

CYBERCOUNSELING FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF CYBERCOUNSELORS:
OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

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CYBERCOUNSELING FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF CYBERCOUNSELORS:
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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Fatih Yılmaz, certify that

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ABSTRACT

Cybercounseling From the Perspective of Cybercounselors: Opportunities and Challenges

Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, the web has gradually become a media for reaching mental health services. Counselees demand counseling services through the internet and cybercounselors started to supply those services. The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the opportunities and challenges of cybercounseling in terms of how cybercounselors experience them. Participants of the study were seven cybercounselors purposively selected and who pursue their practice in Turkey. For data collection, a semi-structured interview protocol was developed and implemented by the researcher. As a result of the thematic qualitative analysis, in-depth knowledge on the cybercounselors practices was reached. One of the major findings of the study is that there are opportunities for both counselors and counselees such as convenience, receiving counseling in one's mother tongue, and saving time. Cybercounseling also has some challenges such as technological insufficiencies and incompatibility for certain techniques and cases. However, the study revealed that counselors found strategies, such as developing a new perspective for counseling and establishing new rules to ensure ethical conduct, in order to overcome those challenges. There are some limitations in the study resulting from the nature of qualitative research sampling. The results are not generalizable; however in-depth understanding was achieved. The study has implications for cybercounselors, counseling educators, and policy-makers.

ÖZET

Siber Danışmanların Bakış Açısıyla Siber Danışmanlık:

Fırsatlar ve Zorluklar

Yirmibirinci yüzyıl başı itibarıyla internet aşamalı olarak ruh sağlığı hizmetlerine ulaşmak için bir araç olmaya başladı. Danışmanların psikolojik danışmanlık hizmetlerini internet üzerinden talep etmesiyle birlikte siber danışmanlar bu hizmeti sağlamaya başladılar. Bu nitel araştırmanın amacı siber danışmanların deneyimleri yoluyla siber danışmanlığın fırsatları ve zorluklarını incelemektir. Çalışmanın örneklemini Türkiye’de psikolojik danışmanlık yapan ve uygunluk düzeyi gözetilerek amaçlı olarak seçilmiş yedi siber danışmandan oluşmaktadır. Araştırmacı veri toplamak için yarı-yapılandırılmış bir görüşme protokolü geliştirmiş ve uygulamıştır. Tematik nitel analiz sonucu siber danışmanların çalışmaları ile ilgili detaylı bilgiye ulaşılmıştır. Araştırmanın temel bulgularından birisi psikolojik danışmanlar ve danışanlar için elverişlilik, danışanın kendi ana dilinde danışmanlık alması ve zaman tasarrufu gibi fırsatların olmasıdır. Siber danışmanlığın teknolojik kısıtlamalar ve bazı teknik ve vakalar için uygun olmayışı gibi zorlukları da bulunmaktadır. Ancak bu araştırma psikolojik danışmanların bu zorlukları aşmak için yeni bir danışmanlık bakış açısı geliştirme ve yeni kurallar oluşturarak etik değerleri garanti etme gibi stratejiler uyguladıklarını ortaya koymuştur. Nitel araştırmanın örneklem doğası gereği araştırmada bazı sınırlılıklar söz konusudur. Sonuçlar genellenebilir olmamakla beraber derinlemesine anlayışa ulaşılmıştır. Araştırmanın siber danışmanlar, danışmanlık alanında çalışan eğitimciler ve politika yapıcılar için önerileri bulunmaktadır.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the problem

In the recent decades, technology started to take part in humans' lives more than ever. As technology transforms how people live, services and their supply forms are also modified. According to the Turkish Statistical Institution, 66.8% of people in Turkey use the internet frequently and 80% of the residences have internet access (Turkish Statistical Institution, 2018a). Research suggests that the number of individuals who purchased goods or services over the internet increased from 8.4% in 2011 to 24.9% in 2017. Almost one quarter of the population uses the internet as an access medium to receive various services (Turkish Statistical Institution, 2018a).

In fact, regarding the high number of people using the internet as a tool, the web is a source of access to mental health services as well. Mental health services originally take place in private practices called mental health clinics and traditionally in a face-to-face fashion. For the last two decades, advances in the area of technology and mental health services opened up a new area of research and services: cybercounseling (Richards & Vigan'ó, 2013).

Several benefits of these services were mentioned in the literature. Firstly, people living in rural or remote areas can access mental health services where they live (Simpson & Reid, 2014a) since geographical distance is not a barrier for cybercounseling. Secondly, flexibility in the ways of offering the services and provision of immediate response to a need (Fang, Tarshis, McInroy, & Mishna, 2018) are some opportunities that cybercounseling offers. Cybercounseling has a

further advantage for people who live away from their home countries. For instance, over 100.000 Turkish citizens emigrated from Turkey between 2016 and 2017 (Turkish Statistical Institution, 2017). Since culture-specific barriers play a role in seeking out mental health services (Tuliao, Velasquez, Bello, & Pinson, 2016), cybercounseling might be a viable alternative especially for migrants.

There are some disadvantages of cybercounseling as well. Challenges in communicating limited non-verbal cues and signs, difficulties with applicability to a majority of the counselees, confidentiality threats, and technical problems are stated by counselors as drawbacks (Schuster, Pokorny, Berger, Topooco, & Laireiter, 2018). In response to those problems, professional associations devised ethical principles and specified the competencies that are required for cybercounseling (Haberstroh, Barney, Foster, & Duffey, 2014).

Beginning with the first cybercounseling software used as a test of human-computer interaction in the 1960's by Joseph Weizenbaum (1966), called Eliza, and continuing with the current technological tools in cybercounseling such as videoconferencing, e-mail, text messaging, smart phone applications, and social media (Barnett, 2018), cybercounseling has been an ongoing phenomenon in the helping professions. There are quantitative and qualitative studies exploring issues about cybercounseling around the world, but the research literature in Turkey lacks focus on the application of new technologies to counseling (Aygün Cengiz, 2008).

1.2 Purpose of the study

The main goal of the study was to examine cybercounselors' experiences in terms of how they describe the opportunities and challenges of cybercounseling through videoconferencing. For the purposes of the study, counselors who actively offer cybercounseling and who have a Master's degree were interviewed. As their points of view are clarified and demonstrated, a richer understanding of their experiences, within the context of Turkey has become possible.

1.3 Research questions

This study offers the answers to the following research questions:

- (1) What are the opportunities of cybercounseling?
- (2) What are the challenges of cybercounseling?
- (3) What are the strategies to overcome challenges of cybercounseling?

Since this study is implemented as qualitative research, the content of the research questions have been reformulated after the data collection was initiated. The reformulation has been based on the repeating patterns that emerged from the data.

1.4 The significance of the study

With the presentation of a new counseling technique, the "how" question takes place next. The current study explores the hows of cybercounseling in the Turkish context. Although there are numerous web sites advertising online counseling services in

Turkey, cybercounseling still remains neglected in research. Şimşek Alphan (2018) examined the development of an online intervention program on infertility for Turkish women who tried to make meaning of the issue. Aygün Cengiz (2008) did a descriptive study of online therapy on the Internet. She examined seven websites in Turkey that offered online therapy. She concluded that there are ethical challenges for the online services in terms of confidentiality, professionalism, and informed consent. There are also some quantitative studies related to the acceptance of online counseling by Turkish counselors (Bastemur & Bastemur, 2015) and opinions of families, students, and school counselors about online school counseling (Savaş & Harmancı, 2010).

To the author's knowledge, there is no qualitative data in the literature on counseling in Turkey, related to the opportunities and challenges of cybercounseling. Hence, the current study is a step forward for cybercounseling research, since the actual practitioners of cybercounseling share an interpretation of their experiences. Through this study, cybercounselors' voices are heard as to how they are struggling to reach out to those who cannot readily receive their services. The current study will contribute to the accumulation of in-depth knowledge about cybercounseling in Turkey. This knowledge might contribute to the practices of counselors, counselor education and policy-making related to counseling. The significance of this research is based on the implications. The findings of the study might reduce ambiguities for counselors before they decide to set up an online service. Counseling program developers will be better informed of the limitations of cybercounseling and they might develop specific programs creating innovative strategies to overcome the challenges. Finally, policy-makers might re-establish detailed local guidelines and regulations for the ethical provision of cybercounseling.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Digital culture and its influences on individuals

A new generation has arrived called Millennials who are born after the year 1982. They haven't been in a world without computers or information technologies. Millennials, to which the current researcher also belongs, are called the "digital natives" (Palfrey & Gasser, 2008). They spend considerable time online and they are comfortable with online communication. Millennials started to transform social interaction to new communities (Coleman, 2005). They became more socially and politically committed by communicating online and exchanging ideas (Chiu, Hsu, & Wang, 2006).

The internet serves as a socialization medium for these young people in making friends, having interaction with the current friends, and pursuing romantic relationships (Reich, Subrahmanyam, & Espinoza, 2012). Similarly, social network sites are used by youth also for interacting with peers who they do not have close relationships with, such as friends of friends (Espinoza & Juvonen, 2011). The scope of online communication varies from communications with grandparents, close or distant relatives to total strangers (Kraut & Burke, 2015).

Social media use among young people has been a concern regarding the digital culture in terms of its influences on psychological well-being. Active use of social media has started to dominate not only the social lives, but also the self-esteem of young people who have an inclination to add new friends on the websites in an effort to feel more popular. For instance, teenage girls experience stress as they try to

achieve beauty standards through portraying their photos on social media (Chua & Chang, 2016).

In another research conducted in Scotland, using social media in long hours was associated with decreased sleep quality, lowered self-esteem, and increased depression and anxiety (Woods & Scott, 2016). Cyber-bullying is another digital culture problem that adolescents encounter. It is an out of the school problem which is rarely discussed at school. According to students, school personnel are unable to help such situations (Agatston, Kowalski, & Limber, 2007).

In a sense, the online world has become a core phenomenon in many people's lives. This new type of communication is said to have its effects on people's well-being depending on the person's own decisions. Namely, if a person decides to use this new communication style to increase social support, it enhances psychological well-being of the individual; however, if it causes withdrawal from social contacts, it decreases welfare of the user (Kraut & Burke, 2015).

Although excessive internet and social media use predicts depression, using social networking sites in an effort to increase social support such as communicating family members abroad via Facebook might be beneficial for mental health (Banjanin, Banjanin, Dimitrijevic, & Pantic, 2015). As can be seen, digital culture is Janus-headed which has both opportunities and challenges based on the way it is used. Similarly, cybercounseling is a service provided in the digital environment which has its dynamics related to similar opportunities and challenges. In fact, it might be the case that younger generations are inclined to use the internet in order to increase their social support. Research demonstrates that younger people or "digital natives" demand internet-based mental health sites more than those who are not born

into the digital culture (Kurioka, Muto, & Tarumi, 2001; Mehta & Chalhoub, 2006). As a response to such demands, even states began to create online programs. For instance, online counseling and guidance services have been state's point of interest in Denmark and they launched online counseling and guidance services in 2011. The state provides individual and personal guidance to all citizens via different technological tools such as chat, telephone, SMS, e-mail and Facebook (Zhang, 2016).

2.2 Definition and effectiveness of cybercounseling

Technology has influenced counseling and psychotherapy for over 50 years (Goss & Anthony, 2009). In this period of time, therapists and counselors used many tools of technology in exponentially increasing rates. Richards and Vigan'ó (2012) describe cybercounseling as “implementing therapeutic interventions in cyberspace by the competent counselor and counselee(s) by using computer-assisted communication” (p. 699). They refer to it also as e-therapy, cybertherapy, e-counseling, or online counseling.

Cybercounseling effectiveness is reviewed in many studies. The meta-analysis performed on 92 research studies by Barak, Hen, Boniel-Nissim, and Shapira (2008) showed medium effectiveness of cybercounseling (effect size 0.53). This number was acquired by summarizing the results of studies that utilized different counseling methods and paradigms, varying cybercounseling modalities, varying effectiveness indicators, counselors working with a various range of issues and with varying ages of clients. In Griffiths and Christensen's (2006) systematic review of 15 randomized controlled trials, effectiveness was reported to be positive

in terms of reducing risk factors or improving symptoms, although there were some methodological limitations in the studies. Interventions through cybercounseling were found to be used to treat conditions such as depression, anxiety, insomnia, headaches, eating disorders, and encopresis.

As a result of a pilot study conducted for university students, online-based acceptance and commitment therapy was found to be effective and feasible in promoting mental health skills (Viskovich & Pakenham, 2018). The mental health skills that improved were acceptance, defusion, valued living, and mindfulness which promote life satisfaction. Another study reviewed online psychological interventions that provide self-therapy programs in modules. The programs were found out to be effective in reducing the symptoms of clients (Zamorano, Marchena-Consejero, Hervias-Ortega, Menacho-Jimenez, & Mera-Cantillo, 2017). The modules in the various interventions included psychoeducational materials, assigned tasks, and record-keeping which were related to positive psychology, cognitive behavioral therapy, and acceptance and commitment therapy paradigms. With the completion of the programs, well-beings of clients were improved.

In a randomized control trial conducted recently (Lalouni et al., 2018); children who received cognitive behavior therapy (CBT) online had a significantly larger recovery in gastrointestinal symptom severity with a medium effect size compared with children who received conventional treatments which included medications and visits to health care professionals. For the cost of treatment, a follow-up study was conducted after 36 weeks. Children who got online treatment used health care less. Each child who received online therapy saved US \$1050 compared to regular treatment.

In another recent study, Şimşek Alphan (2018) conducted an online intervention program for women experiencing infertility. The study showed that the online intervention was effective in increasing the meaning-making of infertility by the participants.

2.3 Types of cybercounseling

Cybercounseling has many forms. These forms are differentiated by some major factors (Barak et al., 2008). The first differentiating factor is the intervention method depending on whether it includes human communication or not. In that sense, self-help web sites and web-based therapy offered by a computer program are differentiated from e-therapy by an actual professional. In fact, computer programs have found to be effective, just like human counselors. As an example, a fully automated iCBT (internet-delivered cognitive behavioral therapy) program was used to treat symptoms of OCD (obsessive-compulsive disorder) in individuals who are between 12 to 18 years. Results were promising; the symptoms significantly decreased (Rees, Anderson, Kane, & Finlay-Jones, 2016).

The second factor is about whether the counseling is conducted live or is asynchronous. The third one is the medium as to whether it is text-based, audio only, or video. Text-based cybercounseling method can be implemented through e-mailing or messaging with the counselor. E-mail is asynchronous and messaging is synchronous. Audio-only cybercounseling is conducted by telephone and lastly webcams are used throughout videoconferencing (Barak, et al., 2008).

Technology is developing rapidly. Thus, from this frame of reference, other new forms of cybercounseling might be soon utilized by counselors and counsees

(Barak et al., 2008). Different methods of cybercounseling and their effectiveness will be described in the following sections.

2.3.1 Cybercounseling through videoconferencing

Cybercounseling through videoconferencing is a modality in which the counselor and the counselee both can view and speak with each other in real time. The most common method used in cybercounseling used to be e-mailing (Ainsworth, 2004). However, there have been great advances in technology since then.

Videoconferencing technology has developed and has become a widely used tool. Software programs used in videoconferencing such as “Skype” make this modality appealing and affordable (Baker & Ray, 2011). Programs such as Facetime, Messages, Google Hangouts, Talky Core, Viber, and Tango have also appeared to be used in cybercounseling interventions (Tzelepis et al., 2017).

Since the counselor answers the client’s calls punctually, synchronous communication facilitates spontaneous and instant interaction (Cipolletta, Frassoni, & Faccio, 2018). In that sense, seeing someone and talking with them synchronously might be providing a feeling of real-time connection for the two parties.

Cybercounseling through videoconferencing has been researched in terms of effectiveness and the results are promising. In a systematic review, 92 articles related to effectiveness of videoconferencing therapy on depression were critically reviewed and 33 articles were included in the review (Berryhill et al., 2019). Results showed that among them, 21 studies reported statistically significant reductions in depression symptoms.

In a pilot study, effectiveness of acceptance-based behavior therapy delivered by videoconferencing to treat generalized social anxiety disorder in adults was assessed (Yuen et al., 2013). Results showed improvements in social anxiety, depression, disability, quality of life, and experiential avoidance with effect sizes comparable to or larger than studies published previously on delivering face-to-face cognitive behavior therapy for social anxiety disorder.

Videoconferencing is not only used for therapeutic reasons, but also for psychoeducation. One experimental research evaluating the effectiveness of parent training addressed ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) treatment provided by videoconferencing. Videoconferencing modality was found to be as effective as face-to-face parent training and was favored by the participants (Xie et al., 2013).

2.3.2 Audio-only cybercounseling

Audio-only cybercounseling might be referred to as telephone counseling. When the counselee and the counselor conduct the counseling session by interacting through the phone, it is called telephone counseling. Recently, telephones have been replaced by cell phones and the tool used in cybercounseling shifted from landlines to cell phone connections.

In one meta-analytic review, telephone-based intervention was found to be effective. It was suggested that it overcame barriers by offering ease of conduct and also being a common tool for a major part of the population (Bee et al., 2008). In a randomized, controlled trial in Iran, 46 women were selected in an effort to compare the effect of face-to-face with telephone-based counseling on sexual satisfaction

(Zargar Shoushtari, Afshari, Abedi & Tabesh, 2015). Results indicated that telephone-based counseling led to increased sexual satisfaction better than face-to-face counseling did. This research suggests that telephone-based counseling is an effective and low-cost approach in an effort to overcome sexual problems in couples.

In a program developed for reducing juvenile recidivism, telephone counseling was implemented (Burraston, Cherrington, & Bahr, 2012). The results showed that cognitive training provided by telephone counseling is an effective and affordable intervention for reducing recidivism.

Kingsley and Henning (2015) suggest that application of specific counseling approaches (i.e. Adlerian therapy) require a collaborative relationship between the counselee and the counselor. They assert that this might be difficult in phone counseling because of the inability to read facial cues and body language.

In an experimental research conducted for assisting tobacco treatment in Brazil, a combined method of phone and text message counseling was found to be effective in carbon monoxide-verified abstinence of the experimental group (Cruvinel, Richter, Colugnati, & Ronzani, 2018). Participants also rated the content of the text messages as “helpful” and found the length of phone counseling as “just right”.

2.3.3 Text-based cybercounseling

There are two ways of doing text-based cybercounseling: synchronous or asynchronous. In the synchronous modality, online messaging has become widely used in the past and e-mail has been used as the asynchronous modality where the

response is delayed (Heinlen, Welfel, Richmond, & Rak, 2003). In the past, some practical concerns in text-based cybercounseling have been stated such as the difficulties in transmitting empathy, warmth, and humor through text (Danby, Butler, & Emmison, 2009). However, some viable benefits of text-based cybercounseling have also been stated. Anonymity through the lack of visual cues provides psychological security, liberation and increased the self-disclosure of the users (Suler, 2004).

More recent studies also supported the ease of self-revelation in text-based cybercounseling. Dunn (2012) compared the face-to-face interaction to computer-assisted communication and found higher levels of self-revelation. In another study, college students mentioned the convenience, quickness, and anonymity of text-based cybercounseling in contrast to traditional counseling (Leibert, Archer Jr, Munson, & York, 2006). Past qualitative research suggested that online counselors valued the therapeutic progress they were able to achieve with counselees through text-based counseling (Akmehmet-Sekerler, 2008). In a recent study on text-based cybercounseling, the motivation for choosing text-based modality was studied (Gatti, Brivio, & Calciano, 2016). The study revealed that being private and autonomous, having control over the counseling process, and accessibility of text-based counseling are the motivational factors for being preferred by young counselees.

Finally, in a study comparing face-to-face counseling and chat-based counseling in terms of reducing symptoms of procrastination, the results showed that both modalities were effective (Gieselmann & Pietrowsky, 2016). However, those participants who received chat-based counseling showed more self-disclosure than the ones who received traditional counseling.

It was also found that different modalities in cybercounseling have different effectiveness levels. For instance, in the online chat modality, improvements were noted even after one session (Fukkink & Hermanns, 2009a; King, Bambling, Reid, & Thomas, 2006) and continued over one month (Fukkink & Hermanns, 2009b).

2.4 Reasons for cybercounseling

As technology developed, cybercounseling became inevitable mainly because it offers solutions to some of the challenges traditional counseling has. There are several obstacles to access mental health services such as the labeling attached to mental illness, financial problems, energy and time to attain services, and finding the appropriate services. Psychological causes such as worry, fear of being labeled or avoiding face-to-face communication also may play a role in the preference for cybercounseling (Lange, van de Ven, & Schrieken, 2003; Murphy & Mitchell, 1998).

Due to geographical distribution, mobility, or simply because of absence of time, mental health services might not be available for the counselees' accessibility (Oravec, 2000). For instance, Turkey's population is distributed as geographically heterogeneous. This leads to the distribution of the mental health service supplies to be heterogeneous as well. 18.4% of the population of Turkey lives in İstanbul (Turkish Statistical Institution, 2018b). Thus, mental health services are mainly located in Istanbul.

Cybercounseling is seen as an answer to many problems because of the anonymity, lower costs, and availability through computer-mediated technologies (Tirel, Rozgonjuk, Purre, & Elhai, 2019). For people who experience embarrassment for sharing their issues or for people who have anxiety articulating problems in-

person, digital media might ease communication in a greater level than do traditional counseling settings. Videoconferencing combined with text-chat may facilitate client engagement to counseling and might increase rapport (Stubbings, Rees, & Roberts, 2015). Moreover, cybercounseling offers accessibility. Especially, in school settings, school counselors might benefit from cybercounseling in which students' accessibility to mental health services can be increased. Schools counselors are known by the students and this enables them not to rely on their parents to arrange private counseling services (Glasgeen & Campbell, 2009).

It is asserted that cybercounseling can deliver effective fundamental parts of face-to-face counseling (Amichai-Hamburger, Klomek, Friedman, Zuckerman, & Shani-Sherman, 2014). Wider knowledge and the tools technology supplies to counselors make cybercounseling more effective every day. Focusing on the counselee-counselor relationship at the core of the practice leads to positive outcomes that help make cybercounseling a significant process (Amichai-Hamburger et al., 2014).

2.5 Rapport in cybercounseling

Rapport, as mentioned under different names such as the therapeutic relationship, working alliance, or therapeutic alliance, captured researchers' interest since the beginning of the profession. Establishing rapport is very important in the counseling practice because, many research studies suggest that successful counseling outcome is dependent on creating the counselor-counselee relationship (Ahn & Wampold, 2001; Lambert & Ogles, 2004).

Different names and different conceptualizations exist but Bordin (1979) offered three dimensions through which literature was influenced greatly. The first dimension is the consensus of the therapist and client on the aims of therapy. The second one is the therapist's and client's agreement on the process for reaching these aims. The final dimension is the emotional connection of the therapist and client which consists of respect, trust, confidence and attachment.

As a matter of fact, different paradigms conceptualized rapport from different angles. The first paradigm that pays attention to the therapist-client relationship which contributes to healing was psychoanalysis (Horvath, 2000). Freud's central focus about the therapist-client relationship was countertransference and its interpretation. He supported the therapist's objectivity in the relationship. Hence, he was inattentive to the genuine healing connection between the therapist and the client (Safran & Muran, 2006). On the other hand, Carl Rogers (1951), the founder of client-centered therapy, suggested that the counselor should furnish a relationship which consists of empathy, genuineness, and unconditional positive regard in an effort to support the client's potential.

In contrast, first behaviorists saw rapport as an end product rather than the root of effective treatment (Banerjee & Basu, 2016). However, later behaviorists and cognitive therapists agreed to the role of the therapeutic relationship as a means of the treatment plan (Horvath, 2000).

By defining rapport in different paradigms, rapport in cybercounseling becomes crucial in terms of the effectiveness of cybercounseling. People who categorize themselves as lonely and those who have social anxiety and difficulty in face-to-face relationships, might more easily build rapport in cybercounseling

(McKenna & Bargh, 2000). McKenna and Bargh state that these isolated people who have anxiety problems feel safer and have a better sense of control in cybercounseling settings.

In a narrative review of rapport in cybercounseling, Berger (2017) found noteworthy results. Regardless of the modalities of cybercounseling practices, diagnostic groups of counselees and the volume of contact between the counselor and the counselee, counselees experienced higher therapeutic alliance online than they experienced in traditional counseling. Relationship is very important between the counselor and the counselee and this recent review provides promising results for rapport in cybercounseling.

In relation to the current study, rapport in cybercounseling through videoconferencing was reviewed in Simpson and Reid's (2014b) research. 23 papers were reviewed and the results show that both counselees and cybercounselors rated high levels of therapeutic alliance. Counselors' ratings got higher as the sessions progressed. There was evidence of counselors' strategies for overcoming challenges in videoconferencing which led to increased expression of empathy and warmth.

2.6 Cybercounseling experiences

In one of the earliest cybercounseling studies, Cohen and Kerr (1998) found no difference in attitudes toward cybercounseling of the counselees', perception of counselor's proficiency, appeal, and reliability compared to those in face-to-face counseling. In fact, clients or potential clients welcome cybercounseling more than professionals do (Mallen, Vogel, Rochlen, & Day, 2005a). In a recent study in

Turkey, 63% of the counselors agreed that cybercounseling might be done in contrast to 19% of the 542 participants who disagreed (Bastemur & Bastemur, 2015).

Disclosure and writing behaviors are seen as opportunities of cybercounseling in terms of online behaviors. Hanley (2009) addressed that counselees enjoyed control on whether or not to disclose that they are crying. This caused them comfort and ease in the counseling process.

In a study conducted on online text-based synchronous counseling with 24 counselees, it is reported that when clients see their thoughts and emotions in writing, they had a chance of further self-reflection (Beattie, Shaw, Kaur, & Kessler, 2009). This might result in a more calibrated and aware transfer of thoughts and emotions.

Cybercounseling, as this research aims to understand in depth, is experienced by the counselee and the counselor from different perspectives. Empirical analyses of the experiences of counselors and counselees in cybercounseling will be reviewed in the following two sections.

2.6.1 Counselee experiences with cybercounseling

In regard to satisfaction from the counseling process, Zainudin and Yusop (2018) carried out an experimental study and found out that the counselee experience for an adolescent group was more satisfactory in cybercounseling than it was in face-to-face counseling. The experiment was conducted with 60 counselees whose ages varied between 13 and 18. The age and gender distribution of the control and experimental groups was balanced. They divided the group into two; 30 participants received cybercounseling and the rest was offered face-to-face counseling. Client's

Satisfaction Inventory Short-Form (CSI-SF) was administered as a pretest and posttest measure. CSI-SF has four levels: Low, moderate, high, and very high. In the cybercounseling group, none of the participants rated low or moderate levels of satisfaction; whereas in face-to-face counseling, 3% of the participants reported low and 13% of them reported moderate satisfaction. While 90% of the counselees receiving cybercounseling stated very high satisfaction, 47% of the counselees receiving face-to-face counseling stated very high satisfaction. Lastly, 37% of the counselees who were intervened through face-to-face counseling reported high satisfaction; whereas 10% of the clients who were treated by cybercounseling scored high satisfaction.

In a qualitative research designed to understand a new way of communicating in counseling, avatar-based intervention was studied (Rijn, Cooper, & Chryssafidou, 2017). A new technological tool named the “ProReal” software which is designed to support a metaphoric and reflective counseling intervention was used. In the intervention, the program generates avatars which represent the counselor and the counselees. From the counselee point of view, those who have tendency for technology usage found the experience more helpful than the rest did. Especially male counselees stated that they benefited from the experience. Although participants stated that the program is helpful in telling their inner feelings, communicating a specific problem was difficult because the program was also viewed as a barrier (Rijn et al., 2017).

2.6.2 Counselor experiences with cybercounseling

In a qualitative study aiming at exploring cybercounselors' experiences and the cybercounseling process, the following major themes were surfaced: finance, convenience, trust, and assessment. Cybercounselors in the study mentioned online work as an enlargement of their face-to-face counseling practice (Akmehmet-Sekerler, 2008).

A recent research conducted in a qualitative fashion about cybercounselors' experiences showed that cybercounselors' perceptions fall into three categories: presenting problems of the counsees, characteristics of the counsees and how they formed contact, and anonymity (Dowling & Rickwood, 2014). Researchers conducted focus groups with 19 experienced cybercounselors who work with young clients. In the first category, cybercounselors mentioned that the most common presenting problems were depression, anxiety, self-harm, and suicidal ideation. For the second category which is characteristics of the counsees and how they contacted the counselor, cybercounselors stated that there are two types of clients: ones who need urgent care for a limited amount of time and ones who benefit from the service for a long-term. In the latter scenario, cybercounseling replaces face-to-face counseling. Finally, anonymity provides counsees with control, so that they might act disinhibited. As cybercounselors experienced in this research, counsees share whatever they want to share, login or logout anytime they want, and they even might not tell their real name to the counselor.

In another research about the cybercounselors' experience, two semi-structured focus groups were conducted with 26 cybercounselors. Counselors, who work in Kids Help Line in Australia, noticed that counsees feel emotionally safe in

the cybercounseling relationship as opposed to the traditional distant counselor and counselee relationship (Bambling, King, Reid, & Wegner, 2008). They also experienced that the main disadvantages are the communication problems arising from lack of verbal cues and difficulty in evaluating the young counselees' problems.

2.7 Ethics in cybercounseling

In the Turkish Psychological Association Ethics Code (2004), briefing the counselee about the online medium is deemed to be an important element in cybercounseling. Besides, it states that all ethical code is in effect for cybercounseling as well. It is no different for the American Counseling Association Ethical Code (2014). The American Counseling Association (ACA) also added a part named "distance counseling, technology and social media" into their ethical code in 2014. Throughout the text, "competence" and "caution" are emphasized.

Aside from basic ethical codes, there might be further ethical concerns such as anonymity, delay, interruptions in accessibility, problems assessing non-verbal cues, technological insufficiencies, online privacy issues and communicational challenges (Harris & Birnbaum, 2015). Harris and Birnbaum (2015) suggest that while online counseling has an advantage of anonymity for clients, certain ethical and legal responsibilities of counselors such as reporting sexual abuse, suicide or intimate partner violence remain as challenges. Secondly, delays occurred in synchronous and asynchronous counseling have an impact on the therapeutical effectiveness. Another drawback is that online counseling might miss the immediate needs or crises of counselees. Lastly, absence of non-verbal cues also raises

questions about assessment since it can lead to communicational misunderstandings (Harris & Birnbaum, 2015).

Richardson, Reid, and Dziurawiec (2015) claim that traditional counseling approaches which are not adapted to cybercounseling are ethically irresponsible. They state that techniques do not function in cybercounseling the same way as in traditional counseling. They assert that cybercounselors need transformed strategies in the cybercounseling practice.

Gamble, Boyle, and Morris (2015) discussed ethical considerations of confidentiality in developing technology and cybercounseling practice. Firstly, they recommend that the counselor and the counselee talk about the appropriate location due to the possible presence of others that might jeopardize confidentiality. Secondly, counselors need to be cautious of e-mail usage with their counsees. Since free e-mail providers might utilize users' data for advertorial purposes, this might lead to revealing the identity of the counselee. Encrypted e-mail addresses should be used as a precaution. Finally, they recommend that if the cybercounselors takes electronic notes, they need to be aware of the risks storing data on cloud systems. Since hacking the cloud server might be possible, physical storage of the counselee data needs to be employed.

Boundaries are another ethical challenge in cybercounseling (Lustgarten & Elhai, 2018). People have access to many communication media such as social networks, texts and e-mails. At any time of the day, counsees can communicate with the counselor via these media. Counselors do not have control over when exactly clients disclose sensitive information. Thus, both counselors and counsees need to be careful about the boundaries and the counselors have a responsibility to

educate counsees about the issue. Secondly, in contrast to normal business hours, these media might lead counsees to cross boundaries any time of the day by texting, sending messages, or even make calls. They might expect immediate response from the counselor in return. Again in regard to boundaries, counsees might want to add the counselor as a friend in social media accounts such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter (Barnett, 2018). These are important concerns for the ethical professional relationship to be possible. Social media connection might yield a social relationship and it conflicts the nature of the counselor and the counsee relationship.

As discussed above, ethical competence in cybercounseling is very important in terms of delivering effective services. Specific training is needed to answer this and other concerns. In the following section, cybercounseling education and training will be covered.

2.8 Cybercounseling education and training

Cybercounseling education or training is not as widespread as cybercounseling is. In one study, 93 of the cybercounselors who have at least a Master's degree noted that 94% of them have not had any training in cybercounseling while they received their professional training (Finn & Barak, 2010). 92% of them learned cybercounseling from their studies about the subject, 80% learned from consultation informally, 20% of them from workshops, and only 6% had received training programs.

The guidelines for how to implement cybercounseling are formed; however, the training options are few (McCord, Saenz, Armstrong, & Elliott, 2015). One of the pioneers in the field named Telehealth Counseling Clinic, located in Texas, USA,

developed a training model for cybercounselors. The clinic trains counselors to help low-income patients. Among the competencies they provide are fundamental counseling competencies, cultural competencies, theoretical and practical competencies, and cybercounseling competencies (McCord, et al., 2015).

Nowadays cybercounselors are contacted for numerous reasons, such as cyberbullying, cheating online, self-harm online, posing fake romantic relationships, online pedophilic behaviors, posing as seriously ill, or posing as a relative of a seriously ill person (Anthony, 2015). Anthony (2015) states that the core curriculum of counselors should be updated through awareness about these digital age problems. Since being an active participant in the digital environment is important for empathizing with people experiencing problems associated with the digital culture, she encourages online courses for cybercounselors.

Counseling education is based on graduate study, supervision of the practice and working with clients in an internship (Mallen, Vogel, & Rochlen, 2005b). Mallen et al. (2005b) suggest that a similar kind of education is needed for cybercounseling, but special topics should be discussed, too. In addition, assessment, creating rapport without non-verbal cues, and forming a nurturing environment should be in the training and supervision of cybercounseling. Counselors use minimal communicational facilitators (such as uh, huh, yes, etc.) in text-based cybercounseling, so summarizing, empathizing, and understanding of clients online should be part of the education of cybercounselors.

For the supervision part of the cybercounseling education, the following suggestions were offered:

Cybercounselors in training need to acquire experience in different modalities such as asynchronous e-mail, synchronous chat, and videoconferencing; face-

to-face counseling standards and the legal and ethical standards online should be highlighted by supervisors; the cybercounselor's online experience should be enlightened through typical supervision sessions; supervisees should document each session to be reviewed by their supervisors; supervisors should focus on assessment and lead their trainees; trainees should be told to do continuous assessment of the clients because of the lacking non-verbal cues (Mallen et al., 2005b, p. 791).

2.8.1 Competency in cybercounseling

In counseling, certain skills are crucial to be able to be a competent counselor:

In training of counsellors' core attending skills, exploration skills and action skills are fundamental to the development of competency. Attending skills include, listening, restating, paraphrasing, clarification, reflecting feelings empathizing and summarizing. The exploration skills are probing, questioning, immediacy, self-disclosure, confrontation, clarifying, linking, and interpretation. Action skills often used are reinforcement, blocking, modelling, suggesting, giving feedback, goal setting, directiveness, suggesting and advising. (Adeyemo & Agokei, 2012, p.155)

Adeyemo & Agokei (2012) propose some crucial skills in online counseling

to be able to provide good service in addition to these crucial skills. They suggest that an important challenge for practicing counseling in the transformed digital culture would be the ability to understand and communicate emotions. In some cybercounseling modalities verbal cues are not sufficient or visible, thus cybercounselors need to develop ways to evaluate the responses of clients and should transfer their emotional responses such as being warm and empathetic to online settings. Cybercounselors should also put their body language in text (if text-based modality is used. Namely they need to be experienced in computer-mediated communication skills; they need to employ techniques in which they can understand the client's emotions, views, and perceptions and also reflect back to the client. Finally, they suggest that the cybercounselors need to check with the counselees whether the process of counseling is desirable or not (Adeyemo & Agokei, 2012).

Trepal, Haberstroh, Duffey, and Evans (2007) suggested that emoticons which are visual symbols like “sad”, “happy”, or “anxious” faces might be a way of expressing emotions. Thus, learning this communication skill along with abbreviations like “LOL (laugh out loud)”, might be a means to exchanging emotions in the absence of visual cues (Trepal et al., 2007). Such “rules” of the digital culture might need to be attained by the cybercounselors in order to communicate effectively with counselees. Consequently, communicational skills in face-to-face counseling and those in online counseling might be more differentiated in the future.

Shaw and Shaw (2006) state that having a professional cybercounseling certificate is not sufficient; cybercounselors also need skills in using technology. American Counseling Association’s branch of Association for Counselor Education and Supervision Executive Counsel (2007) provided a technical competencies manual for counseling education. According to this manual, 12 technological competencies are advised to be offered in counseling education. These skills include being able to use programs such as Microsoft Word/ Excel/ PowerPoint, Macromedia Dreamweaver, SPSS, and audiovisual equipment such as a projection machine. Furthermore, they also mention that counselors should be able to assist clients in using computerized and/or internet-based testing, diagnostic, and career decision-making programs, be able to protect privacy of the clients while using e-mail as a communicational tool, and teach clients how to use supportive sources of internet like searching information for careers, employment websites, helping their education, scholarships or financial aids, treatment-related information and social opportunities, participate in professional networks of counselors in an effort to continue competent and ethical practice, to be able to be up-to-date in counseling literature by using research databases, to be able to use the Internet as a supervision and professional

development source, to be able to execute essential computer tasks in an effort to overcome technical insufficiencies during the service and protecting sensitive data of clients, to be able to be up-to-date about legal, ethical, and competency matters related to cybercounseling.

Shaw and Shaw (2006) found their results alarming in terms of ethical standards regarding the license, affiliation, and intent of online counselors. This research was carried out a decade ago. In the Turkish Parliament, a law draft on Mental Health Law was proposed on July 27th of last year (Akçay, 2018), but it has not been concluded to this time. In the absence of mental health laws, a similar alarming condition might appear to be the case for the Turkish mental health community as the cybercounseling practice in Turkey is explored.

2.9 Practice and training of cybercounselors in Turkey

When a search is done with the key words “online danışmanlık” which is the Turkish translation for cybercounseling, around 790,000 results come up at the present day (June, 2019). It appears that many private counseling centers do offer cybercounseling within their repertoire of services in Turkey.

In contrast to how widespread cybercounseling is the research in the universities’ counseling or psychology departments are limited. According to the Turkish Council of Higher Education website prepared for all of the undergraduate programs, only Psychology and Psychological Counseling programs exist (Yüksek Öğretim Kurumu [YÖK], 2019). When graduate programs are searched,

cybercounseling or distance counseling is not an option for graduate study either. To the author's knowledge, no special training certificates have been found about how to offer online counseling.

2.10 Pros and cons of cybercounseling revisited

New advances bring new criticism or oppositions. Cybercounseling, when it was first introduced, had many adversaries. For now, cybercounseling is acknowledged by many practitioners and associations across the world. For instance, the Turkish Psychological Association (TPA, 2004) added a section for cybercounseling to its ethical codebook in 2004. Cybercounseling is referred to as "non-traditional therapy settings". The "non-traditional therapy setting" is described as taking place using phone, e-mail, online chat services, or videoconferences from the beginning of the therapy relationship. TPA put an explanation there and stated that cybercounseling and these methods are still a controversial topic. Thus, discussing technologically aided counseling would be important in terms of pros and cons.

To begin with, it has been admitted since long ago that the use of technology in counseling is demanded by counselees rather than the practitioners and the therapeutic relationship can be established meaningfully (Anthony, 2001). The effectiveness of cybercounseling is examined by a comprehensive review and meta-analysis by Barak et al. (2008) and the mean weighted effect size was found to be 0.53 (medium effect). As mentioned in the previous sections, this and similar research studies suggest that the effectiveness of cybercounseling is similar to the effectiveness of traditional therapy.

In addition, different kinds of communication styles have come into existence with the advancements in technology. People prefer online shopping rather than going to a mall, videoconferences in job settings or schools rather than being physically there, and using social media instruments rather than face-to-face interactions in real-time (Barnett, 2018). Limiting counseling services to face-to-face mental health clinics might cause decrease in the efficiency of counseling practices. Goss and Anthony (2009) claim that this has been doing clients a disservice. According to them, asking clients to come to clinics, to sit with a stranger and then discuss the most private matters is not an efficient way to help them since the modern world provides different communicational opportunities and supplying only face-to-face modality in counseling might cause losing touch with the way people communicate in daily life (Goss & Anthony, 2009).

On the other hand, major oppositions stemmed from the fundamentals of therapeutic understanding (Bambling, King, Reid, & Wegner, 2008). Firstly, the body language of the counselor and the non-verbal communication cues of clients became a concern. When a counselor does not see the client's face, s/he might miss non-verbal communication cues. In addition, they claim that the lack of the counselor's body language might create resistance. The oppositional side sees these elements as the base for creating the therapeutic relationship. Secondly, privacy and confidentiality might be affected in cybercounseling settings (Wrape & McGinn, 2019). As examples of ethical issues, the clients might be acting as a different person or the counselor could be unable to intervene in an emergent situation. Other concerns for cybercounseling are the technical problems that stem from technological tools and the incompatibility of especially the written modality for certain clients (Fang et al., 2018). Lastly, training of cybercounselors and the

dependency on technological instruments have been discussed for the cons of cybercounseling (Harris & Birnbaum, 2015).

As time passed, ethical codes were established, technological tools became more advanced, and counselors became more aware of the online counseling processes (Nagarajan & Yuvaraj, 2019). In a recent study conducted to understand attitudes toward cybercounseling, 62.6% of the psychologists who participated in the study were favorable towards cybercounseling (Cipolletta & Mocellin, 2018). Transforming counseling services into cybercounseling has been inevitable with the current developments. The current research will help inform the readers about the perspective of cybercounselors in Turkey as to how they experience cybercounseling and how they include cybercounseling in their practice.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the methodology of the study in detail. First, the design of the study and the rationale for implementing the qualitative approach will be explained. Then, selection of the participants, sample characteristics, the development of the interview protocol, and the data collection procedures will be described. Finally, the data analysis method will be outlined.

3.1 Research design

The aim of this study is to examine cybercounselors' experiences in terms of how they describe the opportunities, challenges, and strategies to overcome challenges to practice cybercounseling. Qualitative method of inquiry is employed to reach this aim. As Creswell (2014) suggests, qualitative research fits best in an effort to study a research problem which does not have distinct variables, studies on the phenomenon might be limited in the literature, or there might be a need to explore participants' experiences.

Hence, the qualitative approach suits the purposes of the current study since no similar studies have been published on this topic in Turkey. Qualitative research studies a subject in depth and tries to see the complete picture without counting data (Watkins, 2012). In addition, understanding of experiences, feelings, and emotions are well-heard by the qualitative studies in which other forms of research are not adequate (Manning & Kunkel, 2014). In this research, neither the cybercounselors as individuals, nor their counseling skills and knowledge of the area were under

analysis. The main focus of the analyses was what they described as their experiences through the practice of cybercounseling. Similar to some other studies on cybercounseling as outlined in the literature review (Şimşek Alphan 2018; Beattie et al., 2009), the current study acknowledges the usefulness of implementing interviewing in an effort to acquire a detailed description of the shared and unique experiences about cybercounseling.

3.2 Identity of the researcher

Paying attention to the characteristics of the researcher is crucial in qualitative research since the data collection and the interpretation of the data may interact with the identity of the researcher (Kaderli, 2017). The researcher's interpretations are not merely a result of his/her personal perceptions or strategies, but rather they are a product of the researcher's sociocultural background and identity. As a school counselor and cybercounselor himself, the researcher was highly interested in research on cybercounseling. The researcher has an undergraduate degree in guidance and psychological counseling and is a Master's student in the psychological counseling and guidance graduate program. Moreover, he completed the two-year-long certificate course on Family and Couple Counseling from the Bilgi University Clinical Psychology Department and received the state approved certificate for private practice. The researcher offers cybercounseling sessions both to clients abroad and places within the country where there is a lack of counselors.

Thus, the researcher has a background similar to the cybercounselors he interviewed. He felt the dire need to study cybercounseling in his thesis in order to contribute to the cybercounseling literature in Turkey. After completing this study,

the researcher feels that the cybercounselors he interviewed have outlined a similar rationale as he had: it is a professional responsibility to help people who do not have access to counseling services nearby.

3.3 Selection of the participants

In most qualitative research, participants are not selected randomly, but are selected through purposive sampling (Creswell, 2014). In the current research, participants were selected from among those counselors who practice cybercounseling through videoconferencing.

Counselors who have had at least three cybercounseling cases and who have at least a Master's degree in psychological counseling or clinical psychology were selected as participants. These criteria were decided together with the thesis research committee to ensure that the participants were experienced and knowledgeable on the topic of the study and could express rich information based on their expertise. In addition, their age groups of practice were adolescents and adults.

Since they all worked in counseling centers and they called their online practice "counseling", they will be referred to as "cybercounselors". The snowball technique was employed to reach more participants. Snowball sampling in qualitative research is a kind of purposeful sampling in that the researcher requests participants to suggest other people to become new participants (Creswell, 2014). One of the researcher's colleagues became a gatekeeper by referring two participants. The first participant became the second gatekeeper and suggested two participants next. Those participants referred the last two participants. The interviews conducted were semi-

structured. In such interviews, the participant is not led by the inquirer's structured questions, but is facilitated in a liberal fashion.

After the criteria for selecting participants were determined, they were explained to the researcher's colleagues and professional network to reach eligible participants to be recruited. Ethical approval and contents of the study were presented to the participants by e-mail (See Appendix A). Cybercounselors interested in the study were then contacted by phone in order to arrange the timing and the place of the interviews. Cybercounselors who met the predetermined criteria participated in the study.

In qualitative research, the number of participants depends on when the saturation level of the data is reached. Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006) propose that data saturation is reached when further coding is no more achievable. In the current research, the data collection process ended after seven interviews, since the saturation level was reached as the same patterns of codes kept on repeating throughout.

3.4 The participants

The participants were seven counselors who practice cybercounseling through videoconferencing. All of them work in private psychological counseling centers in Istanbul practicing traditional face-to-face counseling. All participants have at least a graduate degree either on psychological guidance and counseling or clinical psychology. Besides, they attended counseling trainings in various paradigms and professional areas. They are all female cybercounselors. As a profession, it is not rare to see the majority of counselors to be females in Turkey. For instance, among the 62

Bachelor's degree graduates in 2019, 51 of them were females and only 11 of them were males (Boğaziçi University graduation booklet, 2019). Each counselor participant in the study is assigned a participant number in an effort to conceal their identity. Numbers that the participants were assigned were used in the excerpts in place of their names. Participants' demographic and professional characteristics are demonstrated in Appendix B (See Appendix B).

Participant 1 runs her practice in her private psychological counseling center. She graduated from the psychology undergraduate program and has a clinical psychology Master's degree. Besides, her trainings include, but are not limited to integrative psychotherapy, eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR), sexual therapy, family and marriage counseling. In her early professional life, she moved to Germany. After moving back to Turkey from abroad, she started to see her counsees online. Practicing cybercounseling was not her choice in the beginning; however, both her counsees living in Germany and the ones who are referred to her demanded her to start providing cybercounseling. She has an experience of five years in cybercounseling. She works with adolescents, couples, and adults.

Participant 2 has her own psychological counseling center. She graduated from the psychology undergraduate program and has a clinical psychology Master's degree. Her theoretical orientation is psychodynamic therapy. She started cybercounseling after she moved abroad. She offered cybercounseling to her ongoing counsees at that time. Then, she moved back to Istanbul and she offers cybercounseling to Turkish counsees living abroad now. She has an experience of four years in cybercounseling. She works with adolescents, couples and adults.

Participant 3 has her own psychological counseling center. She has an undergraduate degree in psychology and a clinical psychology Master's degree. She completed her education in the USA. Her theoretical orientation is postmodern therapy. After receiving a referral from an eating disorder mail group, she started cybercounseling. She has been doing cybercounseling since 2007. She specifically works on eating disorders with adolescents, couples, and adults.

Participant 4 works in a private psychological counseling center. She graduated from the guidance and psychological counseling undergraduate program and has the guidance and psychological counseling Master's degree. Her theoretical orientation is psychodynamic therapy. She has been practicing cybercounseling for five years. She works with adolescents, couples, and adults.

Participant 5 works in a private psychological counseling center. She graduated from the psychology undergraduate program and has a clinical psychology Master's degree. She has had experience in school counseling, in a fertility clinic, and in a university. She has been practicing cybercounseling since three years. She works with adults.

Participant 6 works in a private psychological counseling center. She graduated from the psychology undergraduate program and has Master's degree in applied psychology. She has training in Gestalt therapy. She has an experience of 15 years in cybercounseling. She works with adolescents, couples, and adults.

Participant 7 works in a private psychological counseling center. She graduated from the psychology program and she took her mental health counseling Master's degree abroad. She is pursuing a doctorate in a psychological counseling

program. Besides that, she gives lectures to undergraduate students in various universities. She has an experience of one year in cybercounseling. She works with adolescents and adults.

3.5 Data collection

Interviews are used in many qualitative studies as the main data collection technique (Creswell, 2014). The aim of the qualitative research interview is to contribute to the conceptual and theoretical knowledge through the interviewees' life experiences (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). The semi-structured interview allows the researcher to acquire information by acting freely since extra questions can be used to help the participant elaborate and give more detail in case the answers are not understood well (Kvale, 1996).

3.5.1 Development of the interview protocol

The original research questions and the purpose of the study helped shape the interview questions. In addition, the researcher was offered suggestions by the thesis committee members during the proposal stage and he also utilized previous literature to guide the process.

The semi-structured interview includes two main parts. In the first part, questions focus on getting familiar with the professionals and their practice. Six questions were addressed to explore the educational background of the cybercounselors, their professional experiences, their counseling perspectives, the tools they use in cybercounseling, and the settings they implement their services.

In the second part, the story of how they started to do cybercounseling, the type of counselees who prefer cybercounseling, reasons counselors prefer to offer cybercounseling, differences with the face-to-face counseling modality, advantages of cybercounseling and disadvantages of cybercounseling were inquired with the help of six open-ended questions. These questions had probes as non-verbal communication and about how they overcome difficulties in cybercounseling. English and Turkish versions of the interview protocol are presented in the Appendix (See Appendix C and Appendix D).

3.5.2 Implementation of the interview

After getting the ethical approval from the Boğaziçi University Ethics Committee for Master and PhD Theses in Social Sciences and Humanities (SOBETİK), (See Appendix A), the interviews were conducted by the researcher. The location of the interviews and the time arrangement were left to the participants according to their convenience. Five of the interviews took place in the participants' offices and one of them was executed in a café. One participant was interviewed through videoconferencing due to her busy schedule. The interviews took 25 to 45 minutes. All interviews but one was voice-recorded. In one of the interviews, the voice recorder was interrupted after a while. The researcher took notes right after the interview and he asked the interviewee to comment on his notes later on.

The Informed Consent Form (See Appendix E for the English and Appendix F for the Turkish version) was explained and given to the participants. All of the participants received the consent form before the interview. Potential risks and benefits of the study and the issues about confidentiality were mentioned both

verbally and in written form. The participants were encouraged to ask any other questions they had. The withdrawal right was mentioned and if they wanted so, the data obtained would be destroyed as told. None of them wanted to withdraw from the study. The participant, who was videoconferenced, left her form to a convenient office after she signed it (She determined where she wanted to leave the copy). Both the researcher and the participants signed the consent form. After an ice breaking conversation, the interviews were conducted. As a cybercounselor himself, the researcher took advantage of having taken interview techniques courses during his undergraduate and graduate studies. He could distance himself from topics he can comment about and let the participants share their opinions without interrupting or influencing them. Following the transcription of the voice recordings, the data was sent to the participants for member-checking. Member-checking is a technique for supporting the credibility of the qualitative data results (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell, & Walter, 2016). It is also known as participant or respondent validation. It was done online through e-mail after all the analyses were completed. The participants received their interviews' transcript and they all responded positively.

3.6 Data analysis

This study implemented thematic analysis which is used widely in psychological studies designed in a qualitative fashion (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis can be identified as a method of analysis which aims to identify, analyze, and report the themes. It is easy to use and applicable to a variety of theories. Braun and Clarke (2006) claim that thematic analysis is a fundamental method for qualitative analysis. They recommend it for beginning researchers since it supplies the basic skills which

lead to other qualitative analysis forms. Thematic analysis is independent from theory and is flexible enough to be used across various approaches. It provides rich, comprehensive, and complex data. However, given this flexibility, as Attride-Stirling (2001) claims, thematic analysis should include a methodical systematization: what the researcher is doing and why, and “how” s/he did her/his analysis in their research. The researcher implemented the thematic analysis as Braun and Clarke (2006) proposed in a six-phase guideline: Getting familiar with the data, creating preliminary codes, search of categories, checking themes, describing and giving a name to themes, and reporting the findings.

In the first stage, data was collected by the researcher through semi-structured interviews via the voice recording of and notes on the meetings. Thus, the researcher had some knowledge of the data and it yielded to an inquisitive orientation and many preliminary ideas. The researcher listened to the data repeatedly, transcribed it into Microsoft Word and read the data several times in an effort to build potential patterns in his mind before coding. In the second stage of the analysis, the thesis advisor assisted with the initial coding process and provided examples of eliciting codes. Then the researcher carried out the line-by-line coding of the whole data on Microsoft Office 365 Excel Program by matching the codes with the related lines of the transcripts. In the third stage, after the codes were attained, they were sorted in an effort to form potential themes. A sketch of mind map initially was drawn to a computer program and the first set of categories was formed. The categories were matched to the potential themes. In the fourth stage, emerged themes were reviewed. The extra ones were combined with the new ones. In the fifth stage of the data analysis, the thesis advisor and the researcher met and drew a mind map related to the reviewed themes. Main themes and categories began to be decided upon. The

researcher went over the themes and defined final versions. Finally, after defining the themes, various excerpts were chosen according to the related data. Vivid examples were selected in order to make findings clear. Purpose of the study, research questions, and the related literature were addressed in reporting and discussion of the findings. In order to increase the credibility of the data, quotations of each participant were included (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

In this chapter, findings of the study are introduced in two main parts: themes that emerged from the study and the summary of the findings in relation to the research questions. Firstly, themes will be presented one by one. Then, the research questions will be discussed in terms of the data.

4.1 Themes emerging from the study

In presenting the findings of qualitative research, presenting only the themes risks the richness of the data, offers little depth, and remains just descriptive (King, 2004).

Thus, after description of the data, researchers construct patterns and interpretations which are often related to the literature in an effort to acquire broader meanings (Braun & Clark, 2006). Short quotes in qualitative reports give a chance to the reader to understand the specific position of the interpretation, whereas longer passages lead to the understanding of the original texts (Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules, 2017).

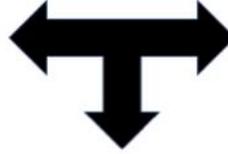
In this section, themes will be reported together with definitions, interpretations, and excerpts. The discussion section will relate the findings to the literature.

The analysis of the data in the current study led to the emergence of 11 major themes. The themes are demonstrated in Figure 1 which is drawn as a visual representation of how research questions constitute themes.

Opportunities of cybercounseling



Challenges of cybercounseling



Strategies to overcome challenges of cybercounseling

Figure 1. Themes and research questions

The data was gathered in Turkish. In order to describe each theme, quotes were selected and translated into English. Original quotes of participants in Turkish are presented in Appendix G (See Appendix G). Each quote is identified by a participant number, appendix number, and line number in parentheses. For example, (Participant 3, Appendix G, 29) denotes that Participant 3's original Turkish statement can be found in the 29th line of Appendix G.

4.1.1 Opportunities of cybercounseling

According to the reports of the cybercounselors, there were five themes that could be categorized under the first research question related to the opportunities of cybercounseling. They were actually what encouraged the professionals to start

doing cybercounseling in the first place. Thus, they can also be defined as the necessities and the motivation combined together as opportunities of cybercounseling.

4.1.1.1 Theme 1: Receiving counseling in mother tongue

According to the participants, receiving counseling in one's native language is a critical need for counselees.

Therapy in one's mother tongue is very important as you know. My experiences tell me that providing this to people living abroad is important. (Participant 4, Appendix G, 45)

As stated in the background of this thesis, there are so many Turkish people emigrating abroad. Five of the participants (Participant 1, Participant 3, Participant 4, Participant 5, and Participant 6) stated that this is a key topic. They also suggested that it is very difficult to refer counselees to a counselor abroad who speaks Turkish. This theme overlaps/interacts with the theme about continuity, yet it also deserves to be mentioned separately since it does not necessarily need to be a continuation of a previous relationship, but might need to start from scratch when abroad.

Participant 1 lived in Germany in the past and provided counseling services to the Turkish community there. After she moved back to Turkey, her counselees wanted to continue counseling with her because they wanted to receive counseling in their mother tongue.

Actually, as I mentioned, after I moved back to Turkey, since individuals who are referred from Germany have a language problem and can't go to a German therapist, I conducted accelerated sessions. However, their sessions needed to continue. There was no counselor to refer who speaks Turkish there. (Participant 1, Appendix G, 16)

Participant 5 also thinks of it is a matter of having the counseling or not in terms of receiving counseling in mother tongue.

If s/he lives in Sweden, if there is no therapist speaking Turkish, and s/he needs counseling, cybercounseling is a good option. (Participant 5, Appendix G, 17)

Participant 6 states that especially young people who just left the country and are trying to adapt to a new country seek counseling in the language that they feel comfortable in.

Cybercounseling is convenient especially for those who just left Turkey, who tries to adapt there. I observe this especially with ages between 20 and 25 and who are referred by others. They say “Mrs. 6, our counseling will go on, I am so relieved because of it”. I hear this in young people. They feel it as a support. I know this very surely from my experiences that people who live abroad want to have counseling in their mother tongue. Receiving counseling through the mother tongue, finding a Turkish therapist who just moved to another country is challenging. (Participant 6, Appendix G, 18)

As the above excerpt points out, individuals might need extra support during a transition in their lives, such as a transition of countries. Thus, receiving counseling in own’s native language is critical for that adaptation period.

4.1.1.2 Theme 2: Convenience and comfort

The research participants mentioned convenience and comfort in many instances during the interviews. For them, the convenience of practicing cybercounseling is one of the pivotal advantages of their online practice. In fact, it is a bi-product rather than a main objective. On the other hand, they mentioned the comfort and freedom of counselees as well.

Participant 3 mentioned the convenience and comfort of the counselee referring to the choice of his/her setting of cybercounseling. She described her surprise as well as her inevitable acceptance of the setting preference of the counselee.

Counselees have their sessions in their bedrooms, offices, any place in their homes, but I can see they are in their bedrooms. It is a little bizarre when I think about it now. I can see the pillow in the back, sitting in her/his bedroom.

I can feel s/he is comfortable. Very comfortable... and I think it is not place to dictate where s/he has his/her session, I thought about it now. It is a bedroom; it is interesting, isn't it? Therapy from bed... S/he found the most suitable place for the session. S/he is comfortable at that moment; in his/her home comfort or any place's comfort and s/he talks about his/her very important issues regarding his/her life. (Participant 3, Appendix G, 19)

Participant 4 stated the feeling of convenience and comfort related to being free of body language of the counselor and the comfort of the home.

Cybercounseling leaves you an impact and comfort zone. It provides you with more comfort. You may not pay attention to your body language compared to face-to-face counseling. You need to be careful about your face, mimics, yes, but how you sit down or stand up in face-to-face counseling, it makes an effect on the counselees. There are comforting aspects of cybercounseling such as practicing therapy while you are sitting informally, if that works out for you. (Participant 4, Appendix G, 20)

Participant 5 shared an experience of her life that was a dream to her. Her dream came true and she still had her practice.

I went abroad for two months. I travelled to a number of cities. My computer was with me all the time. My session schedule was constant. If we have the session at 4 o'clock according to Istanbul time, we had our session then. I organized my trip accordingly and I took a trip. This was the time I could travel, work, be on a vacation and earn money. Namely, all in one... They say there is no choice without consequence; however there was nothing to face as a consequence for me. I did not give up anything. It was so fun for me. (Participant 5, Appendix G, 21)

Participant 7 stated the logistics of face-to-face counseling and going to the office and compared it with cybercounseling.

In a city like Istanbul it is not an easy issue to go to the counseling office for me. To do that, I need to get ready mentally, physically, to be careful about my clothes, to display proper image, to enter the room rested. It is a big effort for me. These do not exist in cybercounseling. I am in my room, in a quiet place; I can wear anything I like. Only my upper body is shown. It is even possible to wear pajamas. There is a considerable space of freedom cybercounseling offers. (Participant 7, Appendix G, 22)

Cybercounseling offers comfort and convenience for counselor and counselee. Participants experienced the ease of practice for themselves and observed relaxed approaches in their counselees.

4.1.1.3 Theme 3: Mobility and overcoming geographical distance

One of the main opportunities of cybercounseling occurs to be the fact that the counselor and the counselee do not need to be in the same city or even country. The geographical distance barrier and even traffic is eliminated through cybercounseling. All participants except one mentioned the advantage of overcoming geographical distance. In addition, cybercounseling provides mobility to both the counselor and the counselee. Mobility can be defined as not being tied to a single place. Thus, one of the distinguishing factors of cybercounseling is that it gives the opportunity to be mobile.

Even when practicing face-to-face counseling regularly in the same city, the counselee may need to go to some place out of town for a short period of time. The advantages of technology enable the client to be mobile for a number of reasons one of which could be family reasons. The geographical distance is overcome by cybercounseling as Participant 4 described:

I think cybercounseling provides a great advantage to those who cannot afford giving a break in counseling. For some reason, s/he wants to have a break for one or two weeks but s/he needs counseling very much. For example his/her parents need to have surgery in another city. S/he needs to take care of them. (Participant 4, Appendix G, 23)

Mobility of the counselor and the counsees was mentioned by the participants as well. Participant 7 proposes a freedom of receiving counseling service by just carrying a computer.

The counselee can carry his/her computer everywhere. S/he is not required to stay in his/her room. If s/he travels across cities, works busy, needs to travel, and enjoys traveling, s/he can carry me in his/her computer. (Participant 7, Appendix G, 24)

Participant 5 mentioned both counselors' and counsees' mobility and opportunity to having sessions in different locations.

For a period of time, I practiced only cybercounseling. I was travelling at that time. I didn't need to be at home. I told the clients beforehand. You will see me at different places. Actually, they don't care after a while. They also can become online and mobile. For example [the client] might have a meeting in Madrid; connects with me from there. It is possible in both our worlds.
(Participant 5, Appendix G, 25)

Participant 7 mentioned that getting from one place to another in a big city is a burden that prevents the mobility of individuals.

In a city like Istanbul it is not an easy issue to go to the counseling office.
(Participant 7, Appendix G, 22)

The issue of living in a metropolis appeared in many different instances during the interviews. It is a choice that leads to not only lack of mobility, and loss of time, but also discontinuing services. That already was working well for the counselee.

4.1.1.4 Theme 4: Continuous Services

As the face-to-face counseling relationship continues in its regular pace, there might be a risk of interruption due to several reasons. Continuous services might be described as the cybercounseling relationship being a dependable one which facilitates the ongoing counseling process free from interruptions. Since there might be temporary life changes such as moving in or out of the country, cybercounseling serves as a continuous service that replaces face-to-face counseling which has already started. All participants mentioned that they had a chance to *continue* their sessions thanks to cybercounseling. In fact, they mentioned a few risks that lead to discontinue counseling service. Among them are the counselor's or counselee's need for a long vacation or some important thing to do, moving to a place far away within the metropolis, busy schedules, or having a health problem that leads to staying at home for a while.

Participant 4 shared her experience related to a counselee who has emigrated and with whom she is using face-to-face counseling modality. Cybercounseling has become an advantage in this period of time to be able to ensure that uninterrupted counseling practice is provided to the counselee by his/her preferred counselor.

One counselee of mine, whom I used to see in face-to-face, moved abroad. Our sessions were continuing. S/he needed to move, we looked for a formula to continue. At first, s/he went and came back to see me from time to time. When s/he couldn't come back to Turkey and her need continued, s/he did not choose to see another counselor because s/he preferred me. (Participant 4, Appendix G, 26)

In some part of Participant 1's professional life, it was the reverse. She lived in Germany and she had counselees in Turkey.

When I lived abroad, I came here from Germany in the summers and saw counselees. I then continue when I turn back. (Participant 1, Appendix G, 27)

Participant 6 transformed her career counseling practice to psychological counseling for providing continuous service.

I forgot to tell you that I have career counseling expertise as well; I had adolescent high school students to offer career counseling. I had a chance to meet senior high school students. It has started 15 years ago. Afterwards, career counseling practice transformed into psychological counseling for some of them. Many of them went abroad and they needed to go on. We started this practice. (Participant 6, Appendix G, 28)

Participant 2 emigrated from Turkey at some period of her life and cybercounseling has been an opportunity for her to continue her career. Besides, in an effort to offer continuous service for current counselees who moved, she had sessions in the online modality.

I needed to move to a country in Europe. I recommended it to my ongoing counselees who are suitable for cybercounseling. I started my cybercounseling practice with them. I also continue with the counselees who moved. You know there are so many people immigrated to European countries, Canada, and Dubai. (Participant 2, Appendix G, 29)

Participant 3 had a counselee who had so many changes in his/her life. She is thankful to the existence of cybercounseling since she was able to continue her service.

For example I had a counselee we met in the face-to-face counseling modality. S/he moved to another city, than s/he moved to another country, than s/he moved back to İstanbul but to a faraway location. It was complicated. Yes... "I am outside of the country or I am on vacation, we can't have a session" it is not like that. It continues. (Participant 3, Appendix G, 30)

Participant 5 experienced continuation of service that she provided through the face-to-face modality. She started with some of her counsees online and for some period of time she provided face-to-face counseling as its continuation.

They sometimes come here for a meeting or vacation. They ask me if it is possible to have a session face-to-face. I say: sure. We arrange a time. It occurred in small numbers, like 2 out of 20, but it happens. They have a right to have face-to-face counseling. I do not set a rule that says "we started by cybercounseling, we need to pursue this modality." (Participant 5, Appendix G, 31)

Health problems might make face-to-face counseling impossible in some instances.

Participant 5 mentions an experience like this:

One of the counsees started counseling in the face-to-face fashion. We continued our sessions about one month. After a period of time, s/he had health issues and was immobilized. We had cybercounseling sessions with him/her. (Participant 3, Appendix G, 32)

Overall, it looks like many life changes cause a risk to the continuing relationship of the counselee and the counselor. According to the counselors, cybercounseling becomes a great opportunity for the counselee who gets used to a counselor and wants to continue receiving uninterrupted services from the same person.

4.1.1.5 Theme 5: Flexibility and saving time

One of the most prominent opportunities of cybercounseling is that it is a time-saving and flexible practice. In terms of time-saving, it has different layers of benefits.

Firstly, it gives an opportunity to continue with the same counselor, thus counsees do not need waste time as they go through the exact same steps from the beginning of the practice as they change places. Secondly, counselors and counsees do not need to go to an office, go through traffic, and prepare for the session. Especially, if counselor and counsee live in the same metropolis, cybercounseling provides time saving. For flexibility, scheduling a session, rescheduling a session, changing the session place is possible in cybercounseling. In addition, living in a metropolis like Istanbul is a challenging experience for counselors and counsees. Traffic, busy schedules, traveling across continents might be difficult. Participants see cybercounseling as an advantage to overcome these challenges.

Participant 2 shares her perspective about counsee experience on continuing with the same counselor; this time not only for close ties, but regarding the investment of time.

It is an issue of preference for my counsees, too. They don't want to go through the same processes with another therapist. They want to continue our process. (Participant 2, Appendix G, 37)

Even the preparation stage of going out of the home costs professionals time and energy. Participant 7 was freed from that burden by practicing cybercounseling.

It is so soothing not to dress up as if I am going out and to spare that time for myself by not caring about public appearance. (Participant 7, Appendix G, 38)

The difficulties about being on time to places and the fact that much time is lost due to that were mentioned by one of the participants.

People in Istanbul always complain about being punctual or tardiness. Issue about losing time, counselees mention their contentment. (Participant 6, Appendix G, 39)

Living in a metropolis brings in time losses, covering distances and losing time.

Participant 1 mentioned a counselee who came from the other side of Istanbul and cybercounseling became an opportunity for this case.

In a city like Istanbul, I have a counselee across the European side. It is very difficult for him/her to come here regularly. S/he got divorced and sold his/her car. S/he doesn't have a car. It is very hard by public transportation. If s/he would continue like this, s/he would drop out after one or two visits or find a nearby counselor from scratch. Cybercounseling is a big advantage in this sense. (Participant 1, Appendix G, 40)

Participant 3 brought up the traffic issue about living in a metropolis. Overcoming the traffic and saving time is mentioned by the participants as a prominent advantage of cybercounseling.

For example, s/he lives across the European side, and was referred to me. S/he asks: "I don't want to go into traffic, let's meet face-to-face and go on in Skype." I have counselees working in long shifts or having busy jobs. Consequently, they need to have sessions late hours. They don't want to spend time. (Participant 3, Appendix G, 41)

Busy lives of professionals' lead them to search for methods that will add flexibility to their schedules and solve problems related to the lack of time.

4.1.2 Challenges of cybercounseling

Besides opportunities, the participants of the study also mentioned the challenges that cybercounseling brings. One of the following themes denotes the reasons that cybercounseling cannot be applied with certain clients and in certain ways. One theme denotes the ways technology limits the interaction in some ways until new technology finds solutions to them. Lastly, participants emphasized the challenges due to limited non-verbal cues.

4.1.2.1 Theme 6: Incompatibility for certain techniques and cases

Because of the nature of cybercounseling, some physical challenges prevent applying certain therapeutic techniques. Some of the techniques denoted as unsuitable for cybercounseling mentioned by the participants are: the empty chair technique, sexual therapy techniques, and the trauma treatment named EMDR. In addition, although cybercounseling provides a wide-range of flexibility, it is expressed by the participants that it is not suitable for certain counsees. Participants outline this reality referencing to their experiences. Incompatibility is either related to age group or specific personality types.

Participant 1 talked about the specific techniques which she fails to execute online. One of them relates to the fact that they are not together in the same room where the counselor interacts with the video together as she follows the counselee. She emphasizes that she has to see the same screen together with the counselee at the same time and she cannot do that online.

We cannot apply some techniques. Let's say for example, empty chair technique. This technique cannot be implemented. Personally, in some technics or in sexual therapy, psycho-education needs to be implemented and some videos need to be watched by the counsees. Video needs to be paused and watched. In sexual therapy, education is very important, we need to pause and explain. There is an alternative like sending the video to the counselee and recommend him/her to watch it and you explain him/her. However, it is not the same thing. I memorized videos that I know in which minute I need to pause and tell. Counselee would watch it and I would tell without looking at the screen at the same time. He will remember and search for the video sequence. It is not possible to see the same content together. If you need to show content, it is hard to implement in psycho-education. (Participant 1, Appendix G, 10)

Participant 3 pointed out the incompatibility of cybercounseling for certain age groups such as adolescents.

While practicing with adolescents, I need to remove the hierarchical relationship as much as possible according to methods I believe. Power relationship is not good for adolescents. It is hard to express my point of view

regarding equality in Skype by using my body language. However, they can experience my friendliness when they come here. I can establish the trust relationship in face-to-face counseling easily by my seating arrangement, my voice, and my glance. (Participant 3, Appendix G, 42)

The screen has become an obstacle for Participant 3 in her work with adolescents.

She has a skill to make adolescents feel at ease, but she feels inhibited in the online environment because she cannot apply that to her tone of voice, glance, or where she sits in the room. On the other hand, Participant 4 reported incompatibility of cybercounseling for specific cases. For instance, those counselees, who could benefit from outside control, are not suitable for cybercounseling according to her. She says that the counselee needs to experience the actual physical presence of the counselor in order to learn boundaries.

Counselees I had till now, I think they are suitable for cybercounseling. They can handle the distance formed by cybercounseling and they can continue the relationship like this. Unsuitable counselees are the ones who need more boundaries. They need to be in the office at a specific time, they need to be in the room, they need to wait in the waiting room and then they need to be welcomed inside. It is beneficial for them to be in the same room with the counselor, to be assessed with their body language, to be interpreted with their body language as to how they sit, how they use the room. Even there were counselees that where they put their bags is meaningful. (Participant 4, Appendix G, 43)

Let alone receiving counseling online, some counselees need to be referred to medical help because they have more severe conditions that might need immediate medical attention and medication. Specific conditions and cases were revealed in terms of unsuitability of cybercounseling by participant 6.

There are certain counselees I don't prefer to see online: the ones who have a serious personality disorder, psychosis, and tendency for suicide. I don't accept in the beginning and refer them to a nearby psychiatrist by saying face-to-face counseling is more appropriate. (Participant 6, Appendix G, 44)

Counselors identified that cybercounseling is not compatible with some specific cases, age groups and techniques.

4.1.2.2 Theme 7: Technical insufficiencies and environmental interruptions

Although there are rapid advances in technology, all participants experienced technical insufficiencies and said that this affects the flow of the counseling sessions from time to time. Technical insufficiencies mentioned by the participants range from connection losses to banned software. All of them cause interruption in the communication. Furthermore, five of the participants (Participant 1, Participant 3, Participant 4, Participant 6, and Participant 7) talked about non-technical environmental interruptions that are triggered by the nature of cybercounseling. Among them; counselee's outdoor session setting preferences, another person's interruptions, and risk of counselor's home interruption were raised as some of the concerns.

Participant 7 mentioned her emotional reactions and how the flow of the session is compromised when a technical problem occurs. She feels resentful and angry during those times and expresses her disappointment through online feedback to service providers.

I feel resentment if the technical problem originated from me. I give feedbacks to Skype. Feedbacks I give have strong content: "You are disgusting! I couldn't hear anything." I check all options related to insufficiencies. I really feel upset. In such instances, if it is because of me, I need some time to cool down. If it is because of counselee, I react in a normal way; I guess I am bitter for myself. There are excuses afterwards. I think it harms the sincerity. We blame ourselves about the source of the problem. We feel distant from core of the subject and inspiration of the moment. I need to make an effort. (Participant 7, Appendix G, 11)

On the other hand, environmental interruptions were voiced by participant 6 through an example she experienced in one of the sessions.

For example, one of my regular counsees from England lives together with her boyfriend. I know that her boyfriend is not OK with counseling; he does not believe in this process. I know he does not enter the room, but she looks back. He distracts her and she has an attention issue. (Participant 6, Appendix G, 12)

It looks like the unwanted interruptions that counselors face during their actual performance of the online practice are two-fold: technical and environmental. Besides, technical problems, someone in the household might deliberately or inadvertently interrupt in the process. Even someone's presence in the next room might cause a slight distraction. Both reasons affect the counseling process and sometimes even lead to unnecessary talk such as apologizing for the disconnection.

4.1.2.3 Theme 8: Limited non-verbal cues

Non-verbal cues are an important part of the assessment of counselees. This theme is related to missing some of the non-verbal cues on the screen and the challenges that occur in assessment because of that. They include body movements, mimics, and gestures. All of the participants raised concerns about assessing non-verbal cues in cybercounseling.

Participant 2 explained the limitation of assessing non-verbal cues of one of her counselees. She compares her online experience with her face-to-face experience.

There is the non-verbal communication issue as well. You can see the counselee above his/her chest. Does the counselee shake her hand or feet? What does his/her body language tell? You can miss these details. With one of my face-to-face counselees, I had noticed a water accumulation after the counselee went out. I asked this, she said it is a health condition related to sweat glands and that was the sweat dripping from her hands. You cannot acquire this information in cybercounseling. (Participant 2, Appendix G, 13)

Participant 7 talked about her efforts to focus more in order to assess more. In addition, she drew attention to the effects of missing the non-verbal behaviors such as fidgeting or involuntary movements of the hands or feet.

But it is different related to non-verbal. For example in adolescent counselees, when I detect their feet's shaking, it enables to talk about here and now in a long period. I cannot look at his/her feet, or if s/he plays with his/her fingernails, I won't be able to see him/her. (Participant 7, Appendix G, 14)

Participant 4 commented on missing out on the observations about body language and the spatial analysis of the counselee to be incomplete. It is important information for her to be able to notice how and where the counselee sits.

There are limitations on body language for both the counselee and counselor. It is meaningful for me where the counselee's settling on the couch and the location of his/her in the coach. It may be interpreted. These are limited in cybercounseling. (Participant 4, Appendix G, 15)

4.1.3 Strategies to overcome challenges of cybercounseling

In the beginning of the current study, there were two research questions related to opportunities and challenges of cybercounseling. During the data analysis stage, a third area of research appeared: strategies to overcome challenges of cybercounseling. Participants mentioned these strategies that need to go under a different topic of research interest that is neither under the category of opportunities nor challenges. As the data collection progressed it appeared that counselors have been experiencing the need to devise ways to work effectively in cybercounseling and handle the difficulties that it brings. They seem to believe that cybercounseling is here to stay since there is a great demand by the counsees. They have come up with strategies that could be defined as the delicacies, the precautions, the adaptations, and the methods that they have devised in order to manage the challenges of cybercounseling.

4.1.3.1 Theme 9: Establishing ethical conduct

In the second part of the interview protocol, the participants were asked to explain their professional opinion about their cybercounseling practice. Establishing ethical

conduct in terms of privacy and competency were manifested in all the interviews and described as a natural responsibility. Cybercounselors care both about being careful to protect the counsees' privacy and also offering the services the counselee needs. The current theme is related to this care.

Regarding privacy, Participant 7's concern about privacy of the counselee was revealed. She establishes it by taking online safety measures and makes sure she includes them on an informed consent statement.

I need to add new titles regularly about privacy in informed consent: "I am storing your data like this, I will open a new account for you, your information will be encrypted, and I won't share this information with the 3rd parties and there are measures I take in the computer: I use a trusted antivirus software and encrypted software." (Participant 7, Appendix G, 1)

Establishing ethical conduct in terms of competency was also mentioned. Participant 4, Participant 5, and Participant 6 mentioned receiving supervision regarding cybercounseling in order to adapt to this need.

I received supervision in an effort not to do wrong and make a mistake and affect the counselee badly. (Participant 6, Appendix G, 2)

Participant 1 mentioned the strategies she uses to ensure privacy of the counselee as she is offering cybercounseling. Her family is respectful to her practice, but she cannot avoid being conscious of the fact that there is somebody at home. Thus, she uses her office for cybercounseling.

My son is 14, when I warn him he doesn't enter the room; however, I am uncomfortable about it. I conduct cybercounseling at the office like the traditional one. I implement it by ensuring no one can hear the counselee. Technology is different; I adjust the volume as a speaking tone. I notify my colleagues that I have a session (Participant 1, Appendix G, 3)

The participants expressed awareness of some ethical risks and took precautions such as making sure they store counselee information in a safe place, ensuring the silence and privacy of the setting, and also letting the counsees know about the precautions.

4.1.3.2 Theme 10: Motivation and commitment of the counselor

Counselor motivation and commitment for cybercounseling was stated by all participants. Since cybercounseling has differences compared to traditional counseling, attitudes towards either of the modalities differ based on the counselor's experiences. Motivation and commitment of the counselor to cybercounseling gave participants opportunity to practice this modality despite the stated challenges.

Participant 3 described her motivation by telling that she wished her counselees in traditional counseling had asked for cybercounseling.

I practice it so often. Indeed, I want to tell my unwilling counselees how good it would be conducted that way. (Participant 3, Appendix G, 4)

Participant 5 mentioned her eagerness about cybercounseling. The equality about getting help motivated her. She feels like it is the right thing to do.

If you live in Ağrı, I do not know how many clinical psychologists exist there. If you live in Mardin, how many qualified psychologist exist? Sure there is. However, how many? Or how many of the psychologists can provide counseling in the mother tongue for Turkish people living abroad? This was the first motivator for me to provide a service that contributes to equality. (Participant 5, Appendix G, 5)

Participant 6 talked about her supportive approach and her motivation and commitment as a response to a need of the counselees.

I am a natural and spontaneous person. Starting to cybercounseling was because of my motivation not a planned action. We were in a process that young counselees would go to abroad. We started a journey they did not want to abandon it. This need made me meet with this experience. (Participant 6, Appendix G, 6)

Participant 7 mentioned the effect of cybercounseling on her psychological wellness.

She said that it makes her feel good, too.

The cybercounseling place is one of the places where I can stay alone by myself and feel well. I take advantage of its therapeutic effect on me. (Participant 7, Appendix G, 7)

4.1.3.3 Theme 11: Developing a new perspective for counseling

Developing a new perspective for counseling surfaced in the current study. Since the relationship with the counselee and the rules in counseling are very important, counselors found professional strategies to overcome challenges in cybercounseling. Therapeutic alliance was brought to attention by all the participants in this study. The importance and challenges in developing a new perspective for counseling is mentioned in the interviews. Some of the participants expressed that after building a relationship in traditional counseling, they started practicing cybercounseling. Four of the participants (Participant 1, Participant 2, Participant 4, and Participant 6) made traditional counseling mandatory before starting cybercounseling. Participant 1 and Participant 2 tried doing only cybercounseling with some clients and the clients dropped out. Participant 3, Participant 5 and Participant 7 do not see a difference in this manner. In addition, as cybercounseling is a different modality, new sets of rules or arrangements are needed to implement counseling effectively. Participants have their own experiences in building a framework in cybercounseling. Since cybercounseling is a non-conventional method, it brought counselors' new place arrangements, preparation for counseling practice, and new interventions for adapting the practice.

Participant 2 mentions the place arrangement to build a new perspective and boundaries for her counsees in cybercounseling.

I have my sessions at my home or my office. Especially, I prefer not showing my private life to counsees. Since I practice in psychodynamic therapy, I shouldn't expose my private world to them. An empty wall is usually shown at my back. (Participant 3, Appendix G, 33)

Participant 3 approached building framework in a flexible way because of her counseling paradigm. She faced challenges and pursued a flexible approach.

I experienced some difficulties and questioned them. One of my counselees lighted up a cigarette. It was weird for me. What can you say? Put that cigarette down? I do not have such rules. I practice counseling in the post-modern paradigm. Or can I have a meal? I just came home and I am hungry, can I have a meal? But the one with the cigarette was interesting. It is illegal to smoke everywhere, he lighted up and smoking like a chimney. I felt uncomfortable. Then I thought about this and said: “wait a minute 3, do not fall into traditional traps. Counselee feels comfortable; he/she is continuing his/her habit. No need to attribute meaning. He/she is continuing his/her human behavior. (Participant 3, Appendix G, 34)

Participant 7 contributed to the theme in two different ways. First one is place arrangement and due to it building the framework as staying anonymous. Second one is building a style as a way of overcoming technical insufficiencies.

I am realizing as I talk to you that I have a floor lamp which have two arms that can be configurable. I arrange it according to me by configuring dimmed light all the time in online counseling. I prefer ambiguity in my face's details rather than detailed and sharp. I am aware of it now since I can prefer. I could prefer to be seen clearly; however I am in the dimmed light. Online counseling provides me anonymity. I think that anonymity is therapeutic. It is like the confession booth in catholic churches. There is a contact and I am there. I am there ambiguously. My hair and look is not fresh as distracting him/her. I am enjoying that anonymity. (Participant 7, Appendix G, 35)

On the other hand, Participant 7 developed humor skills as a strategy to overcome the distance she and her counselee has.

To overcome difficulties, as occurred to me while we are having a chat, I am experiencing that my sense of humor is stronger in cybercounseling. Since there are setbacks in catching things, humor connects and repairing us. That is my humor. I use humor mostly in cybercounseling. I take advantage of my humor in facilitating my practice. (Participant 7, Appendix G, 36)

Participant 3 cared about professionalism and found strategies to overcome the challenge of using home as an office. She was careful about the setting.

I am making up, if I am at the kitchen, pots and sink might be seen. I am looking for seriousness. S/he can understand whether I am at home. How? In a way... I am conducting my sessions in three different locations at home. There are paintings in two of them on my back. There is a cupboard on the other. I care about this. (Participant 3, Appendix G, 8)

Participant 5 mentioned building a therapeutic alliance and counselees to continue to see her in the long-term. She sees no difference between face-to-face and cybercounseling.

I don't feel distance with the counselees. Transference and countertransference are the same in cybercounseling. It happens in cybercounseling as well. I do not know whether you will ask me but I continue my sessions with some of the counselees since 2016. It is like being in a therapy room. (Participant 5, Appendix G, 9)

4.2 Summary of the findings related to the research questions

In this section, research questions and related themes that emerged from the analyses will be summarized. As can be seen in Table 1, each research question was answered by the elicited themes.

Table 1. Research Questions and Related Themes

Research Question	Themes
What are the opportunities of cybercounseling?	Receiving counseling in mother tongue, convenience and comfort, mobility and overcoming geographical distance, continuous services, flexibility and saving time
What are the challenges of cybercounseling?	Incompatibility for certain techniques and cases, technical insufficiencies and environmental interruptions, limited non-verbal cues
What are the strategies to overcome challenges in cybercounseling?	Establishing ethical conduct, developing a new perspective for counseling, motivation and commitment of the counselor

4.2.1 Research question 1: What are the opportunities of cybercounseling?

The participants of the study were cybercounselors. Since they have begun and continue to practice in this modality, most of them believed in the effectiveness and advantages of it.

The theme of receiving counseling in mother tongue was mentioned by five of the participants. Participants shared their experiences from the counselee perspective that counsees need and demand counseling in their own mother tongue. For instance, a participant proposed that a Turkish expert is valuable in the Turkish community in Germany. Technology also provides convenience and comfort according to participants. All participants mentioned many comfort areas ranging from physical comfort to not being bound to a place. Geographical distance was another advantage that was brought up in the interviews. Participants mentioned being connected with counsees through the cybercounseling medium from around the world. Mobility was also stated as an improvement cybercounseling provides into the practice of counseling. Counselors stated that they went on vacations and counsees, for instance, had business trips and some health issues. Counseling is possible in any location because of the mobility advantage of cybercounseling.

Some participants stated that in some period of their or their counsees' lives, they offered both face-to-face and cybercounseling to the same counselee. They mentioned that they started with traditional counseling and they or their counsees needed to move or travel. Thus, they could provide cybercounseling as continuous service. Continuation of services is also mentioned as an important gain from cybercounseling. Busy schedules and health problems might cause cancellation of sessions. However, participants mention that cybercounseling is a great advantage

in sustainability of the sessions in daily life. It is also time-saving, flexible and an advantage for the logistical challenges of living in a metropolis.

4.2.2 Research question 2: What are the challenges of cybercounseling?

All participants mentioned cybercounseling's restriction on incompatibility for certain cases. Some severe personality disorders, boundary problems, counsees' with suicidal tendencies, and psychoses appeared to be unsuitable for cybercounseling. In addition, some techniques are not suitable for cybercounseling as well. Among them EMDR, sexual therapy, and empty chair technique were mentioned.

All participants shared experiences of technical insufficiencies. In addition, environmental interruptions like interruption of others in counselee's session place, outdoor session place preferences also create difficulty for cybercounseling. The final theme that emerged from the reports of participants was limited non-verbal cues. Participants' views on assessing non-verbal cues varied. One participant proposed that they can see only above the chest of the counsees and this leads to missing the interpretation of the arms, hands, and legs of the counselee as a whole.

4.2.3 Research question 3: What are the strategies to overcome challenges of cybercounseling?

Participants mentioned their strategies to overcome challenges of cybercounseling. This research question was answered by the themes establishing ethical conduct,

developing a new perspective for counseling, and motivation and commitment of the counselor.

As counselors practice cybercounseling, they developed some understanding and solutions related to challenges. They needed to protect their counsees' privacy as an ethical concern. They downloaded virus software programs and they kept their notes in a secure place. They needed to develop a new perspective for counseling in this new modality. They mentioned building a new framework which made them create new rules and understanding. Similar to building a framework, therapeutic alliance is also a way to overcome challenges. Some of them required face-to-face counseling first as a gate to cybercounseling. Lastly, motivation and commitment of the counselor for cybercounseling was mentioned as a result of the preferences of counsees living abroad.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study intended to understand cybercounselors' experiences in terms of how they describe the opportunities, challenges and strategies to overcome challenges to practice cybercounseling.

Cybercounseling might be simply defined as the counselor and counselee experiencing counseling in different locations and their counseling interaction occurring via information technology (Cipolletta & Mocellin, 2018). As the technology develops, people's habits in searching and accessing psychological support change. Smart phones changed mental health habits. More than 10,000 smart phone applications concerning mental health are available and the numbers are increasing (Torous & Roberts, 2017). This colossal supply of mental health counseling services by the counselors still needs to be studied in detail from the perspectives of cybercounselors.

In the current study, seven cybercounselors were interviewed in a semi-structured fashion in an effort to obtain their experiences regarding their perspectives of opportunities, challenges and their strategies to overcome these challenges. Thematic analysis was implemented from the verbatim transcripts of interviews. 11 themes emerged and were presented in the findings section. This gave an opportunity to a detailed and in-depth understanding of cybercounselors' experiences.

In this chapter, the findings are discussed in relation to the relevant literature, and conclusions are drawn. Then, limitations of the study and implications for

counselors and counselor educators, and policy makers will be discussed. Lastly, recommendations for future research are demonstrated.

5.1 Discussion of the findings

Cybercounseling is a new area of practice for counselors in contrast to traditional counseling in which they are educated, trained, and supervised. Their area of expertise is face-to-face counseling; however, in cybercounseling they are trying to adapt their skills, education and experience to this new area. Findings support the previous studies in terms of opportunities, challenges and strategies that counselors devise to practice cybercounseling.

They all mention ethics, specifically the “primum non nocere” principal which is do no harm. Since they need extra training, supervision, or arrangements for this new modality, they make an effort to do those. Even one of the participants, who does not have a motivation to practice cybercounseling, exercises it because conditions pushed her. Some of them prefer face-to-face counseling, if it were possible. However, they state that many counselees demand and prefer online counseling.

The cybercounselors developed a new perspective for counseling since they needed new sets of rules in order to build a new framework and they created a therapeutic alliance given all the changes. With all these efforts, they embrace the opportunities of the cybercounseling modality. It opened them a new market of counselees. They talk about convenience and comfort it provides. One of the participants even travelled across Europe and practiced her profession thanks to cybercounseling. Thus, although there are challenges out there, counselors find

strategies to benefit from the opportunities of cybercounseling. The discussion part is divided into three main parts corresponding to the three inquiry areas of the study: opportunities, challenges, and strategies to overcome challenges.

5.1.1 Opportunities of cybercounseling

Opportunities of cybercounseling are the prominent concept found in this study and included the themes: receiving counseling in mother tongue, convenience and comfort, mobility and overcoming geographical distance, continuous services, flexibility and saving time.

Receiving counseling in one's mother tongue was found to be one of the crucial reasons that counselors felt inclined to offer services online. Counseling is mainly practiced through speaking and communicating verbally. Counselees seek someone to listen to them and want to be heard comprehensively. In counseling, counselees express their fears, dreams, conflicts, and traumas. Telling these very important things is difficult by itself. Counselees might not prefer to be further challenged by the language barrier. This finding is in parallel with previous reports that stated overcoming the language barrier to be a very important convenience of cybercounseling (Rochlen, Zack, & Speyer, 2004). According to cybercounselors in this study, while the counselees immigrate to another country and are globalized, they also keep in touch by demanding a Turkish-speaking counselor. It should be noted that it does not just have to do with understanding the language or expressing counselee's himself/herself, it also has to do with the identity based on the understanding of the participant.

As participants define characteristics of their counselees, they draw a picture. In the literature, millennials' interaction with the technology is different from people who are not digital natives (Palfrey & Gasser, 2008). As one of the participants mentioned in a specific expression, they are "being born into it". Participants experienced that their counselees are usually between the ages 20-35, they are flexible, and they are competent at using technology.

Convenience and comfort was mentioned by every participant in the study. These results corroborate the findings of a great deal of the previous work in Fair's (2017) study on counselor's perception on online counseling. Fair's findings suggest the time-saving convenience and counselees with mobility issues as in current research. With a computer, smart phone, or a tablet, cybercounselors carry their practice to every place on earth. One of the participants both travelled and continued her practice. In addition, since videoconferencing shows mainly the upper part of the body, counselors can dress in casual clothes, too. That is valid for make-up as well. With the aid of lighting, they do not need to spend time for preparing in contrast to the amount of time they would have spent before going out in the office. They are comfortable in their homes similar to what previous research had suggested (Akmehmet-Sekerler, 2008).

Another aspect of the convenience is financial convenience. In Turkish Counseling Centers, if the counselor works for a center, s/he needs to pay an agreed percent of the counseling fee per session. Participants mentioned the affordability and flexibility of the fees of cybercounseling. These results reflect those of Venkatesh, James, Thong, and Xu (2012) who also found that financial constraints determine the consumer acceptance and use of the technology.

About mobility, while counselors talk about themselves in this research, they mentioned the vacations they take. It is a great opportunity for them to have a vacation and earn money at the same time. This was expressed as an advantage for counselees as well.

As convenience and comfort and mobility refers, when a counselor and a counselee have a computer, smart phone, or tablet and a running internet connection, they can meet anywhere in the world. Geographical distance is not a barrier anymore. This finding was also reported by Haddouk (2018) that isolated people might not have opportunity to access traditional counseling due to geographical reasons, mobility issues or psychological constraints that makes it hard to go to counseling office.

There are students from Turkey who want to receive their education abroad and there are many citizens who move to another country or city. Cybercounseling has been an advantage for them. They do not need to come to a specific counseling center; they do not need to be in the room. Moreover, in parallel with the present results, Perle and Nierenberg (2013) have proposed that rural areas are in need for mental health counseling services and cybercounseling is an advantage to provide this need. Participants mentioned that counselees access cybercounseling from especially the eastern part of Turkey. One participant had a counselee from Batman, and another had a counselee from Elazığ. The one that called from Batman required guidance related to her wife who was just diagnosed with bipolar disorder. He needed expert opinion to take care of his wife. In addition, It is encouraging to compare expert counseling care access finding in this study with that found by Frueh (2015) who reported that specialty mental health care is far away where people lives.

One of the participant's counselee from Elazığ needed answers relating to their adolescent boy's gender identity. One counselee needed an expert working with the LGBT individuals. One participant works with the LGBT society in Turkey and knows the mental health experts who work with the LGBT population. There was no expert in the eastern part of Turkey, thus cybercounseling became as she says "valuable" for that family.

5.1.2 Challenges of cybercounseling

Challenges of cybercounseling found in this study are incompatibility for certain techniques and cases, technical insufficiencies and environmental interruptions and limited non-verbal cues.

There are similarities between the perspectives of Italian psychologists' online counseling challenges studied by Cipolletta & Mocellin (2018) with the perspectives in the current research. They report top three challenges in cybercounseling: reduction of the non-verbal communication signs, frustration arising from technical problems and possibility of intrusion in the room while user and helper are communicating. In this study, similar findings were obtained. . Missing cues was a source of complaint.

Incompatibility for certain techniques and cases' theme is parallel to Cook, Biyanova, and Coyne's (2009) research. They present open-ended questions to over 1600 North American Psychotherapists and based on the emerged themes, one of the concerns of clinicians was applicability of online counseling techniques to specific client populations. Same findings were found by another study that counselors agreed on incompatibility of cybercounseling on suicidal thoughts, domestic

violence, substance abuse, child abuse, and sexual assaults (Finn & Barak, 2010). This finding is similar to what the previous research revealed. Participants talked about the incompatibility of certain clients such as severe psychological problems, counselees who have suicidal thoughts, and those with substance abuse problems.

5.1.3 Strategies to overcome challenges of cybercounseling

This research revealed the experiences of cybercounselors strategies that they devise for the challenges of cybercounseling are establishing ethical conduct, developing a new perspective for counseling and motivation and commitment of the counselor.

As mentioned in the literature review, Richardson et al. (2015) claim that strategies should be taken into consideration in an effort to adapt traditional counseling approaches to cybercounseling. Otherwise, it might be evaluated as ethical irresponsibility. Techniques in cybercounseling do not function in the same way in cybercounseling than in the traditional counseling. This also accords with the findings of the current study, which showed that participants in this research developed a new perspective in cybercounseling. To be able to build a framework and create a working alliance, they arranged their office or home environments, set up new rules and worked on new skills such as using humor in the counseling relationship.

Strategies to overcome challenges in cybercounseling were also reported by Akmeahmet-Şekerler (2008). In her study, she found that challenges on assessment based on lack of visual cues forced counselors to devise communicational tools. This led innovative assessment methods such as asking direct questions which would normally be observed visually. In the current research, participants tried to adapt

their practice in an ethical way by overcoming challenges technology causes. They all mentioned adapting their session environment to protect their counsees' confidentiality by not allowing to send the sound of the devices to third parties. They ask their husbands to not to come home, their children to not to enter the room and warn others no to intervene the office rooms.

Developing a new perspective for counseling is needed in cybercounseling. Changing perspective in therapeutic alliance is a way of overcoming challenges in cybercounseling. In a recent research one of the ways of building therapeutic alliance is setting therapeutic rules (Cipolletta et al., 2018). Same finding appeared in this research. Participants mentioned about the rules they prepared for cybercounseling and present them before the first session. Cipolletta et al. (2018) proposes this as a way of constructing the counseling relationship.

In addition, Reamer (2018) proposes strategies for building standards of mental health care for cyber technology. After reviewing the ethical codes of mental health associations, he summarizes standards to adapt to online counseling. One of the strategies he derived from ethical code is that mental health professionals should be careful in disclosing their personal information online that clients can access. In this study, a parallel strategy arose as to creating an online persona.

5.2 Conclusion

This research aims at understanding the cybercounselors' perceptions on opportunities, challenges and strategies to overcome challenges in cybercounseling. In an effort to research this, three questions were asked;

- (1) What are the opportunities of cybercounseling?
- (2) What are the challenges of cybercounseling?
- (3) What are the strategies to overcome challenges of cybercounseling?

The present study tried to answer these questions in order to understand cybercounselors perceptions of their practices. In parallel to studies related to perceptions of cybercounselors (Perle & Nierenberg, 2013; Fair, 2017), there are certain opportunities expressed such as time-saving, overcoming geographical distance and convenient practice. Creating a framework and Turkish-speaking counseling as in the theme of receiving counseling in mother tongue are two of the important findings of this study.

In addition to opportunities, the research has also shown that cybercounseling has challenges. The findings of this research provide insights for incompatibility for certain techniques and cases, limited non-verbal cues; technical insufficiencies which affect session flow and environmental interruptions that are perceived by the cybercounselors participated in this study. Some of the findings of this investigation complement those of earlier studies (Simms, Gibson, & O'Donnell, 2011).

This study has raised important questions about the nature of cybercounselors' strategies to overcome challenges in cybercounseling. Parallel findings came to light (Schwartz & Lonborg, 2011) as in this research emerged themes included developing a new perspective for counseling, establishing ethical conduct, and motivation and commitment of the counselor.

Counseling is under the influence of technology for over 50 years (Goss & Anthony, 2009). Recently, technological advances provided great opportunities for

implementing counseling online. There are opportunities and challenges as this research suggests in cybercounseling. In the field, ethical conduct still is a hot topic. In Turkey, ethical and legal implications of mental health services are still not under regulation. Cybercounseling, as this research suggests, provides great opportunities in the field. It is a vital need and is inevitable. This information can be used to develop targeted interventions aimed at providing education, supervision, and trainings for cybercounseling and establishing mental health service law to fill the gap in the field.

5.3 Limitations of the study

This research has some limitations. Since the researcher intended to understand the experiences of expert cybercounselors who had at least three cases, the research was conducted with a limited sample. Thus, the results will not be able to be generalizable; however, depth of information generated is a step to hear Turkish cybercounselors' perceptions.

Since it is social science research, subjectivity of the analysis of the data and results might be a limitation. Researcher tried to avoid this by taking a few measures. First, he applied member checking and consulted with his thesis advisor in part of the data analyses part in order to ensure trustworthiness.

Although this study does not aim at researching effectiveness of the cybercounseling practice of counselors, one of the limitations would be counselors' presentation of their success. The researcher felt this while interviewing them by noticing the anecdotes presented were the effective ones.

Finally, all of the participants were female. That might have partially affected the findings by neglecting the point of view of male counselors.

5.4 Implications of the study

5.4.1 Implications for counselors and counselor education

This study provided information on the practice of cybercounseling in terms of the opportunities, challenges and the strategies to overcome challenges. Future cybercounselors in Turkey need to be aware that providing counseling in Turkish has benefits for a new market for practice. Yet, they should be aware of the heterogeneity of the counselees including emigrated people from Turkey and people who live in different locations of Turkey other than the region the counselors reside in. Thus, cultural competence gains more importance than ever. They need to have an extensive cultural, sociological, political, and historical understanding of a heterogenous population in order to be able to serve them more effectively.

In addition, regarding the challenges, technological insufficiencies emerged in the study. Future cybercounselors need to have competency in technical and technological abilities. Since the medium is a technological tool, using and maintaining the tool efficiently is crucial for effective practice. Relating to competency, communicating online is another challenge for future cybercounselors. This study showed that different sets of skills might need to be developed. Counselor educators need to create programs being aware of how face-to-face counseling and cybercounseling differ in terms of the skills each medium might require.

Another implication for counselors would be the strategies they need to devise to overcome the challenges of cybercounseling. Non-verbal communication might be a limitation for cybercounseling; however, counselors need to find other ways to assess counselees. Practice of cybercounseling is a reality in Turkey. Thus, the need, supply and demand should be recognized by counselor education programs. There was no training program for cybercounseling at the time this research was done. As the results of the study suggest, specific programs might include topics such as, building online rapport, technical competency, establishing ethical conduct, suitable counseling techniques, and boundaries for cybercounseling.

Finally, the current research suggests that cybercounseling has opportunities such as saving time that might facilitate school counseling services such as home visits. School counselors and even social workers might use cybercounseling as a tool for contacting families. One more implication for school counseling would be online support for senior students who are studying at home under stress for the university entrance exams.

5.5 Recommendations for further research

Further research could explore cybercounseling in the school counseling settings. Regarding school counseling practice, utilizing cybercounseling for home visits and contacting parents who do not come to school regularly could be examined.

In addition, research could also focus on the areas of practice in cybercounseling. Current research has findings related to certain techniques and cases, however; counseling areas such as depression, bereavement and loss, relationships, eating disorders, and trauma are specifically worth to study. Moreover,

state and prevalence of cybercounseling in Turkey could be identified in an effort to see current status of practice.

Finally, this study is a qualitative research which aimed at exploring cybercounselors' experiences. An experimental study in Turkey related to effectiveness of cybercounseling might contribute to the Turkish research community.

APPENDIX A

ETHICS COMMITTEE APPROVAL

T.C.

BOĞAZIÇI ÜNİVERSİTESİ

Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Yüksek Lisans ve Doktora Tezleri Etik İnceleme Komisyonu

Sayı: 2019 - 33

28 Mart 2019

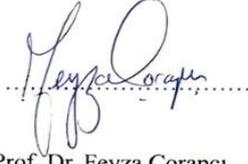
Fatih Yılmaz
Eğitim Bilimleri

Sayın Araştırmacı,

"Siber Danışmanların Bakış Açısıyla Siber Danışmanlığın Avantajları ve Dezavantajları"
başlıklı projeniz ile ilgili olarak yaptığınız SBB-EAK 2019/22 sayılı başvuru komisyonumuz
tarafından 28 Mart 2019 tarihli toplantıda incelenmiş ve uygun bulunmuştur.



Dr. Öğr. Üyesi İnci Ayhan



Prof. Dr. Feyza Çorapçı



Doç. Dr. Mehmet Yiğit Gürdal



Doç. Dr. Ebru Kaya



Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Şebnem Yalçın

APPENDIX B

DEMOGRAPHIC AND PROFESSIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPANTS

Participant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Gender	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female
Undergraduate Program	Psychology	Psychology	Psychology	Psychological Counseling	Psychology	Psychology	Psychology
Graduate Program	Clinical Psychology	Clinical Psychology	Clinical Psychology	Psychological Counseling	Clinical Psychology	Applied Psychology	Mental Health Counseling
Area of Practice	Adults, adolescents, family and couples	Adults, adolescents, family and couples	Eating disorders, adolescents, adults, couples	Adults, adolescents, family and couples	School counseling, university counseling, adults	Career counseling, adolescents, adults and couples	Adults and adolescents
Theoretical Approach	Integrative psychotherapy	Psychodynamic psychotherapy	Postmodern psychotherapy	Psychodynamic psychotherapy	Psychodynamic psychotherapy	Gestalt psychotherapy	Existentialist psychotherapy
Year of Experience in Cybercounseling	5	4	12	5	3	15	1
Approximate number of cases	10	25	60	15	50	40	3

APPENDIX C

THE INTERVIEW FORM

Cybercounseling From the Perspective of Cybercounselors:
Opportunities and Challenges
Interview Protocol

This interview protocol is assigned aiming providing data to the study conducted in the graduate program of Boğaziçi University Institute for Social Sciences Department of Educational Sciences Guidance and Psychological Counseling Program. Your answers will be used by protecting your confidentiality and will be kept confidentially by the researcher. Thank you for your help

Fatih Yılmaz

Boğaziçi University

Getting to Know the Participant

- Which program did you graduate from?
- How long have you been practicing cybercounseling?
- Do you also practice face-to-face counseling?
- Which types of cybercounseling do you use? Which technological tools do you use?
- How many counselees have you had approximately?
- Where do you practice cybercounseling?

Cybercounseling

- How have you started to practice cybercounseling?
- Who prefers the cybercounseling service?
- What are your reasons for preferring cybercounseling?
- In what way cybercounseling is different from face-to-face counseling?

- What are the advantages of cybercounseling in contrast to face-to-face counseling? Can you give examples from your experiences?
- What are the disadvantages of cybercounseling in contrast to face-to-face counseling? Can you give examples from your experiences?

Probes:

- Are there disadvantages considering non-verbal communication in cybercounseling?
- How do you overcome difficulties in cybercounseling?

APPENDIX D

THE INTERVIEW FORM (TURKISH)

Görüntülü Görüşme Yapan Siber Danışmanların Gözüyle Siber Danışmanlık:
Avantajlar, Kısıtlamalar ve Uyum Sağlama

Bu görüşme Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Eğitim Bilimleri Ana Bilim Dalı Rehberlik ve Psikolojik Danışmanlık yüksek lisans programında yürütülmekte olan tez çalışmasına dönük veri toplama amacıyla oluşturulmuştur. Cevaplarınız gizliliğinizin korunarak araştırma verileri olarak kullanılacak ve araştırmacıda gizli tutulacaktır. Katkılarınız için teşekkür ederim.

Fatih Yılmaz

Boğaziçi Üniversitesi

Katılımcıyı tanıma soruları

- Üniversitede hangi programdan mezunsunuz?
- Ne kadar zamandır siber danışmanlık yapıyorsunuz?
- Yüz yüze danışmanlık da yapıyor musunuz?
- Siber danışmanlığı hangi yöntemle yapıyorsunuz, hangi teknolojik araçları kullanıyorsunuz?
- Yaklaşık olarak kaç farklı siber danışmanınız oldu?
- Siber danışmanlığı mekan olarak nerede yapıyorsunuz?

Siber Danışmanlık

- Siber danışmanlığa nasıl başladınız?
- Siber danışmanlığı kimler tercih ediyor?
- Sizin siber danışmanlığı tercih etme sebepleriniz neler?
- Siber danışmanlık yüz yüze danışmanlıktan ne açıdan farklı?

- Siber danışmanlığın yüz yüze danışmanlığa göre avantajları neler?
Deneyimlerinizden örnek verebilir misiniz?
- Siber danışmanlığın yüz yüze danışmanlığa göre dezavantajları neler?
Deneyimlerinizden örnek verebilir misiniz?

Derinleştirici Sorular:

- Sözsüz iletişimi yakalama konusunda yüz yüze iletişimle karşılaştığımızda bir dezavantaj oluyor mu?
- Karşılaştığınız zorlukları nasıl aşıyorsunuz?

APPENDIX E

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Name of the institution: Boğaziçi University

Name of the study: Advantages and Disadvantages of Cybercounseling through the Perspective of Cybercounselors

The project Researcher: Fatih Yılmaz

E-mail: fatih.yilmaz@boun.edu.tr Mobile: 0 531 994 34 51

The Project Led by: Assist. Prof. Sibel Akmehmet Şekerler

E-mail: akmehmet@boun.edu.tr

Phone: 0 212 359 4616/6608

Address: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Kuzey Kampüs, Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü, Eğitim Fakültesi F 213, 34342 Bebek/İstanbul

Dear Cybercounselor,

Fatih Yılmaz who is a student in Boğaziçi University Educational Sciences Department Guidance and Psychological Counseling Program studies a thesis research under the topic “Advantages and Disadvantages of Cybercounseling through the Perspective of Cybercounselors”. The main goal of the study is to examine cybercounselors' experiences in terms of how they describe the advantages, limitations and adaptations to practice cybercounseling. You are invited to this study. We want to inform you about the research. If you agree, please sign and deliver this form in a closed envelop.

If you agree to participate in the research an interview with a maximum of 50-60 minutes will be carried out on a day and hour of your choice. Secondly, if needed we want to conduct a second interview. Second interview might be needed due to lack of time in the first interview or data analysis in this research might reveal other issues that needs to be clarified Second interview will also take 50-60 minutes.

With your consent, we like to record the interviews in an effort to transcribe later. You may choose your preference in the second page. This research aims at scientific objective and participants confidentiality will be ensured. In the transcriptions your or your counselee's name will not be manifested. The verbatim record will be kept in an external hard-drive which does not have internet connection and will be deleted after research completed. Results will be reported in the thesis and in a published journal article. These written forms will not reveal your identity or details which might refer you. Participation in the study is entirely optional. We do not offer any

payment to you. You can opt out of the study at any point. In this case, the information we have received will be destroyed.

If you want any further information about the research project please contact researcher Fatih Yılmaz or research leader Assist. Prof. Sibel Akmeahmet Şekerler Boğaziçi University Educational Sciences Department (Phone: 0 212 359 4616/ 6608, Address: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Kuzey Kampüs, Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü, Eğitim Fakültesi, Ofis: EF 213, 34342 Bebek/İstanbul). In addition, you may learn your participant rights from Boğaziçi University Ethics Committee for Master and PhD Theses in Social Sciences and Humanities through e-mail address: sbe-ethics@boun.edu.tr

If you want to participate in this research project, please sign this form and deliver in a closed envelope. If you received this form by mailing, please post it to project leader's address.

I am, I understood what was told and was written above. I had a chance to ask questions about study. I understand that I can opt out research any time without stating any reasons.

In these conditions I voluntarily participate in the study.

I consent voice recording/I do not consent voice recording.

I want a copy of the informed consent form/I do not want a copy

Participant Name:.....

Signature:

Date (day/month/year):/...../.....

Researcher's Name:

Signature:

Date (day/month/year):/...../.....

You may learn your participant rights from Boğaziçi University Ethics Committee for Master and PhD Theses in Social Sciences and Humanities through e-mail address:

sbe-ethics@boun.edu.tr

APPENDIX F

INFORMED CONSENT FORM (TURKISH)

Araştırmayı destekleyen kurum: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi

Araştırmamanın adı: Siber Danışmanların Bakış Açısıyla Siber Danışmanlığın Avantajları ve Dezavantajları

Araştırmacının adı: Fatih YILMAZ

Araştırmacının iletişim bilgileri:

Tel: 0 531 994 34 51, Mail: fatih.yilmaz@boun.edu.tr

Proje Yürütücüsü: Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Sibel Akmehmet Şekerler

Adresi: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Kuzey Kampüs, Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü, Eğitim Fakültesi, Ofis: EF 213, 34342 Bebek/İstanbul

E-mail adresi: akmehmet@boun.edu.tr

Telefonu: 0 212 359 4616/6608

Sayın Siber Danışman,

Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü Rehberlik ve Psikolojik Danışmanlık Yüksek Lisans Programı öğrencisi Fatih Yılmaz “Siber Danışmanların Bakış Açısıyla Siber Danışmanlığın Avantajları ve Dezavantajları” adı altında bir tez çalışması yürütmektedir. Bu çalışmanın amacı video konferans yoluyla psikolojik danışmanlık hizmeti veren profesyonellerin bakış açısıyla, siber danışmanlığın avantajları ve dezavantajlarını incelemektir. Bu araştırmada bize yardımcı olmanız için sizi davet ediyoruz. Kararınızdan önce araştırma hakkında sizi bilgilendirmek istiyoruz. Bu bilgileri okuduktan sonra araştırmaya katılmak isterseniz lütfen bu formu imzalayıp kapalı bir zarf içinde bize ulaştırınız.

Bu araştırmaya katılmayı kabul ettiğiniz takdirde size uygun bir saatte ve yerde sizinle bir görüşme yapacağız. Bu görüşmeyle sizin verdiğiniz siber danışmanlık hizmeti deneyiminizle ilgili bilgi sahibi olacağız. Röportajın 50 dakika ile 1 saat arası sürmesi beklenmektedir.

İkinci olarak ihtiyaç halinde bir görüşme daha yapmak istiyoruz. İlk görüşmede vaktimiz tüm sormak istediklerimize yetmemesi veya analiz sırasında netleştirmemiz gereken konuların ortaya çıkması halinde ikinci görüşmeye ihtiyaç duyulmaktadır. Bu görüşmenin de 50 dakika ile 1 saat arası sürmesi beklenmektedir.

Bunun için izin vermeniz halinde görüşmeleri bir ses kayıt cihazı ile daha sonra yazıya dökmek amacıyla kaydetmek istemekteyiz. Aşağıda tercihinizi belirtebilirsiniz.

Bu araştırma bilimsel bir amaçla yapılmaktadır ve katılımcı bilgilerinin gizliliği esas alınmaktadır. Ses kayıtlarında sizin veya danışanlarınızın ismi kullanılmayacaktır. Kayıtlar araştırmamız süresince internet bağlantısı olmayan bir sabit diskte muhafaza edilip araştırma sona erdiğinde silineceklerdir. Sonuçlar tez raporu ve makalesi halinde anonim olarak değerlendirilecek; araştırmanın toplumla paylaşılan herhangi bir yazılı versiyonunda katılımcının kimlik bilgilerini belli edecek herhangi bir ayrıntı olmayacaktır.

Bu araştırmaya katılmak tamamen isteğe bağlıdır. Katılımınızdan dolayı size herhangi bir ücret ya da ödül teklif edilmemektedir. Katıldığınız takdirde çalışmanın herhangi bir aşamasında herhangi bir sebep göstermeden onayınızı çekmek hakkına da sahipsiniz. Çekildiğiniz takdirde sizden alınan ses kayıtları veya görüşme notları silinerek imha edilecektir. Araştırma projesi hakkında ek bilgi almak istediğiniz takdirde lütfen araştırmacı Fatih Yılmaz ya da Tez Yürütücüsü Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü Öğretim Üyesi Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Sibel Akmehmet Şekerler ile temasa geçiniz (Telefon: 0 212 359 4616/ 6608, Adres: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Kuzey Kampüs, Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü, Eğitim Fakültesi, Ofis: EF 213, 34342 Bebek/İstanbul). Ayrıca tez çalışmasına katılımcı olarak haklarınızı Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Yüksek Lisans ve Doktora Tezleri Etik İnceleme Komisyonu sbe-ethics@boun.edu.tr e-posta adresinden danışabilirsiniz.

Eğer bu araştırma projesine katılmayı kabul ediyorsanız, lütfen bu formu imzalayıp kapalı bir zarf içerisinde bize geri iletin. Eğer bu formu posta ile almışsanız, lütfen proje yürütücüsünün adresine posta ile gönderin.

Ben, (katılımcının adı), yukarıdaki metni okudum ve katılmam istenen çalışmanın kapsamını ve amacını, gönüllü olarak üzerime düşen sorumlulukları tamamen anladım. Çalışma hakkında soru sorma imkanı buldum. Bu çalışmayı istediğim zaman ve herhangi bir neden belirtmek zorunda kalmadan bırakabileceğimi ve bıraktığım takdirde herhangi bir ters tutum ile karşılaşmayacağımı anladım.

Bu koşullarda söz konusu araştırmaya kendi isteğimle, hiçbir baskı ve zorlama olmaksızın katılmayı kabul ediyorum.

Görüşmede ses kaydı yapılmasına izin veriyorum/ izin vermiyorum.

İhtiyaç halinde ikinci bir görüşme yapılmasına izin veriyorum/izin vermiyorum.

Formun bir örneğini aldım / almak istemiyorum (bu durumda araştırmacı bu kopyayı saklar).

Katılımcının Adı-Soyadı:

.....

İmzası:

Adresi (varsa Telefon No, Faks No):

.....

.....

Tarih (gün/ay/yıl) .../...../.....

Araştırmacının Adı-Soyadı:

İmzası:

Tarih (gün/ay/yıl): .../...../.....

Tez çalışması ile ilgili herhangi bir sorunuz olduğunda Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Yüksek Lisans ve Doktora Tezleri Etik İnceleme Komisyonu sbe-ethics@boun.edu.tr e-posta adresinden iletişime geçebilirsiniz.

APPENDIX G

ORIGINAL TURKISH QUOTES

1. Gizlilik açısından yeni maddeler eklemek zorunda kalıyorum bilgilendirilmiş onama düzenli olarak. “Şöyle saklıyorum, sizin için özel bir hesap açacağım, bilgilerin olduğu yerleri şifreler koymaya gayret ediyorum onları saklarken sadece 3. Kişilerle paylaşılmayacağı bilgisine ilave olarak bilgisayarda aldığım önlemleri de yazıyorum. İyi bir anti virüs programı kullandığım, şifreli programlar kullandığım.” (Participant 7)
2. Sonra bununla ilgili yanlışlık yapmamak üzere, hata ve danışanı etkileyecek olumsuz bir faktör olmasın diyerek bir süpervizörümden danışmanlık aldım. (Participant 6)
3. Oğlum 14 yaşında söylediğim zaman girmez ama ben yine de tedirgin oluyorum. Ofiste yine normal seans şeklinde yaptığım gibi. Ofiste hiç kimsenin hiçbir şekilde duymayacağı şekilde yapıyorum. Teknoloji farklı olduğu için sesi normal konuşma tonunda ayarlıyorum, o tona getiriyorum. Odada görüşme seans olduğunu diğer ofisteki arkadaşlar da biliyor. (Participant 1)
4. O kadar çok yapıyorum ki şey değil. Hatta bazı istemeyen danışanlarıma içimden ne güzel olurdu yapsak diyorum. (Participant 3)
5. Ağrı’da yaşıyorsanız kaç tane klinik psikolog var bilmiyorum. Mardin’de yaşıyorsanız vardır elbette ama kalifiye kaç tane var ya da yurtdışında yaşayan Türkler kendi anadillerinde terapi yapacak birisi. Böyle eşitlik sağlayacak bir hizmet olması benim birinci motivatörüm oldu. (Participant 5)
6. Biraz doğal ve akışında bir insanım. Orada benim için önemli olan motivasyonum, biliyorum planlı bir şey değildi. Bir sürecin içindeyiz o genç insanların yurtdışına gitmesi gerekiyor birlikte bir yola çıkmışız bölünmek de istemiyorlar. Sadece ihtiyaç beni şeyle buluşturdu, hadi biz bunu bir deneyelimle buluşturdu. (Participant 6)
7. Kendimle baş başa kaldığım ve kendimi iyi hissettiğim yegane yerlerden bir tanesi hayatımda. Onun bendeki teröpotik etkisini değerlendirmeye ondan faydalanmaya çalışıyorum. (Participant 7)

8. Uyduruyorum mutfaktaysam arkada lavabo, tencerelerin görünmesi? Bir ciddiyet arıyorum. Evde olduğumu anlayabilir belki. Nasıl anlar? Bir şekilde. 3 ayrı yerde yapıyorum evde evin duruma göre. İkisinde arkada tablo oluyor. Bir tanesinde çocukların oyun dolabı oluyor. Ama onu önemsiyorum. (Participant 3)

9. Çok da bir mesafe varmış gibi gelmiyor bana. Ve hani aynı aktarım, karşı aktarım terapi odasında olan. Orada da oluyor. Uzun zamandır soracak mısınız bilmiyorum ama 2016 yılında başladığım danışanlarıma devam ediyorum. Çok daha rahatım. Uzun soluklu bir çalışma devam ediyor. Terapi odasında olduğu gibi. (Participant 5)

10. Bazı teknikleri uygulayamıyoruz da. Mesela boş sandalye tekniği diyelim. Böyle bir teknik uygulanamaz. Kendim kişisel olarak teknik veya cinsel terapide bazı eğitimler yapılması gerekiyor, videolar izletilmesi gerekiyor. Durdurulacak izlenecek. Cinsel terapi kısmında eğitim kısmı çok önemli, durduracağız anlatacağız. Şöyle bir alternatif var mı var. Gönderirsin danışana izle dersin ondan sonra anlatırsın. Aynı şey değil. Ben o videoyu ezbere biliyorum, hangi dakikada durdurup neler söyleyeceğimi. Danışan onu izleyip ardından benim bunları aynı görüntüye bakmadan birlikte anlatıyor olmam. O da hatırlayacak, hadi oradan bul diyeceksin bulacak. Aynı şeyleri görmemiz mümkün değil. Psiko-eğitim kısmı bir şeyler gösterilerek yapılacaksa yapılamıyor. (Participant 1)

11. Benden kaynaklandığında biraz içerliyorum. İnternete, Skype'a hemen geri bildirim vermiyorum. Çok ağır geri bildirimler. İğrençsin, hiç iyi duymadım, orda bir sürü seçenek çıkarıyor check koyun diye. Hepsine check koyuyorum. Gerçekten bozuluyorum açıkçası. Öyle durumlarda benden kaynaklanırsa kendim sakinleştirmem biraz daha zaman alıyor, danışanın internetinden kaynaklanırsa biraz daha normal karşılıyorum. Biraz daha acımasızım sanırım kendime karşı. Karşılıklı ay pardonlar geliyor seans sürecinde. O samimiyeti zedeleyen bir şey. Çok pardon aaa galiba benim bilgisayarım, yok senin bilgisayarından. Orada konunun göbeğinden, ilhamdan kopulmuş olunuyor. Normalde vermeyeceğim bir çabayı veriyorum. (Participant 7)

12. Mesela bir düzenli çalıştığım İngiltere'de bir danışanım, erkek arkadaşı birlikte yaşıyor. Ben biliyorum ki erkek arkadaşı bu seansa devam etmesine çok da ok değil; yani bir biçimde çok inanmıyor süreçlere. Ben biliyorum arkasından geçmiyor ama bana bakarken arkaya da bakıyor. Belli ki onu dikkatini dağıtacak, o da zorlanarak fokusu olan birisi. (Participant 6)

13. Bir de sözsüz iletişim konusu var. Danışanın göğüsten yukarısını görebiliyorsunuz. Elini, ayağını oynatıyor mu? Vücut dili ne söylüyor? Bunları kaçırabiliyorsunuz. Yüz yüze danışmanlıkta bir keresinde danışan çıktıktan sonra odada su birikintisi görmüştüm. Bunu daha sonra sorduğumda ter bezleri ile alakalı

bir sorun olduğunu, elinden damlayan ter olduğunu öğrendim. Bu bilgiyi online danışmanlıkta elde edemezsiniz. (Participant 2)

14. Ama sözsüze dair başka. Şeyler olabiliyor özellikle ergen danışanlarda keşfettiğim konuşurken birden ayağını sallamaya başladığında sanki oraya göz ucu ile bakmam bile onun ayağı hakkında şimdi ve buradayla ilgili dakikalarca konuşmasına sebebiyet veriyor. Öyle bir bakışı atamayacağım ya da tırnağı ile oynuyorsa, etlerini koparıyorsa onu göremeyeceğim. (Participant 7)

15. Beden diliyle ilgili çeşitli kısıtlar var, sizin de karşı tarafın da. Koltuğa yerleşmesi, sandalyenin koltuğun neresinde oturduğu bizim için anlamlıdır. Benim için anlamlıdır. Yorumlanabilir bir şeyler onlar biraz daha kısıtlı oluyor tabi. (Participant 4)

16. Aslında ilk dediğim gibi Türkiye'ye geldikten sonra Almanya'dan önerilen bazı kişiler, dil sorunundan dolayı orada Alman psikologlara gidemediklerinden dolayı, buraya gelip hızlandırılmış seanslar yaptım. Ondan sonra da onlarla bir şekilde devam edilmesi gerekiyordu. Orada yönlendirilecek Türkçe bilen bir psikolog da yok. (Participant 1)

17. İsveç'te yaşıyorsa ve Türkçe konuşabilecek bir terapist yoksa ve ihtiyacı varsa bu iyi bir seçenek olmuş oluyor. (Participant 5)

18. Özellikle buradan daha yeni henüz gitmiş Türkiye'den henüz gitmiş o tarafa adapte olmaya çalışan insanlara inanılmaz konfor hissi veriyor. Ben bunu özellikle 20-25 aralığında çok görüyorum. Başkalarından duymuş referansla gelenlerde görüyorum. “Ya işte 6 Hanım bizim sürecimizin devam edecek olması da bana bu yola çıkarken bir oh falan dedirtiyor” diyen insanlar olabiliyor. Bunu çok duyuyorum genç insanlarda. Destek olarak hissediyorlar. Şunu çok iyi biliyorum yurtdışındaki insanlar anadillerinde danışmanlık almak istiyorlar genelde. Tecrübelerimden bildiğim kadarıyla. Anadilinde danışmanlık almak özellikle de bir memlekete henüz yeni gitmiş bir insan için orda bir Türk terapist bulmak zorlayıcı olacak. (Participant 6)

19. Danışanlar yatak odalarında, ofislerinde, evlerinin herhangi bir yerlerinde. Ama yatak odaları olduğunu görüyorum. O biraz tuhaf oluyor evet şimdi düşününce. Ama evet arkada yastığı görüyorum. Oturmuş, yatağında oturmuş. Rahat olduğunu hissediyorum. Gayet rahat. Ve bence benim işim değil mesela ona nerde oturacağını söylemek şimdi onu düşündüm. Yatak odası oysa düşününce ne garip değil mi? Yataktan terapi. O ona en uygun yeri bulmuş. O anda orada rahat, evinde konforunda ya da herhangi bir yerin konforunda. Ve oradan hayatına dair çok önemli konuşmalar yapıyor. (Participant 3)

20. Biraz etki alanı bırakıyor, konfor alanı bırakıyor. Daha rahatlık sağlayabiliyor. Beden dilinize yüz yüzedeyken ki kadar dikkat etmeyebiliyorsunuz. Yüzünüze, gözünüze evet ama oturduğunuz kalkışınız danışanlarınıza karşı etki bırakabiliyor. Daha konforlu tarafları var: oturduğunuz yerden terapi yapmak gibi eğer size uyuyorsa bu tarafı. (Participant 4)

21. Ben yurtdışına gittim 2 ay. Seyahat ettim birkaç şehirde, o sırada bilgisayarım hep yanımdaydı. Seans saatlerim hep sabitti. Her Perşembe 4'te yapıyorsak İstanbul saatıyla yine 4'te yaptık. Ben ona göre seyahatimi organize ettim ve seyahat ettim. Bu benim için hem işimi yapabildiğim hem tatil yapabildiğim hem seyahat edebildiğim hem para kazanabildiğim. Yani hepsi bir arada. Bedelsiz seçim olmaz derler ama. Bana göre bedeli, oraya gittim şundan vazgeçtim olmadı bana göre. Benim için çok keyifliydi. (Participant 5)

22. İstanbul gibi bir şehirde danışanlarımı gördüğüm ofise gitmem çok kolay bir mesele değil benim için. Onun için mental olarak hazırlanmak, fiziksel olarak hazırlanmak, giyime kuşama dikkat etmek, temiz görüntüye sahip olmak, dinlenmiş olarak odaya girmeye çalışmak büyük efor benim için. Bütün bunların yok olduğu bir yer online counseling. Odamdayım, sessiz bir yerdeyim, üzerime istediğim şeyi geçirebilirim. Sadece gövdem gözüktüyor. Aşağısına sadece pijama dahi olabilir. Bunu sunduğu çok ciddi bir hareket özgürlüğü var. (Participant 7)

23. O bence arayı vermemek adına ihtiyacı olan danışanlara büyük bir avantaj sağlıyor. Bir sebepten dolayı diyelim ki o ara vermek istiyor. 1-2 hafta olabilir. Onu kaldıramayacak o anda hakikaten ihtiyacı olan ama diyelim anne babası ameliyat olmak durumunda başka şehirde bakmak durumunda. (Participant 4)

24. Bilgisayarı her yere taşıyabilir, her zaman odasında olmak zorunda değil. Şehirler arası geziyorsa, yoğun çalışan bir insansa, seyahat zorunluluğu varsa, keyif aldığı bir şeyse seyahat beni her yere taşıyabilir bilgisayarında. (Participant 7)

25. Sırf online çalıştığım bir dönem oldu. Orada ben seyahatteydim. Evde olmak zorunda olmadığım. Baştan söyledim. Bir süre başka mekandan göreceksiniz. Zaten bir süre sonra çok önemsemiyorlar. Kendileri de online ve mobil olabiliyorlar. Toplantısı Madrid'de oluyor. Bana oradan bağlanıyor. İkimizin dünyasında da olabiliyor. (Participant 5)

26. Bir danışanım, yüz yüze görüştüğüm bir danışanım yurt dışına taşındı. Ve devam ediyorduk. Taşınmak zorunda kalınca nasıl bir formülle yapalım dedik. Önce gidip geldi aralarda görüştük. Türkiye'ye gelemeyince ihtiyacı da devam edince, gittiği yerde de biriyle görüşmeyi tercih etmedi beni tercih ettiği için. (Participant 4)

27. Yurtdışında kaldığım zamanda, yazın Almanya'dan buraya gelip bir süre burada görüştüğümüz kişilerle o şekilde sürdürdüğüm çok uzun vadeli olmasa da sürdürdüğüm seanslar oldu. (Participant 1)

28. Benim ergen danışanlarım lise son sınıflar aynı zamanda kariyer danışmanlığı uzmanlığım da var, onu eklemeyi unuttum. O vesile ile lise son sınıf üniversiteye hazırlanan çocuklarla tanışma fırsatım oldu. Bundan 15 sene önce nerdeyse. Sonrasında bu kariyer danışmanlığı diye başlayan çalışmalar sonrasında kimisinde psikolojik danışmanlık şeklinde devam etti. Daha sonra birçok gencin yurtdışına gitmesiyle bizim sürecimizin de devamı ihtiyacı hasıl oldu. Biz bu çalışmaya başladık. (Participant 6)

29. Avrupa'da bir şehre taşınmam gerekti. Halihazırdaki danışanlarımdan bana göre siber danışmanlığa uygun olanlara önerdim. Onlarla başladım. Ayrıca danışanım olup da taşınanlarla da siber danışmanlık yapıyorum. Biliyorsunuz son yıllarda göç eden çok kişi oldu. Birçok Avrupa Ülkesine, Kanada'ya, Dubai'ye giden danışanlarım oldu. (Participant 2)

30. Mesela bir danışanım var İstanbul'da yüz yüze tanıştık. Başka bir şehre taşındı, başka bir ülkeye taşındı, tekrar İstanbul'a taşındı ama uzak bir yere. O kadar karıştırdık ki. Evet "aa yurtdışındayım yapamam, tatildeyim yapamam" değil. Devam ediyor. (Participant 3)

31. Buraya geldikleri oluyor. Bir toplantı ya da tatil için. O zaman bu seansı yüz yüze yapabilir miyiz? Elbette diyorum. Burada bir saat ayarlıyoruz. Daha az 20 taneden birinde böyle bir şey oldu ama oldu bir iki kere. Öyle bir hakları da var. Yani şey değil. Online başladık sadece online görüşeceğiz diye bir kural getirmeyi doğru bulmadım. (Participant 5)

32. Hem yüz yüze bir danışanım başladı, bir süre sonra bir sağlık problemi yaşadığı için immobile hale geldiği için birkaç ay evden seans yaptık. O evinde ben evimde online seans. (Participant 5)

33. Ofisimde veya evimde yapıyorum. Özellikle kendi özelimi danışanlarıma göstermemeyi tercih ediyorum. Ekol olarak da dinamik yaklaşımı benimsediğim için kendi dünyamı onlara göstermemem gerekir. Genellikle boş bir duvar görünüyor arkada. (Participant 2)

34. Bazen şöyle zorluklar yaşadım. Sonra onları da sorgulamaya başladım. Bir danışanım baktım sigara yaktı karşımda. Çok tuhaf geldi. Ne diyeceksiniz ki? Sigaranı söndür. Öyle kurallarım yok benim için. Zaten post modern yaklaşımlarla çalışıyorum. Ya da ben yemek yiyebilir miyim? Çok açım da eve yeni geldim yemek yiyebilir miyim? Ama o ilginçti. Sigara yasak ya her yerde. Püfür püfür sigara içiyor onu yakıyor. Ben rahatsız oldum. Sonra bunu düşündükçe, bir dakika 3 geleneksel tuzaklara düşme geleneksel öğretilerin. Gayet rahat, gayet rahat hissediyor ve alışkanlığını devam ettiriyor. Başka bir anlam yüklemeye gerek yok. Gayet insani davranışına devam ediyor. (Participant 3)

35. Bir de senle konuştuğumda şunu fark ediyorum, odamda ayarlayabildiğim ayaklı bir ışığım var 2 farklı kolu var, onları kendime göre ayarlayabiliyorum. Ben hep kısık olanını açıyorum online counselingde. Yüzün çok iyi seçilebildiği, bütün yüzdeki girintilere kadar görünebilen bir şey değil de sanki bir tık daha net olmayan mı diyeyim bir yerden sesleniyor gibiyim. Onu şu an fark ediyorum. Çünkü seçebilirim. Çok daha görünür olmayı seçebilirken biraz daha loş bir ışıktayım. Sanki online counseling bana biraz daha anonim olma fırsatı veriyor. O anonimliği çok iyileştirici olduğunu düşünüyorum. Sanki Katolik kiliselerindeki günah çıkarma gibi. O temas var ben ordayım. Biraz daha bulanık bir şekilde ordayım. Benim saçım başım hiçbir şeyim o kadar da onun ilgisini dağıtacak kadar fresh ve göz alıcı değil. O anonimlik hoşuma gidiyor. (Participant 7)

36. Karşılaştığım zorlukları biraz önce konuşurken aklıma geldi espri anlayışımın yani mizah anlayışımın çok daha kuvvetli olduğunu deneyimliyorum online. Çünkü o kadar kaçırma ihtimalim var ki sanki onlar kendiliğinden zaten bizi birbirimize yakınlatacak ve bağlayacak daha başka bir arenada kendisini onarıyor gibi. O da benim için mizah anlayışım oluyor. Mizah anlayışımı en çok kullandığım danışmanlıklar online danışmanlıklar. En çok işime yarayan ve kolaylaştıran ve benim de işime yarayan şey odur. (Participant 7)

37. Danışanlarım için de tercih meselesi. Başka bir terapistten aynı süreçlerden geçmek istemiyor, sürecimizi devam ettirmek istiyor. (Participant 2)

38. Dışarı çıkarmışçasına kendimle ilgilenmek zorunda olmama. Oradaki zamanı kendime ayırabilme, dışarıya nasıl gözükeceğim kaygısını bırakıp. O çok ferahlatıcı. (Participant 7)

39. İstanbul'daki insanların hep şikayet ettikleri dakik olmalar, gecikmeler. Zaman kaybetme mevzusu, bir sürü yerlerde bana memnuniyetlerini söyleyenler de var. (Participant 6)

40. İstanbul gibi bir kentte, karşıdan danışanım var, düzenli buraya haftalık gelmesi çok zor. Boşandı, aracını sattı. Arabası da yok. Toplu taşıma ile çok çok zor. Öyle bir durum olsaydı bir iki gelir bırakırdı veya yakınlarında bir terapist bulacaktı, sıfırdan başlanacaktı. Bu anlamda çok büyük bir artışı var. (Participant 1)

41. Karşıda oturuyor mesela, benim ismimi bir şekilde almış. Hiç trafiğe girmeyim. Ben sizle bir yüz yüze tanışmak istiyorum sonra Skype'tan devam edebilir miyiz diyorlar. Çok uzun mesailer olan, yoğun iş tempoları olan hastalarım danışanlarım oluyor. Böylelikle onlarla akşam geç saatlerde çalışmak zorunda kalıyorlar. Vakit kaybetmek istemiyorlar. (Participant 3)

42. Ergenlerle, ergenleri yakalamak için, güven ilişkisini kurmak için benim inandığım metotlarla hiyerarşik yapının ortadan mümkün olduğu kadar kalkması gerekiyor. O güç ilişkisi ergenlere iyi gelmiyor. Benim onlar karşısında eşit güçte olduğumu beden dilimle ifade etmem Skype'da daha zor. Ama onlar buraya geldiklerinde daha arkadaşça olduğumu görebiliyorlar. Oturmam, ses tonum, bakışım bu güven ilişkisini ergenlerle daha rahat kurarım ergenlerle yüz yüze. (Participant 3)

43. Şu ana kadar yaptıklarım, yapabildiklerim siber danışmanlığa uygun olanlar olduğunu düşünüyorum. O mesafeyi kaldırabilecek, o ilişkiyi bu şekilde sürdürebilecek danışanlar. Uygun olmayan danışanlar, daha fazla çerçeveye ihtiyacı olan danışanlar. O saatte orda olmaya, o mekanda olmaya, bekleme odasında biraz durmaya, daha sonra içeri alınmaya bazı danışanların ona ihtiyacı var. Onun iyi geldiğini düşünüyorum: aynı odada olmaya, beden dilinin okunmasına, Beden dilinin yorumlanmasına, duruş, oturuş, mekanı kullanış, çantasını bir yere koyduğu zaman bile, onun anlamlı olduğu danışanlar oldu. (Participant 4)

44. Onun dışında online görmeyi tercih etmediğim danışanlar. Daha ağır bir kişilik bozukluğu, daha psikotik durum, intihara eğilim durumu, o zaman onun bulunduğu yerdeki bir psikiyatriste gitmesinin ve yüz yüze görüşmesinin uygun olacağını söyleyip baştan kabul etmiyorum. (Participant 5)

45. Kendi ana dilinde terapi çok önemli biliyorsunuz. Gene benim daha çok tecrübem yurtdışındaki danışanlarımla bunu sağlayabilmek. (Participant 4)

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