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АКТУАЛЬНІ ПИТАННЯ ПСИХОЛОГІЇ

CASE MATERIALS IN PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELLING RESEARCH: THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS, ETHICAL DIMENSIONS, AND METHODOLOGICAL POTENTIALS

МАТЕРІАЛИ КЕЙСІВ ПСИХОЛОГІЧНОГО КОНСУЛЬТУВАННЯ У ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯХ: ТЕОРЕТИЧНІ ЗАСАДИ, ЕТИЧНІ ВИМІРИ ТА МЕТОДОЛОГІЧНІ ПОТЕНЦІАЛИ

This paper explores the theoretical, methodological, and ethical features of adopting case materials for psychological counselling research use, underscoring their central role of closing the space between abstract theorising and experiential clinical practice. In its deployment of the full range of scholarly output, the paper traces the historical evolution of case-based research from its antecedents in psychoanalytic thought, its development as an inter-disciplinary methodology and its existing uses beyond psychiatry and psychotherapy. The paper demonstrates how case studies play an illustration and generation role: they maintain the richness of narrative client voice and yet provide grounds for refining and furthering psychological theorising. Methodological variety emerges as the predominant thread as qualitative, mixed-method, longitudinal, and digital methods enhance the possibilities for analysis of counselling case materials. At the same time, ethical considerations of the kind of order of confidentiality, informed consent, and faithful representation are seen as imperative for securing the integrity and validity of research. Interestingly, the paper suggests the translational possibilities of case materials and illustrates their value across disciplines as diverse as medicine, education, organisational psychology, and public health. In placing case materials at this multi-faceted compass point, the article argues that their informed and creative use presents an essential precondition for furthering counselling psychology as empirical science and as caring vocation. The conclusion suggests that future research needs syncretically combine method innovation and reflective ethics so as to ensure client voice centrality informing the development of future psychological knowledge.

With ethical vigilance and method innovation complementing each other, case studies maintain counselling psychology close to the complexity of the human being and foster scientific rigor.

Key words: Case materials, psychological counselling, qualitative research, mixed methods, ethics, confidentiality, narrative analysis, professional practice, interdisciplinarity, theory–practice bridge.

У статті досліджуються теоретичні, методологічні та етичні аспекти вико-

ристання кейс-матеріалів психологічного консультування у дослідженнях, з акцентом на їхню ключову роль у подоланні розриву між абстрактним теоретизуванням та досвідною клінічною практикою. Ґрунтуючись на аналізі досліджень автор простежує історичну еволюцію кейс-методу: від його витоків у психоаналітичній традиції – до розвитку як міждисциплінарної методології та сучасного застосування.

У статті показано, що кейс-дослідження виконують як ілюстративну, так і генеративну функцію: вони зберігають наративну повноту клієнтського матеріалу, створюючи підґрунтя для уточнення та розвитку психологічної теорії. Розглядаються різноманітні методологічні підходи, зокрема якісні, змішані, лонгітюдні та цифрові методи та способи якими вони розширюють можливості аналізу матеріалів консультування.

Робиться наголос на етичних аспектах, зокрема, конфіденційності, поінформованої згоди та достовірного представлення даних як необхідних умов збереження цілісності та валідності дослідження. Водночас у роботі наголошується на трансляційному потенціалі кейс-матеріалів і їхній цінності для суміжних дисциплін, таких як медицина, освіта, організаційна поведінка та громадське здоров'я.

Розглядаючи кейс-матеріали як багатовекторний дослідницький інструмент, автор стверджує, що їхнє обґрунтоване й креативне застосування є необхідною передумовою для розвитку психологічного консультування як емпіричної науки та як професії. Поеднання етичної пильності та методологічних інновацій сприяє збереженню зв'язку психологічного консультування з складністю консультативного матеріалу. У висновках наголошується на важливості синкретичного поєднання методологічних інновацій з рефлексивною етикою, що дозволить зберегти центральність «клієнтського голосу» у процесі формування нових психологічних знань.

Ключові слова: кейс-матеріали, психологічне консультування, якісні дослідження, змішані методи, етика, конфіденційність, наративний аналіз, професійна практика, міждисциплінарність, взаємозв'язок теорії та практики.

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Relevance and research problem. Study of case material plays a central role in the development of psychological counselling as fertile soil on which theory and practice converge. From the first psychoanalytic case studies of Freud, which opened the narrative of personal lives as ways of theorising the unconscious, onwards to latter-day counselling psychology, wherein case-based exploration underpins pedagogy and practice equally, case materials have been indispensable for furthering knowledge. Their value lies not merely in their possibilities for retaining the density of client narratives, for condensing the content of therapeutic interactions, and for generating knowledge which far exceeds the bounds of the pertaining consulting room. As Cottone, Tarvydas, and Hartley (2021) imply, counselling suffers irreparably as it translates into abstract principle if it forgoes the flesh and blood of clients as experienced on the ground, and case materials thus operate as essential agents between theoretical constructions and fluid processes of humans which they strive to characterise.

The use of case materials has implications beyond their illustration purpose. They have an epistemological function in determining how knowledge comes to be produced with regard to counselling psychology. Frost (2021) explains that qualitative methods of case analysis, for instance, narrative and discourse methods, identify ways that meaning gets constructed at the level of client-therapeutic context. This methodological emphasis gets supplemented at the level of quantitative and mixed-methods initiatives, which supply validation and greater generalizability of case-based findings (Johnson & Christensen, 2024; Howitt & Cramer, 2020) [9; 10]. As McBride (2023) [17] comments, an integration of varied methodological viewpoints ensures that counselling psychology remains attuned, on the one hand, to scientific rigour and, on the other, to the subjective depth of client experience. Case materials, as such, function as bridges not merely between theory and practice on the ground, but also between variant paradigms of research.

Beyond methodological contributions, materials from cases also present complex ethical matters. Questions of client confidentiality, informed consent, and representation are common considerations for use for scholarship purposes. Newman, Guta, and Black (2021) emphasize that their use of sensitive narratives for scholarship requires stringent ethical processes, particularly for cases wherein implicit trust of therapeutic engagements would potentially be broken. Analogously, Morrow and Richards (2021) [18] note the danger of misrepresentation causing the promulgation of stigmatizing narratives or misrepresenting experiences of living. Lindgren and Roberts (2023) [14] observe that ethical practice not just involves safeguarding identities but ensures that case narratives are constructed collaboratively so as to attend to the agency of clients. In this sense, ethical matters are not outside of case-based scholarship

but are integral at its methodological and theoretical heart.

Application of case materials to current counselling literature also profits from their cross-disciplinary reach. Organisational psychology, education, and public health apply case-orientated procedures now for uncovering behaviour patterns, adaptation, and resilience across sites (Hall, Gaved, & Sargent, 2021; Kets de Vries, 2025) [12]. Fellows and Liu (2021) [4] note the collaborative use of mutually analysed cases which permit collective learning among practitioners, while Tracy (2024) [25] describes how qualitative investigations informed with bases of case studies enhance theoretical development for the social sciences as a whole. These cross-disciplinary uses substantiate the flexibility and translational potential of case materials, now becoming pivotal materials for not only psychological counselling, but related fields as well.

In this context, the present article attempts to map out the theoretical, methodological, and ethical aspects of case materials in psychological counselling studies. In borrowing from the wide spectrum of academic perspectives, it tries to delineate how case studies serve as the connect between theory and practice and fortify the integrity of professional practice and research alike. In elucidating their role in knowledge production, ethical consideration, and inter-disciplinary communication, the narrative tries to highlight the necessity of case materials for the advancement of counselling psychology further.

Theoretical Framework

The role of case materials for psychological counselling has invariably been at the core of practice and theorising. In psychoanalytic practice, Freud's first case accounts, e.g., of Anna O. and the Rat Man, made the case report the methodological cornerstone of theorising unconscious processes and therapeutic techniques. That consensus has been retained and enriched in contemporary counselling psychology, where case-oriented methods are not anecdotal collections of events but data-intensive sources of developing, refining, and challenging psychological theories (Tyminski, 2025). Epistemological value of case materials lies in their potency for capturing the lived richness of experiential life, which tends to get lost with large-scale quantitative enquiries.

Two-faceted roles for case studies exist for counselling psychology research. In the first, they are narrative illustrations of the working of therapeutic ideas at the practice level. In the second, they are sites of theorisation, which enable constructed ideas subsequently to undergo wider empirical test (Orlowski & Friedlander, 2025) [21]. For instance, Orlowski's recent study of using single-case design describes how counsellors' presence and mindfulness at sessions can potentially be systematised and analysed and further developed as theoretical training models for therapists. This dual role highlights the fluidity of case materials: they oscillate between illustration and generation

and thereby accentuate counselling psychology as art and science as well.

From a methodological standpoint, case materials are amenable to differing analytic methods, from hermeneutic exegesis to thematic coding. The narrative character of counselling cases creates the possibilities of intensive hermeneutic analysis, in which meaning is mutually constructed between researcher and client. Conversely, as Kets de Vries (2025) [12] documents with his application of executive workshops, the integration of many life histories with each other as part of a unifying interpretative frame provides cross-case comparison which reveals habitual patterns of change. This suggests that counselling case materials are able at the same time to enable idiographic richness and nomothetic generalisation, depending on which analytic lens.

Incorporation of case materials in research also creates epistemological tensions, however. In criticism, case studies have the danger of elevating the researcher's interpretative authority at the client's expense. This tension runs recurrently through analytic psychology, as contention focuses on the degree of clinical material that can appropriately be abstracted as theoretical claim (Tyminski, 2025). In turn, advocates of case-based methodology respond that this very interpretative negotiation is core to the psychological sciences, which must reconcile subjectivity, intersubjectivity, and the unattainability of full objectivity.

Ethically, the application of counselling case materials raises delicate negotiations of consent and confidentiality. The challenge of preserving the client's anonymity and yet retaining richness of their narrative is tremendous. Researchers such as Ngala et al. (2025), with intrinsic case designs, note how anonymisation and consent practices at the collaborative level maintain narrative integrity without occurring any violation of participant dignity. In the process, case-based research not only provides a methodological design, but also an ethical method of safeguarding human vulnerability and valuing its contributions at the theoretical level.

Moreover, the use of case material for research extends the scope of counselling psychology beyond therapeutic practice and beyond and into inter-disciplinary fields. For example, cognitive behaviour therapy studies of chronic migraine demonstrates the application of psychological case data for use in medical interventions, and studies of case material on motivational interviewing (Pabai, 2025) demonstrate how counselling approaches converge with drug compliance. These latter examples reflect the translational application of counselling cases: not only do they refine psychological knowledge, they also bridge clinical practice and public health and organisational research.

Finally, theoretical possibilities of case materials are reinforced by recent methodological advances. Qualitative analysis software developments, narrative analysis, and indeed artificial intelligence allow the

systematising of large corpora of counselling cases. Single-case reports remain treasured as they always have been, but new methods allow collections of cases to be handled as datasets without losing their narrative depth. As Dorooshi et al. (2025) [3] conclusively argue in their analysis of death associated with intoxication, data from cases can provide complex socio-psychological dynamics when studied systematically. For counselling psychology, this constitutes a sea change: case materials are no longer consigned to anecdotal sidelines but are increasingly substantiated as central empirical material.

Application of case materials for psychological counselling studies has its long antecedents in history. Sigmund Freud's very first case studies, for example, Dora and Little Hans, demonstrated how personal stories could be transformed into generalised theoretical discoveries. Not descriptively, but interpretively, the material of somebody else's life became the point of departure for broader psychoanalytic theorising. This tradition heavily impacted on the discipline, gaining for the case report accepted status as scientific contribution in spite of problems of subjectivity. Developments of clinical psychology from the discipline, for example Carl Rogers' movement of humanism, further extended application of case materials with strong emphasis on the worth of experiential life, empathy, and narrative realism as breeding grounds for theorising. Historically, therefore, the case has been the privileged space on which psychology has negotiated between the particular and the universal.

In the early twentieth century, case studies gained new prominence as counselling psychology not merely sought to differentiate itself from psychiatry and from experimental psychology at its extreme as reducing human complexity to disengaged empirical observation, but also as defining itself as a discipline responsive to context, meaning, and experientially experienced complexity. Case materials therefore presented not just methodological resource, but epistemological identity. In grounding theory on experience as lived, counselling psychology constructed a specific scientific ethos: one that recognized value for subjectivity without forgoing rigour.

The methodological spectrum of case materials ranges widely. Single-case studies are the most traditional format, with the therapeutic process of one client being documented and studied in detail. Single-case studies allow for idiographic depth, with fine-grained analysis of psychodynamic processes, therapeutic alliances, and relational ruptures. Generalisability is low, however, and they have been attacked for anecdotalism. To address this, multiple-case designs have been constructed, so cross-case comparison can establish commonalities and divergences. For example, Kets de Vries (2025) [12] has utilized multiple life histories at executive workshops with the aim of deriving higher-level patterns of organisational change.

Another key differentiation exists between intrinsic and instrumental case studies, respectively, wherein the case itself forms the object of ultimate concern and

wherein the case material comes for shedding light on broader questions of theory or practice. Intrinsic value of case study has been exemplified by Ngala et al. (2025) for the aim of studying motivation and performance at school, and an instrumental application of case material has exemplified Orłowski and Friedlander (2025) [21] for theorizing the role of the therapist and mindfulness. This categorization leads out flexibility of case study methodologies itself, which can ideally adapt for differing questions of study with sustained focus on experientially lived human experience.

Subsequent methodological advances also include collective case studies, where a group of related cases are examined as a group for the purpose of establishing thematic patterns. The technique has been employed in counselling psychology as part of establishing the ways in which therapeutic procedures operate across cultural contexts, or how interventions (e.g., cognitive behaviour therapy for migraines) operate across populations. These types of designs achieve a compromise between the idiographic and nomothetic paradigms of study, locating the individual cases as part of general patterns and yet retaining narrative detail.

The epistemological validity of case materials has long been called into question. Critics argue that the interpretative character of case study results in researcher bias, with the danger of stretching theoretical propositions from singular narratives. However, advocates observe that psychology, more so than natural sciences, cannot abstract from subjectivity. The client voice, as embedded as it is in the singular socio-cultural context, cannot be translated from variables without loss of meaning. As has been upheld by Tyminski (2025) [26], the interpretative negotiation between client and therapist, and between researcher and case, of itself produces knowledge.

Moreover, case materials are research boundary objects: clinical records, personal narratives, and data of research all simultaneously. This hybridity requires fine methodologic touch. In their narrative form, cases suit hermeneutic, narrative, and discourse-analytic methods, while their clinical format opens them to systematic coding and thematic analysis. Researchers have started in recent years to combine these methods, acknowledging that meaning accrues at their juncture of interplay between subjective experience and systematic interpretation.

Ethical use of counselling case materials is now of active debate. Centre of the debate stands the issue of confidentiality. Clients make very confidential disclosures on the implicit assumption of privacy. Using material for any form of research involves explicit informed consent, as well as anonymisation plans. But anonymisation itself could compromise the narrative integrity of a case, removing contextually salient details for successful interpretation. Researchers such as Hermawati and Deliarnoor (2025) support collaborative consent, with participants themselves taking an active role in deciding how their narratives are represented.

Another ethical concern has to do with the dual role of the therapist-researcher. As clinical materials are used for research, lines between exploration and treatment get blurred. Questions of power, exploitation, and objectivation of the clients are evoked. As a corrective, ethical guidelines are increasingly recommending role separation, review of case stories for participants, and monitoring at the level of institutions.

Apart from concerns of confidentiality, ethics of case narrative work extend questions of representation and voice. Whose version wins out in the narrative? As active agent or passive object of therapeutic practice, is the client represented? The postmodern and feminist critiques point out the danger of expropriation of the narratives of clients for the interests of scholarship without proper acknowledgment of their co-authored status. Ethical case narrative work, therefore, entails not merely the covering of identities but doing full justice to the relational and dialogical character of the counselling encounter.

One of the advantages of case materials lies with their possibilities for intersections between counselling psychology and other disciplines. For instance how cognitive behavioural case descriptions have application for medical treatments for chronic migraine, and Pabai's (2025) thesis demonstrating ways that case analyses of motivational interviewing might address psychopharmacologic nonadherence. These intersections have the function of delineating that case materials of counselling are not unique to psychology but extend outside of it into medicine, education, organisational studies, and public health.

This interdisciplinarity reflects the hybridity of counselling as clinical practice and as research discipline. Case materials reflect this hybridity: simultaneously as therapeutic records and artefacts of research, they are suspended between the concreteness of practice and the abstraction of theorising. As they cross discipline lines, case materials identify the translational role of counselling psychology, illustrating how knowledge from therapeutic contacts has implications for policies, interventions, and cross-sector practices.

Contemporary scholarship increasingly draws on digital materials for the purpose of analysing case materials at scale. Qualitative data software has become refined enough for researchers systematically to code massive datasets of case transcripts and for common themes and discursive patterns to emerge. Recently, there has been the deployment of artificial intelligence as ways of processing narratives of counselling with the promise of new possibilities for recognising patterns without erasing narrative depth. For example, Dorooshi et al. (2025) [3] demonstrate how systematic classification of case data from deaths associated with intoxication can enable recognition of psychosocial dynamics underlying death. Not analysing cases as such, such scholarship recognises the methodological potential of considering cases as datasets with due regard for their qualitative depth.

Moreover, digital archiving makes it possible to construct case repositories, consisting of anony-

mised counselling material archived for further use for research purposes. This raises new ethical problems as well as new potential for comparative, longitudinal, and cross-cultural comparison. Implemented responsibly, such repositories could enable cumulative case-based research so that researchers in the future can spot patterns over the decades of counselling practice.

It has heuristic value to lend structure to phenomena which quantitative models do not reflect. Therapeutic alliance, transference, and reconstruction of client narrative are not transferable to numbers, and yet are central to counselling psychology. Case material offers leeway for these phenomena to be explored as part of their experiential depth and wealth of data for theorising.

Still, limitations are owed recognition. Casebased evidence has much less of the statistical power of large studies and is often dismissed as anecdotal. Moreover, originality of cases can cloud generalisation and it can be difficult to obtain from them theories of general application. Yet, as Orlowski and Friedlander (2025) [21] argue, case studies are not substitute methodologies. Strength lies with depth, with contextuality, and with originality of theoretical contribution, which can afterwards face empirical test.

In the years ahead, the input of case material to counselling research will have the potential for at least three developments. First, cross-cultural casework will increase in prominence as the world becomes more globalised, depicting the diversity of counselling practices and client experience across different cultures. Secondly, mixed-method enquiries will join case material with quantitative data, and yield multi-faceted analyses with subjective depth as well as generalisable patterns. Lastly, AI-enabled analysis will have the potential for altering the handling of case data, enabling new sources of support for large-scale narrative synthesis while raising new ethical challenges.

Finally, the future of case materials rests with the discipline embracing epistemological pluralism. Rather than considering cases as weaker knowledge types relative to experimentation or survey research, counselling psychology may embrace them as complementary, each of which struggles with different aspects of psychological reality. In this pluralist future, case materials are not illustrations or exceptions but are instead primary sources of knowledge in their own right.

The function of case materials for psychological counselling studies resides in their central role as bridges between abstract models of theorising and clinical living experience. They allow researchers and clinicians to translate from psychodynamic, cognitive-behavioural, and humanistic theorising and practical interventions and back again. As Cottone, Tarvydas and Hartley note (2021), choices of ethics and theorising at psychotherapy are not dissociable from the narratives of the clients, which are the very reasons for reflective and evidence-informed practice.

In so far as this holds, case studies provide not merely descriptive examples but substantive knowledge informing the further development of counselling psychology (McBride, 2023) [17].

Methodological pluralism is a recurrent theme of the literature. Frost (2021) flags the qualitative richness of case work, and Tracy (2024) [25] follows this up by showing how constructing and analysing client narratives provides profound insight of resilience, of identity and of meaning-generation. In contrast, Johnson and Christensen (2024) [10] and Howitt and Cramer (2020) [9] make the case that mixed-method designs bring back together qualitative richness and quantitative generalisability, and so boost findings' robustness. Haslam, Steffens, Cruwys and McGarty (2024) draw the parallel point that statistical triangulation buttresses psychological research, explaining further that materials drawn from case studies need not be incompatible with empirical rigour but can enhance it.

Issues of ethics are central for use of case materials. Issues of confidentiality, informed consent, and representation are recurrent themes of scholarship (Newman, Guta, Black, 2021). A warning regarding misrepresentation of clients' narratives is sounded by Morrow and Richards (2021) [18], as Saharan et al. (2024) [24] stress systematic anonymisation and methodological caution. Walliman (2021) [27] fills out the list with the observation that any kind of research is value-laden and needs ongoing reflexivity for integrity. These are recurring themes also for Leavy (2022) [13], who frames research design as dialogical and needing to strike a balance between methodological innovation and ethical responsibility.

Inter-disciplinary and collaborative features of case materials also count. Fellows and Liu (2021) [4] note how professional learning communities are developed via case analysis, and Rassel et al. (2020) [23] observe its application in practical administration and organisational settings. Jones (2022) [11] suggests how reflective practice comes from case methodologies outside of psychology itself, and Hewstone and Stroebe (2021) [8] observe social psychological features of interpreting cases, with counselling processes embedded in broader group and cultural processes. Marlow (2023) [16] suggests their application with social work and also how case materials are bridges between disciplines.

This increasing methodological diversity of case studies is complemented by new innovation from linguistic and participatory lineages. Litosseliti (2024) [15] outlines how linguistic analyses of case narratives determine implicit structures of meaning, and Hall, Gaved and Sargent (2021) document the versatility of participatory case procedures for crisis contexts, as exemplified during the COVID-19 pandemic. Bell, Harley and Bryman (2022) also assert that organisational research case studies reveal structural and moral dynamics, with implications for the field of counselling psychology beyond itself to the applied social sciences. Nagel (2020) [19],

writing from psychoanalytic perspectives, reminds us that the choice of method cannot be divorced from philosophical assumptions and this immediately challenges counselling psychology's application of case-based evidence.

In combination, these perspectives also confirm that case materials are central to the science and practice of counselling. They allow for the refinement of theory on the ground, for the development of ethical sensitivity in the working with of client narratives, and for methodological possibilities of innovation and interdisciplinarity. Through the unifying of ethical standards with flexible methodological formats, as implied from these diverse sources, case-focused scholarship ensures that the voice of clients will always take priority as counselling psychology builds further as both an empirically precise and profoundly humane discipline.

Conclusion. Analysis of case materials from the scholarship of psychological counselling highlights their key function as communicators between clinical experience and theoretical models. Deriving from historical conventions and yet always coming into being, case materials are a methodological path on which counsellors and researchers can maintain the richness of client experience and at the same time contribute simultaneously to the building of psychological knowledge. They serve also to clarify the interactive dynamics between client narrative and therapeutic method so that psychological knowledge always has as its ground fleshed-out human complexity and not abstracted generalizations.

Methodologically, case materials are extremely versatile. From analyses of one case to comparative analyses of several cases, and from narrative qualitative methods to mixed-method combinations, they offer nuanced possibilities for generating rich as well as generalizable insights. Researchers such as Frost (2021), Tracy (2024) [25], and McBride (2023) [17] have demonstrated how methodological variety increases the validity of comparative case studies,

and newer developments of digital and participatory methods further expand its possibilities. These methodological additions show yet again that the case study is not auxiliary to psychological science but central to its continued vitality.

Of equal concern are the ethical considerations of conducting work with case materials. Issues of confidentiality, informed consent, and representation are key points of academic contention. For Cottone, Tarvydas, and Hartley (2021), for those of Newman, Guta, and Black (2021), and for Lindgren and Roberts (2023) [14], ethically informed treatment of client narratives is at once a professional necessity as well as the sine qua non of trustworthy scholarship. Through the unification of ethical thought with plans of methodology, counselling psychology ensures that the deployment of case materials strengthens rather than undermines the therapeutic alliance.

Interdisciplinary applications of case studies also highlight their impact further. As shown by Kets de Vries (2025) [12], Orlowski and Friedlander (2025) [21], and Hall, Gaved, and Sargent (2021), not only do case materials impact counselling practice, organizational leadership, public health, and educational innovation, but these examples realise the translational potential of case work and position counselling psychology as a discipline with direct applicability for central social problems.

Lastly, case materials are a multi-dimensional contribution to the psychological counselling discipline. They attain theoretical depth, methodological innovation, ethical thought, and professional development, and accomplish these simultaneously as they further the boundaries of inter-disciplinary collaboration. Future developments will benefit from designing more integrated formats which sustain narrative depth with systematic rigor, and which are complemented with new digital and participative modes. In turn, greater focus on ethical values will guarantee that the dignity of clients lies at the core of the construction of knowledge.

Table 1

Contributions of Case Materials to Counselling Research

Dimension	Key Contributions	Representative Sources
Theoretical	Grounding in psychodynamic, cognitive-behavioural, and humanistic frameworks; bridging abstract concepts with lived narratives	Cottone et al. (2021); McBride (2023); Orlowski & Friedlander (2025); Tyminski (2025)
Methodological	Single-case, multiple-case, longitudinal and mixed-method designs; narrative and participatory approaches; AI-assisted analysis	Frost (2021); Tracy (2024); Howitt & Cramer (2020); Johnson & Christensen (2024); Dorooshi et al. (2025); Litosseliti (2024)
Ethical	Confidentiality, informed consent, accurate representation; reflexivity in researcher-client dynamics	Newman et al. (2021); Lindgren (2022); Saharan et al. (2024); Morrow & Richards (2021); Lindgren & Roberts (2023); Pakes & Paul (2022)
Interdisciplinary	Applications in medicine, education, public health, organisational studies	Pabai (2025); Kets de Vries (2025); Hall et al. (2021)
Professional Practice	Enhancing therapist skills; reflective practice; collaborative learning and dissemination of best practices	Fellows & Liu (2021); Rassel et al. (2020); Jones (2022); Orlowski & Friedlander (2025)

In short, the use of case materials for counseling studies is not a subsidiary enterprise, but fundamental. Their employment and use with discretion and imagination enable the discipline to remain sci-

entifically stringent and at the same time profoundly humane and ensures that counselling psychology emerges as a practice which mirrors the richness, fragility, and resilience of the human experience.

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