ORIGINAL ARTICLE

The Effectiveness of Cybertherapy for the Introvert And Extrovert Personality Traits

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: The cyberspace creates an infrastructure to build relationships, so the counseling practitioners has taken the initiative to maximize their services. An alternative service helps through this virtual interaction is created and practised. This virtual counselling service is known as cyber-counselling. So, there is a need to see the effectiveness of this cybertherapy service based on personality traits. The objectives of this study are to see the relationships or differences between personality trait in cyber-counselling approach. **Methods:** This quasi-experimental research applied the Non-Equivalent Pre & Post Test design. 60 research subjects are identifed and divided into the two groups the Face-to-Face approach and Cyber-counselling approach. Junior Eyneseck Personality Inventory was used to determined their personality traits and Client Satisfaction Inventory to determine the effectiveness of the therapy. **Results:** Pearson Chi-Square test shows that client satisfaction has no relationship on personality traits towards cybertherapy approach. **Conclusion:** Since the findings of this study are not in line with past literatures, some assumptions can be made regarding the findings of this study. Firstly, the distribution of the subjects based on personality traits can not be done in view of the 'walk-in' elements practiced in this study. Secondly, since the subjects are within the age of 13 to 17 years, the likelihood of the formation and development of their personality traits has yet to mature or steady, while the previous studies conducted on the study of adults.

Keywords: Cyber-counseling, trait personality, introvert, extrovert

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INTRODUCTION

''Psychotherapy sessions by phone, by computer and video are all practical when face-to-face sessions are not feasible'' (Ellis, 2006).

The cyberspace creates an infrastructure to build relationships, so the counseling practitioners has taken the initiative to maximize their services. An alternative service helps through this virtual interaction is created and practised. This virtual counselling service is known as cyber-counselling. This service is also known as web-counseling, cyber-counseling, cyber-therapy and e-therapy. (1,2). This cyber-counselling service has risen rapidly as many qualified counselors began offering cyber-counselling services (3, 4). International Society for Mental Health Online (ISMHO) counted 5000 websites offered cyber-counselling services. (5). Some other studies also show a drastic improvement in cyber-counselling services (2, 6). The increament shows that counsellors no longer afraid of technical rapid

acceleration yet they have to accomodate and take advanteges of this modernisation. (7,8).

The practises of the cyber-counselling services and the recognition of cyber-counselling services is uncertain in its effectiveness. High curiosity among counseling practitioners led them to conduct a survey to measure the effectiveness of this service compared to conventional methods of Face-to-Counseling (9). Many studies show the effectiveness of cyber-counselling services as opposed to Face-to-Face counseling in various aspects. Previous studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of cyber-counselling service on adolescents (11, 12). The findings also show that cyber-counselling can reduce adolescent stress levels (13), and provide emotional relief (12). All studies showed positive results on the effectiveness of cyber-counselling services to adolescents related to the anonymous elements (14), flexibility of time (12,14), anonymity (3) access (7) and client engagement (15).

The introverts are those who do not like to socialize and like to avoid situations that force them to communicate. The introverts are uncomfortable communicating and preferring alone. There are some writings that suggest that cyber-counselling can be beneficial to the introverts (4,7). The introverts listed in these articles are

individuals who are shy, have a sense of humor, lack of self-confidence and dare not deal with the public. Anonymous situations that exist in cyber-counselling and expressing feelings by writing make them feel more confident and free to express their problems (16, 17). Introverts also will benefit from cyber-counselling services as these people feel ashamed and uncomfortable to deal with others especially to express their feelings. The cyber-counselling service that emphasizes the anonymity makes the introverts feel comfortable. In fact, the absence of physical presence also provides comfort to the introverts. Clients choose cyber-counselling on seven key elements of viability, disinhibition, low cost compared to face-to-face counseling, no need to travel to the counselor's office, counselor-client relationship, the advantages of writing therapy and flexiblelity. This will benefits the introverts to express their problems without being shy and hesitant in face-to-face counseling.

Among the key factors in making cyber-counselling effective is the presence of anonymity elements in virtual space (18). Anonymity is an element that allows the client to be unrecognized. Anonymity factor makes clients feel safe and free as they are confident their identity will be hidden. Clients are safe in discussing personal issues and feel safe in sharing the problem. Clients also feel their dignity is preserved because they do not have to look after 'face' as in a face-to-face counseling session. Clients will also feel free to feel guilty for discussing issues that are considered private or family secrets.

A study of 40 subjects to look at personality impact two counseling approaches that are face-to-face counseling and cyber-counselling. The result of the analysis of the two-way anova test, there is a main interaction between the personality trait and the self-discovery. The result of further analysis, the findings show extrovert clients find themselves in face-to-face counseling sessions while introvert clients find themselves in cyber-counselling sessions (19).

The effectiveness of cyber-counselling services to introverts should be more scientifically studied. Most articles only express the opinion of the author and the scientific study is somewhat lacking. The lack of scientific findings encourages researchers to conduct studies that will specifically see the effectiveness of cyber-counselling services for introverts. This study will also look at the comparison of the effectiveness of both counseling methods according to client's personality traits.

The objectives of this study are 1. Is there significant relationship between personality trait and client satisfaction? and 2. Is there significant difference between personality trait and client satisfaction?

METHODOLOGY

This quasi-experimental research applied the Non-Equivalent Pre & Post Test design. Two groups consist of experimental group and control group are formed. The experimental group using the online counseling approach while the control group using the face-to-face approach. 60 research subjects aged 13 to 16 years old are identifed and divided into the two groups. Junior Eyneseck Personality Inventory was used to determined their personality traits. In order to study the effectiveness of the online approach, Client Satisfaction Inventory by McMurtry & Hudson with the reliability of .89 Cronbach Alpha is used.

Table I: Demography profile

DEMOGRAPHY	GROUP	
	CONTROL (Face-to-face) n=30	**EXPERIMENT** (Cybertherapy) n=30
GENDER		
Male	4 (13.3%)	3 (10.0%)
Female	26 (86.7%)	27 (90.0%)
PERSONALITY TRAIT		
Introvert	14 (47.0%)	9 (30.0%)
Extrovert	16 (53.0%)	21 (70.0%)

Personality traits are measured using Junior Eynseck's Personality Instrument. There are two types of personality traits that are identified as introvert personality or extrovert personality. Introvert personality is a non-social person and avoids the situations that force him to communicate. Extrovert personality is also a person who likes to socialize and like to interact with others (19). Group analysis showed that 14 (47%) of subjects had introvert personality traits and 16 (53%) had extrovert personality traits in control group. Experimental groups have nine (30%) subjects with Introvert personality traits and 21 (70%) have extrovert personality traits. Overall, 23 (38%) of the subjects have introvert personality and 37 (62%) of the subjects have extrovert personality involved in this study.

RESULTS

The study is to determine the relationship between personality trait and client satisfaction in both approaches. The study also determine the difference between personality trait and client satisfaction in both approaches. Pearson chi-square and two-way ANOVA are used. The findings are as follows.

Relationship between personality trait and client satisfaction
To determine the relationship between personality traits and client Satisfaction, Pearson Chi-Square test

is used. The subjects were divided into two categories of personality traits namely introvert and extrovert as well as two counseling approaches namely face-to-face counseling and Cyber-counselling. The findings are outlined in Table II.

Table II: Chi-Suare test relationship to personality trait with client satisfaction

PERSONALITY			
	Introvert	Extrovert	Total
CLIENT'S SATISFACTIONS			
Low satisfactions	10	9	
	(52.6%)	(47.4%)	100%
High satisfactions	13	28	
	(31.7%)	(68.3%)	100%

X2=2.405 dk=1, sig. p=.121

The findings of Pearson Chi-Square on Table 4.11 show the value of X2 = 2.405 (dk = 1, p> .05). The small standardized residual values (0.7 to 1.0) indicate that observed frequencies and expected frequencies are too small and insignificant. With this, null hypotesis is failed to be rejected. The result shows that client satisfaction is not related or does not depend on the client's personality traits neither introvert nor extrovert towards cyber-counselling approach nor face-to-face approach.

The difference between personality trait and client satisfaction

Further analysis to determine whether there is a difference between client satisfaction with personality trait on face-to-face counseling and Cyber-counselling methods. The two-way Anova test was used to prove the effect of the approaches, trait personality and the interaction of approches and trait personality as shown in Table III.

Table III: Two way anova differences personality traits and approach on client satisfaction

Client Satisfaction	JKD	dk	F	sig. p	Partial eta^2
Approach	2.610	1	14.839	.001	.209
Personality Trait	.167	1	.951	.334	.017
Approach*Personality Trait	.123	1	.697	.407	.012

(Adjusted R^2 = .201)

The main effect of the main effect on Table 4.12 shows that there is a significant difference between face-to-face counseling and cyber-counselling (F = 14.839, p <.05) with the effect of large size (partial eta2 = .209) and R2 is adjusted = .201. This figure explains that there is a difference in client satisfaction in face-to-face counseling groups is lower than the cyber-counselling group. However, for the main effect of the personality trait (F = .951, p> .05) and the effect of interaction with personality trait (F = .697, p> .05) did not show significant difference in client satisfaction. With this null hypothesis failed to be rejected, and it proved that client satisfaction is not influenced by the effects of interaction

with personality traits.

Generally, the findings conclude that client satisfaction is not influenced by personality traits and the effects of interaction of counseling methods that are exposed to clients. Visually shown in Figure 1
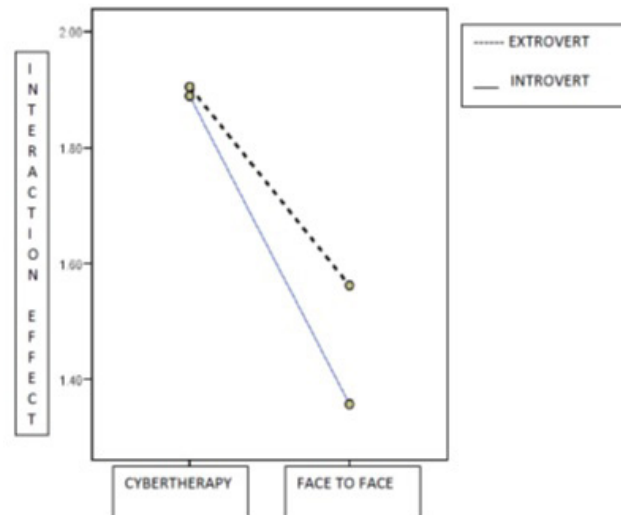

Figure 1: The interaction effects on personality traits and approach on client Satisfaction. The main effect shows that there is a significant difference between face-to-face counselling and cyber-counselling. However, the effect of interaction with personality trait did not show significant difference in client satisfaction.

DISCUSSION

From literature review, introvert personality traits are said to benefit more from cyber-counselling services (4,7). This study examines the effect of the cyber-counselling method on personality traits. To look at personality traits on methods, the study looks at the differences and also the relationship between personality traits in both counseling methods.

Based on data analysis, the findings show no significant differences between introvert and extrovert personality traits to client satisfaction. The findings also show no significant relationship between introvert and extrovert personality traits to client satisfaction and client change.

The findings of this study are contrary to many studies that the cyber-counselling service benefits the introverts (4,7,16,17). The previous findings show that introverts will benefit more in the cyber-counselling service because the introverts described by them are individuals who are too embarrassing, anxious and nervous to express themselves face to face (20), and cyber-counselling can provide benefits to those who are shy in the relationship and have the opportunity to highlight the positive aspects of self-reliance over face-to-face methods during meetings and discussions (4,7).

Studies also stated that the cyber-counselling service

would benefit introvert individuals over the anonymity elements inherent in the cyber-counselling service (18, 19). Anonymity is an element that allows the client to be unrecognized. Anonymity factor makes clients feel safe and free as they are confident their identity will be hidden. The element of anonymity enables clients to feel safe in discussing issues that are personal and safe in sharing the problem. Clients also feel their dignity is protected because they do not have to take care of 'face' as in a face-to-face Counseling session. Clients will also feel free to feel guilty for discussing issues that are considered private or family secrets (19).

The other factor that helps the introverts benefit from the cyber-counselling service is the factor of freedom (dishibitant). Freedom means freedom to express feelings of shame or fear of being evaluated by counselors (5,20). The elements of disinhibition have made the introverts able to express their problems without shame and hesitation as in face-to-face counseling. Cyber-counselling can provide benefits to those who are shy in the relationship and have the opportunity to highlight the positive aspects of self rather than face-to-face methods during meetings and discussions.

Since the findings of this study are not in line with previous literature studies, some assumptions can be made regarding the findings of this study. First, the distribution of the subjects based on personality traits can not be done as the walk-in element is practiced in this study. Secondly, since the subjects are within the age of 13 to 17 years, the likelihood of the formation and development of their personality traits has not yet reached a mature or steady state, while the previous studies conducted on the study of adults.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of cyber-counselling itself is to help clients share their issues without having to attend face-to-face sessions. Apart from saving time, clients can refer their issues and problems to professional professionals without dealing with their own therapists. Previous studies have shown that introvert individuals are more likely to choose cyber-counselling services than extrovert individuals. However, this study gives a new discovery that the client's personality has no relationship with clients satisfactions in cyber-counselling services. Since cyber-counselling is a technological advancement, clients nowadays are choosing faster and easy services rather the conventional way. Client satisfaction is more likely to focus on the quality of cyber-counselling services that they obtained throughout the session. Therefore, cyber-counselling professionals should improve the quality of the service in order to provide the best service and to assist clients of different types of personalities, who will try to get cyber-counselling services anytime and anywhere.

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