



Cybernetics and cyber counselling interface in crisis resilience and coping: Impact of intervention

¹Dr. Saswati Jena, ²Dr. Sareeta Behera

¹Silicon Institute of Technology, Bhubaneswar, Odisha

²National Institute of Science Education and Research, Bhubaneswar, Odisha

ABSTRACT

The functional dimensions of human interactions and development in the Globe, have been etched in the glorious histories of how the world fraternity has progressed from an era of ear-to-ear talk to the era to Wi-Fi. Cybernetics and Cyber-Counselling have emerged as resourceful and impactful thresholds to human development, holistic health and well-being. Particularly, during the current times of the crisis situations, in which the paradigms of social interactions have been restricted to from-a-distance interactions; the usability and dynamism of cybernetics have scaled up. The present study is an attempt to develop an interface between cybernetics, cyber-counselling and their efficacy in terms of facilitating one's resilience, coping styles through locus of control and help-seeking behaviour. Finding of the study have been promising at both the levels of significance ($p < .05$; $p < .01$) and the qualitative narratives as well.

Keywords— Counselling, Cyberspace, Well-Being, Mental Health, Cybernetics, Technology

1. INTRODUCTION

Traditions-Techniques-Technology...since the advent of humankind on the maps and sketches of the world, there has been a spike in the endeavours of man to progress through traditions etched in their psychosocial fabric, techniques to strive and thrive towards advancements, and use technological innovations for better proficiency and efficiency in life. As individuals and civilizations start spinning the weaves of intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships; begin to connect with the other societies in various latitudes and longitudes of the world; create an interface in technology and efficacy in progress and sustainable development; the interaction between technological precursors, cybernetics and cyber-psychological dimensions tend to enhance to the next level. With the flowing time of stages, situations and experiential stimulations in life; the constellation of human interactions across the world through the cyberspace has seen a buffer and boost over the last few decades. Whether it is for interactions with family, and peers; workspace, teammates and authorities; assistive devices and technical innovations; legal systems or cyberspace in daily living; the combination of cybernetics and cyberspace has in a way become an integral part and parcel of life. However, there are times when things tend to fall apart in these aspects, more specifically, during the times of Global Crisis situations. And during those testing times, one's locus of control, help-seeking behaviour, resilience and coping skills are put to litmus tests. As per one report in Hindustan Times, the corona virus disease (Covid-19), which has already infected 2.4 million people and killed at least 165,000, is the second most devastating pandemic after the 1918 Spanish flu. In India, 27,977 people are affected and 884 deaths as per 'worldometer' on 27th April, 2020. In this COVID-19 Lockdown phase which is for an uncertain period and the sudden changes in lifestyle will create many psycho-social issues among people. The feeling of anxiety, isolation, frustration, and helplessness are there and to have such feelings are normal too. But to cope with this the need of mental health professionals emerge but medium will be cyberspace. Psychologists, Psychiatrists, Mental health professionals are volunteering and rendering counseling and support services to people who are in need of it.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Technology is the new path way to face this difficult time as this situation is absolutely new and unique in its way and all are in the learning mode to adjust with the circumstances. There is an increase in cyber counseling (Online counseling) and collection of data in cybernetics (Google form) and over telephone through tele-counselling.

Cyber psychology is comparatively a new concept and providing counseling services online was not acceptable to many. But in 21st century, our lives are intertwined with cyber technology or internet ranging from health, education, life style to entertainment and basic survival needs.

Initially, Cyber counseling was being discarded as it started with e-mail and chat rooms. But with technological development, the onset of webcam era and introduction of video call came into practice. Hence, face to face counselling and observation of body language were possible. Zainudin and Yusop (2018) supported this in their research article. They mentioned about the promising

future of Cyber counseling and revealed positive input on its effectiveness. Their prediction has become today's reality in this global pandemic, COVID19. Cyber counselling enabled the main limitations of the Cyber-counseling service i.e. reduced face-to-face absence (Barak, 1999; Lunt, 2004; Grohol, 2003).

As cyber counseling and cyber psychology are new trends, Singh and Singh (2019) has tried to give concise picture of the awareness regarding the cyber counseling in terms of number of publications on this across countries from 2012-2019. United Kingdom tops the list with 117 numbers followed by Netherland (54), United States (52) and India had 3 publications. European countries lead in terms of publication and awareness.

In such scenarios, the concept "Resilience" makes unique impact on human-beings as it provides emotional support and psychological strength to bounce back and to cope and adapt successfully. More than two decades ago Walsh (1996) pointed out resilience in ecological and developmental contexts and shared beliefs and narratives that promote a sense of coherence, collaboration, competence, and confidence which are fundamental in coping style.

3. RESEARCH GAP

Global pandemic, COVID-19 is creating a completely new situation every passing day at individual level and as a group, community and society across the globe. No one is spared from its effect. In this condition, it is difficult to take any reference based on past research data. To guide people in this crisis situation with resilience and coping strategies through cyber psychology is comparatively a new process. As there is a scarcity of research data on the above-mentioned concepts, the present research has been taken up with the following objectives:

4. OBJECTIVES

- To develop the tools (interview schedule) for help seeking behaviour and locus of control.
- To develop crisis intervention modules that addresses resilience and coping styles during the period of crisis.
- To study the impact of interventions through cyber counselling

5. METHOD OF STUDY

The present research is based on a 2X2 quasi-experimental single subject research design. Purposive sampling and snowball sampling methods have been used to include 75 subjects in the study. The intervention module has been administered for a period of one month, in order to derive qualitative and quantitative implications. In terms of the 2X2 design, the different factors include: Help Seeking Behavior (Autonomy and Directed) X Locus of Control (Internal and External). Results of the obtained data were analyzed using Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA). The following figure represents the methodological approach in the present study:

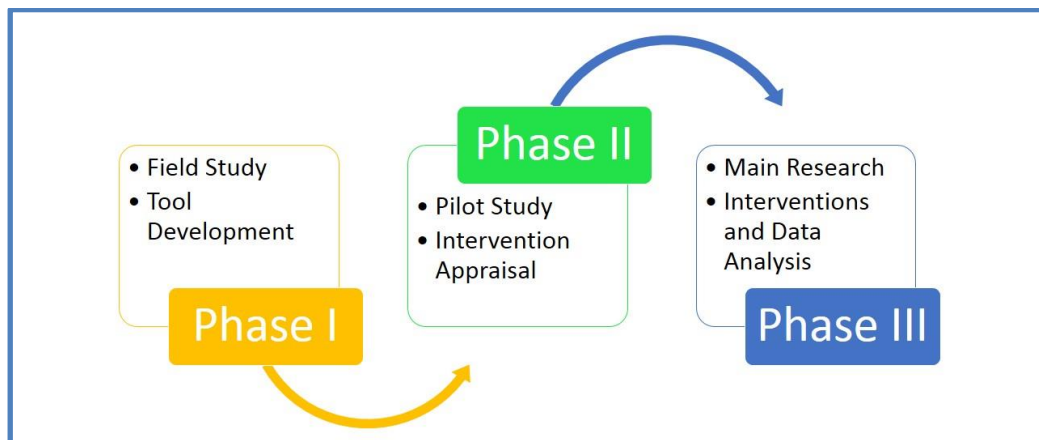


Fig. 1: Methodological Approaches in the Present Study

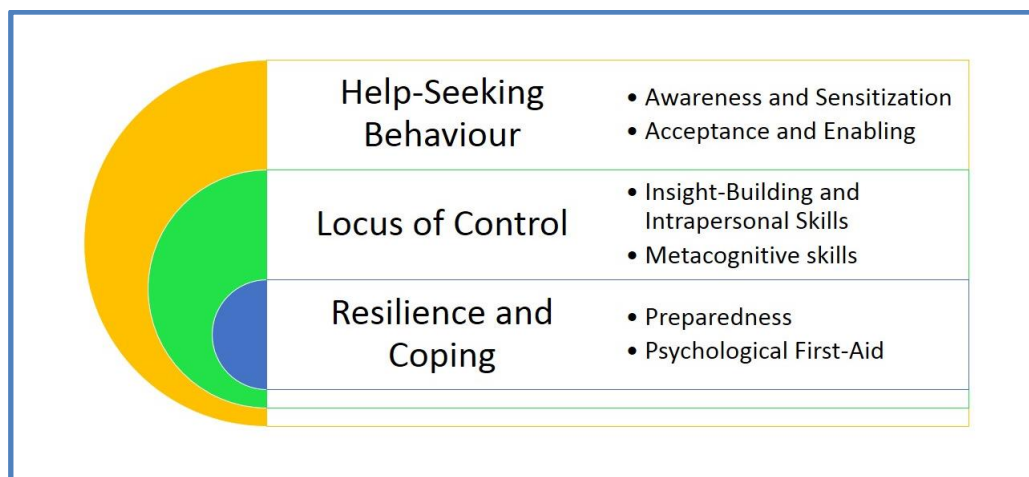


Fig. 2: Interventions Sketch of the Present Research

6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data obtained through the research were analyzed using the Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA), in which, pre-existing conditions before the interventions were statistically partial-out. Following table represents a summary of the ANCOVA results:

Table 1: Summary Table of Quantitative Results

Dimensions	Main Effects	F-Ratio
Self-Dependence	Autonomy	6.54*
Self- Awareness	Autonomy	6.57*
	Directed	7.28*
Self-Attribution	Autonomy X Directed	12.06**
Situation Acceptance	Autonomy X Directed	14.93**

p<.05*, p<.01**

Cybernetics and Cyber-Counselling Interface have a significant role to play in terms of facilitating resilience and coping. When different intervention modules were introduced and administered, it showed a significant difference across the variables at both p<.05 (f=6.54; 6.57; 7.28) for main effects and p<.01 (f=12.06; f=14.93) for and interaction effects in terms of Autonomy and Directed Help-Seeking Behavior. When Cyber-Counselling Interventions were administered among the subjects, their locus of control gave forth to positive implications when they used internal and external locus of control in addition to a well-defined intrapersonal / self-attribution and situation acceptance.

The present study imparts wider thresholds for developing mechanisms of cyber-counselling and cybernetics at both policy frameworks level and implementation from grassroots to global levels.

7. REFERENCES

- [1] Alleman, J.R. (2002). Online Counseling: The internet and mental health treatment. *Psychotherapy: Theory/ Research/ Practice/ Training*, 39(2), 199-209.
- [2] Colon, Y. (1996). Chatter(er)ing through the fingertips: doing group therapy online, *Journal of Feminist Theory*, 9, 205-215.
- [3] Hanley, T. (2006). Developing youth-friendly online counseling services in the UK: A small scale investigation into the views of practitioners. *Counselling & Psychotherapy Research*, 6(3), 116-119.
- [4] Singh, A. K., and Singh, P.K, (2019). Recent Trends, Current Research in Cyberpsychology: a literature review. *Library Philosophy and Practice (e- journal)*. 2656. <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/2656>
- [5] Walsh, F. (1996). The Concept of Family Resilience: Crisis and Challenge, *Special Section Family Resilience: A Concept and Its Application Family Process*. 35:261-281.
- [6] Zainudin, Z.N., & Yusop, Y.M. (2018). Cyber- Counseling: Is It Really New?, *International Research Journal of Education and Sciences (IRJES)*, Vol. 2 Issue 2,19-24.