

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE ONLINE PSYCHOTHERAPEUTIC RELATIONSHIP IN TEACHERS TRAINING COLLEGE IN THE LAKE REGION, KENYA

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Abstract: -

Online technology emerged as a useful tool for psychotherapy practices in higher institution of learning. From 2014, the Ministry of Education provided internet technology facilities in public teacher training colleges. This was aimed at providing access to a wide range of educational material and facilities for educational guidance and counseling and psychotherapy practices. The purpose of this study was to identify the factors that influence online psychotherapeutic relationship between the counselor and the clients with a view of giving a critical perspective of evidence based approach for this practice. The objective of the study was to find out the factors influencing online psychotherapeutic relationship between the trainees and tutors in teacher training colleges in the Lake Region of Kenya. The population consisted of 327 participants. This included 40 tutors, and 287 teacher trainees. Data was collected by use of semi-structured questionnaires and interview schedule. Data collected was analyzed by use descriptive statistics and presented qualitatively and quantitatively. That included percentages and frequency count. The finding of this study showed that 76% of the tutor counselors reported that feelings influenced them to introduce online psychotherapy practice. The other results indicated that honesty, and 80% stated that trust and emotional closeness influence their relationship. At the same time, 73% of the tutors counselors reported feelings and honesty was reported by 83% and 87% said trust and emotional closeness. But only 7% remained neutral. The findings of this study may assist the government, non-governmental organization and professional psychotherapists to allocate more resources for the development of online psychotherapeutic relationship in Teacher Training Colleges. Based on the research findings the study recommends that online psychotherapeutic relationship be strengthened in teacher training colleges.

Keywords: - Influence, Online Psychotherapeutic relationship, Teacher trainees, Lake Region



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INTRODUCTION

Online Psychotherapy is the professional mental health helping relationship over the internet. It is also referred to as e-therapy, distance therapy, internet therapy and e-counseling. Personal qualities of the therapist and the ability to form a warm and supportive relationship are extremely important factors in therapeutic relationship. Griffiths (2006) explained that the ability to make relationships by both the client and the therapist has a direct correlation with forming the online psychotherapeutic relationship. When a client is feeling vulnerable, the way in which the therapist responds as a caregiver has an impact on the psychotherapy process. Kenya Counseling Association (2011) noted that psychotherapy is ineffective unless the person delivering the therapy is genuinely caring, empathetic and has the ability to bond with the clients. The formation of a strong online psychotherapeutic relationship leads to desirable results and it therefore demands commitment from the participants.

Statement of the problem

Students in teacher training colleges in Kenya are at the early adulthood stage of human growth and development. This is a critical period with myriads of psychological, social, and academic issues which affect trainees that require a personal and confidential psychotherapeutic intervention. For a long time face to face technique has been used by counselors to address these issues among the teacher trainees. Increased work load for tutor counselors and exposure to ICT has necessitated the introduction of online psychotherapy to cater for the high demand of counseling interventions among the teacher trainees. Online psychotherapeutic relationship has been established in developed countries; however there is limited information whether factors that influence this alliance have been established in teacher training colleges in Kenya. Therefore there was need to carry out a research study on factors that influence online psychotherapeutic relationship in teachers training colleges in the lake region, Kenya.

Purpose of the study was to;

Examine factors that influence online psychotherapeutic relationship in teacher training colleges in Kenya.

Objectives of the study was to;

Find out the factors that influence online psychotherapeutic relationship between the trainees and the tutors in teacher training colleges in Kenya

LITERATURE REVIEW

Psychotherapy is rooted and enhanced by a therapeutic relationship between therapist and client, as well as agreement about the goals and tasks of the treatment. Psychotherapy (individual and group) is a practice designed to provide symptom relief and personality change, reduce future symptomatic episodes, enhance quality of life, promote adaptive functioning in work/school and relationships, increase the likelihood of making healthy life choices, and offer other benefits established by the collaboration between the client and the psychotherapist. According to Smith (2010) researchers and practitioners continue to develop culturally-relevant, socially-proactive approaches and modalities that allow psychologists to extend psychotherapeutic services to vulnerable populations. The acquisition of multicultural competence and the adaptation of psychotherapy, whether in content, language, or approach, can improve client engagement and retention in treatment and can enhance development of the therapeutic relationship.

In United States of America, NIHM (2016) established that psychotherapeutic relationship begins with establishing empathy and sensitivity to the needs of the client. The therapist's ability to understand and communicate the client's needs and feelings play a key role in therapeutic relationship. Schultze (2006) stated that over 80% of the positive outcomes of therapy may be due to the therapeutic relationship with the contributing elements being the manner in which the therapist exhibits warmth, empathy, and respect for the client. Schultze (2006) infers that therapeutic alliance can be separated into three categories; bond, goals, and task. Bond between therapist and client includes trust and emotional closeness. Goals include the changes in behavior that the client and therapist set and work on together. Task is the method that both therapist and client use to achieve their goals. Thus, in order to maintain goals and tasks to be accomplished, there must be a relationship (bond) between therapist and client.

In Australia, Sigmund Freud, a therapist, cited by Child (2011) proposed four types of therapies. This includes, Psychoanalysis which finds out an effective treatment for patients with neurotic and hysterical symptoms. The second therapy is Humanistic that is composed of person centered model that embrace three conditions used in psychotherapy namely, empathy, genuineness and unconditional positive regard that is used in the therapeutic process. The third approach refers to behavior therapies that focus on individuals change in behavior. Finally Cognitive therapy seeks to help patients to overcome difficulties by identifying the dysfunctional thinking, behavior, and emotional responses.

Richardson (2012) an Asian psychologist exposed that psychotherapy for work and relationship is a social constructionist perspective, informed by feminist and social justice values, and responsive to radical changes in contemporary lives, that fosters a shift in vocational psychology from helping people develop careers to helping people construct lives through work and relationship. The proposition of this perspective is a new discourse for describing the construction of lives that specifies social contexts through which people construct lives. These social contexts are personal care work, personal relationships, and market work relationships. The propositions of counseling for work and relationship perspective are the central focus of how lives are constructed. This study identified the factors that influence online psychotherapeutic relationship in Teacher Training Colleges in Lake Region, Kenya.

In South Africa, Easterbrook and Meehan (2017) indicated that both the therapists and the client have a valuable contribution to the therapy. This call for both the counselor and the clients to prepare well for the psychotherapy process

and also set realistic goals that can be achieved from the therapeutic relationship. Therefore the formation and the outcome of a strong online psychotherapeutic relationship demands commitment from the participants

In Kenya, Mwititi (2011) noted that one out of every four Kenyans suffers from one form of mental health related challenges. This means that people suffer from a state that requires attention. It is estimated that mental challenges affect at least 10 million people in Kenya. It is clear that this situation could have been prevented if counseling, especially online psychotherapy was in place. The therapist would use online platform to reach many clients at a given time. Kenya Counseling Association (2011) noted that psychotherapy is ineffective unless the person delivering the therapy is genuinely caring, empathetic and has the ability to bond with the client. This study identified the factors that influence online psychotherapeutic relationship in Teacher Training Colleges in Lake Region, Kenya.

Research design

The study utilized a survey design to gather information as it is during the study period. Kothari (2011) observed that the purpose of survey design is used to gather data that describes the state of affairs as it exists at present. Survey usually involves a method of collecting data by interviewing or administering a questionnaire to a sample of individuals. Orodho and Kombo (2006) emphasized that it can be used when collecting information about peoples' attitudes, opinions, habits, or any of the variety of educational issues. The variables under investigation in this study that influence online psychotherapeutic relationship includes, the respondents' feelings, honesty, trust and emotional closeness, and that counseling can take place regardless of the geographical location.

Geographical Location of the Study

This Study was conducted in Teacher Training Colleges in the Lake Region, Kenya. The regions comprise Homa Bay, Kisii, Kisumu, Migori and Siaya Counties. The region borders western region to the north, Transzoia region to the east and the republic of Tanzania to the southern part of Kenya. The choice of the study location was necessitated by little documentation on the practice of online psychotherapy in teachers training colleges in Kenya and frequent interruptions of power which affect the provision of service. According to Kenya Vision 2030 (2007) the rapid urbanization in the Lake Region has led to rural urban- rural migration in search of employment. Transport infrastructure remains poor and less than 50 % of the roads are paved. Only 30% of the population has access to electricity, and the majority of the population has no access to proper water and sanitation services. Due to the low income generating capacity, most households are unable to afford connection costs associated with rural electrification. In terms of water infrastructure, opportunities exist to link the counties of Migori, Homa Bay, Siaya, and Kisumu through Lake Victoria. Air transport can be improved by the rehabilitation of airstrips in Kabunde in Homa Bay County and Lichota in Migori.

According to Kenya Vision 2030 (2007) key development opportunities for the region lie in the currently underexploited natural resources. Kisii County has adequate rainfall and red volcanic soil exist that can support extensive, high yield farms. Migori County has greater potential in sugar cane and tobacco farming as well as fishing along its Lake Victoria coast line. Homa Bay County has potential for cotton farming, as well as the cultivation of sorghum and sugar cane. The numerous rivers in the region offer opportunities for the development hydroelectric power, which may Harness sustained electricity supply to the national grid. Tourist attractions include nature, wildlife and culture. The Lake Region houses educational polytechnics and Universities.

Research Population

The population of the study comprised 2200 respondents drawn from five public teacher training colleges within the Lake Region. Sample size of 327 respondents was selected from the population and involved in the study. Each college has eight second year classes and each class has tutors responsible for those classes as indicated in Table 3.3. This population has been exposed to curriculum in counseling and computer studies and based on this background it was easy for them to interpret and understand the research questionnaire on online psychotherapy.

Table 3.3: Number of second year trainees in college

College code	Class								Total	%
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H		
01	56	59	60	58	59	61	61	58	471	21.4
02	97	97	97	99	98	97	97	97	772	35.1
03	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	362	16.5
04	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	143	6.5
05	58	56	58	56	56	56	58	58	452	20.5
Total	275	276	279	277	277	278	280	277	2200	100

Source: Teacher Training College, Deans' office 2015/2016

Sample Size and Sampling Procedures

The study was conducted in five (5) public TTCs in Lake Region, Kenya. Out of the total 2200 participants from the five teacher training colleges, the researcher selected sample size of 327 participants. According to table 3.1 by Kathuri and Pals (1993) cited by Ocholla (2014), for a population of two thousand two hundred and twenty (2200) a sample size of three hundred and twenty seven (327) is recommended to be suitable. Kombo and Tromp, (2006) pointed out that sampling is the process of selecting a suitable sample of a population for determining the characteristics of the whole population. Out of 327 respondents, 40 tutor counselors and 287 trainees were selected to participate in the study. Simple Random Sampling procedure was used to select 57 trainees from each college. Stratified sampling procedure was used to select seven trainees from each class to participate in the study. Stratified sampling procedure was used to highlight a specific subgroup within a population by gender. After the formation of the subgroups stratified simple random sampling was used to select random samples in proportion from each strata created to be used in the study. Kothari (2011) pointed out that Stratified Simple Random Sampling is appropriate because every participant has an equal chance of inclusion in the sample. Purposive sampling procedure was used select 8 tutor counselors of which each of them was assigned a second year class in each college to participate in the study as shown in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4: Distribution of respondents by college and by class

College	Class								Tutor	Total	%
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H			
01	6	7	7	8	7	8	7	7	8	65	19.9
02	7	8	7	7	8	7	8	7	8	67	20.4
03	8	7	6	7	7	8	7	7	8	65	19.9
04	7	6	7	8	7	8	7	7	8	65	19.9
05	7	8	7	7	7	6	8	7	8	65	19.9
Total	35	36	34	37	36	37	37	35	40	327	100

Source: Teacher Training College, Deans' office 2015/2016

Instruments of Data Collection

Data for the study was collected through a self-structured questionnaire. The researcher constructed the questionnaire based on the objectives, research questions, literature review, and consultation with the research supervisors of Rongo University in the Department of Educational Psychology. The research instruments contained open ended, closed ended and a rating scale items. Both the trainees and the tutors responded to similar items. The instruments were used to collect information in line with objectives of online psychotherapy practice. These instruments were preferred because the respondents were able to read, understand and interpret the instructions provided.

Validity of the Instruments

Mugenda and Mugenda (2009) defined validity as the degree to which results obtained from the analysis of data actually represents the phenomenon under study. Mugenda and Mugenda (2009) refer to Validity of instruments as the degree to which an instrument actually measures what the researcher intends to measure. The questionnaire was viewed by the research supervisors of Rongo University. The researcher revised the questionnaire based on the recommendations suggested by the supervisors before using it in data collection.

Reliability of the Instruments

Mugenda and Mugenda (2009) noted that reliability is a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results after repeated trials. Kothari (2011) explained that the reliability can be tested by finding out about the data, for example if there is any bias of the compiler, the desired level of accuracy and if it was achieved. Reliability of the instrument was established by Test retest procedure which was done through piloting on selected respondents identical to the ones used in the study from a selected teachers training college. A simple random sampling procedure was used to select a population of 98 (30%) respondents to participate in the pilot study. According to Kombo and Tromp (2006) 30% of the study sample size is appropriate for the pilot study. The pilot study had the same characteristics with those included in the actual research. The expected reliability index was at 0.60 which is within the acceptable threshold.

Data Collection Procedures

The research acquired a permit from the National Council of Science and Technology, Nairobi to facilitate research authorization. The researcher made an appointment to visit the principals of Migori, Asumbi, Kenyena, Ugenya and Bondo Teacher Training Colleges, in order to seek permission from college administrations, concerning data collection. On the agreed date, the researcher collected data in line with the research objectives and questions. The researcher administered the questionnaire in person.

Methods of Data analysis

Data was cleaned, coded, organized and subjected to Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS). According to Cohen, Manson and Morrison (2011) cleaning is the process of identifying, and removing the incorrect and inaccurate data. Editing was done to eliminate errors made by the respondents during data collection procedure. This method requires interpretation of the responses and it helps to edit unnecessary information provided by the respondents. Quantitative data was coded and entered in the computer for data analysis using SPSS. Quantitative data from closed ended questions was grouped and analyzed using descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics entailed frequency counts and percentages, to analyzed data obtained from the questionnaire. Frequency counts were computed for the data collected by use of tables to establish various distributions that may occur from the study. The results were presented using tables, pie charts and bar graphs.

Results and discussions

The purpose of this study was to examine the factors which influence online psychotherapeutic relationship in public teacher training colleges in the Lake Region, Kenya. This chapter presents the analysis, findings and discussions of the collected data based on demographic information and research objectives of the study. Descriptive statistic was used to analyze the variables used in the study. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program was used to analyze the collected data. The results were displayed inform of percentages, means, charts and frequency tables.

Demographic characteristics of the tutors and trainees

Demographic information for trainees and tutors included the questionnaire return rate, gender, age and basic training of the study respondents.

Summary of return rate of the questionnaire

Table 4.1.1: Summary of the return rate

TUTORS			TRAINEEES			
College	Administered	Returned	Questionnaires		Returned	Return Rate (%)
			Return Rate (%)	Administered		
1	8	8	20	57	55	19.2
2	8	5	12.5	59	47	16.4
3	8	7	17.5	57	48	16.7
4	8	6	15	57	50	17.4
5	8	5	12.5	57	50	17.4
Total	40	30	75	287	250	87.1

Source: Survey data (2017)

The findings of demographic information indicated that out of the 40 questionnaires administered to eight tutors from each of the five teachers training colleges, the return rate was at 75%. The findings further indicated that out of the 287 questionnaires administered to 59 trainees from one of the five training colleges and 57 that were administered to trainees from the remaining four training colleges, 250 were returned. The return rate was 87.1%. According to Oso and Onen (2011) this return rate is within the acceptable threshold. This was achieved because the researcher went out to the respondents to collect data in person.

4.1.2: Gender of the respondent

In this first item the respondents were asked to state their gender. Gender was important in this study because it explained the interest and degree of openness of both male and female respondents in psychotherapy practice. The results showed that female respondents were more than the male respondents as displayed in table 4.1.2.

Table 4.1.2: Gender of the respondents

	Tutors		Trainees	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Male	14	46.7	105	42
Female	16	53.3	145	58
Total	30	100	250	100

The results showed that both male and female tutor counselors had equal chances of participating in the study and that a larger percentage of participants were of female gender. Table 4.1.2 showed that 14(46.7%) of tutor respondents were of the male gender while 16(53.3%) of the respondents were of the female gender. Table 4.1.2 also showed that there were 145 (58%) female respondents and 105 (42%) male respondents across the colleges involved.

This study finding is in agreement with Lande, Burton and Sullivan (2011) who observed that women reported higher levels of self-disclosure to female therapists and that they are readily accessible. Romano and Kravitz (2005) noted that

in primary care clinics women had preference for having a female service provider. Reasons for preference of female therapists included feeling of comfort while talking to a female therapist unlike the male therapist. The respondents prefer a female therapist if their presenting problem was of personal nature. Blow, Timm and Cox (2008) indicated that a male therapist was preferred when the presenting problem was vocational in nature.

As it can be seen from table 4.1.2, catering for clients' preference for therapy can lead to a better psychotherapy engagement and outcome. However when receiving crisis services the client may not have the time to become acclimated to a male therapist. The American Psychological Association (APA) (2017) documented that counseling is a nurturing profession and that women tend to be more collectivistic focused on serving the family and the community, and this may confirm why they are more appointed for care services than men in teacher training colleges. APA (2017) noted that women are drawn to psychology because they perceive themselves as more empathetic than men. This is in agreement with Luo (2002) who observed that mental health treatment is provided by practitioners where women outnumber men seeking help for emotional problems. Therefore the study findings showed that there was a remarkable disparity in terms of participation and that the gender of the tutors influenced their participation in the study either positively or negatively.

Table 4.3: Factors that influence online psychotherapeutic relationship

ITEM	D	SD	N	A	SA	Mean	S.D
Counselor's feelings for the client leads to a strong online psychotherapeutic relationship	0 (0%)	1 (3.3%)	7 (23.3%)	16 (53.3%)	6 (20%)	3.90	0.76
Honesty is a condition that contributes to a strong psychotherapeutic relationship	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	5 (16.7%)	15 (50%)	10 (33.3%)	4.17	0.69
Trust and emotional closeness depends on both the client and trainee	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4 (13.3%)	17 (56.7%)	9 (30%)	4.16	0.65
Counseling process can take place regardless of geographical location	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (6.7%)	15 (50%)	13 (43.3%)	4.37	0.62

The first item the researcher sought to find out from the respondents whether the counselors' feelings led to a strong online psychotherapeutic relationship. The results showed that the counselors' feelings led to a strong online psychotherapeutic relationship in teacher training colleges. Table 4.3 showed that 16(53.3%) of the tutors agreed with the research claim. 6(20%) of the respondents strongly agreed that the counselor's feelings for the client lead to a strong online psychotherapeutic relationship. This is in agreement with NIHM (2016) reported that psychotherapeutic relationship begins with establishing empathy and sensitivity to the needs of the client. The therapist's ability to understand and communicate the client's needs and feelings play a key role in therapeutic relationship. In addition, Schultze (2006) stated that over 80% of the positive outcomes of therapy may be due to the therapeutic relationship with the contributing elements being the manner in which the therapist exhibits warmth, empathy, and respect for the client. This implies that for a strong psychotherapeutic relationship to be established empathy, genuineness and unconditional positive regard as core conditions are required. Therefore it can be concluded that counselors feeling is significant in establishing online alliance. The number of those who had neutral position was at 7(23.3%) and the frequency of tutors who strongly disagreed was 1 (3.3%). This showed that there is need for tutors to be exposed to online psychotherapy practice.

In the next item the tutors were asked to state their level of agreement on whether honesty influences online psychotherapeutic relationship. The outcome show that tutors agree that honesty contributes to a strong online psychotherapeutic relationship between the counselors and the clients. Table 4.3 showed that 10(33.3%) of the tutors strongly agreed while 15(50%) agreed that honesty contributes to a strong psychotherapeutic relationship between the tutor counselor and the teacher trainees. This indicates a strong agreement with the research claim that honesty contributes to a strong online psychotherapeutic relationship. This was confirmed from the literature review by Young (2006) who pointed out that clients experienced a sense of freedom to express themselves online without embarrassment or fear of judgment from therapist's honesty and openness. In the following item respondents were asked to cite their level of agreement on whether trust and emotional closeness influence online psychotherapy. Results indicate that trust and emotional closeness in online psychotherapeutic relationship depend on both the counselors and the clients. Table 4.3 showed that 9 (30%) and 17(56.7%) of the respondents cited strongly agree and agree respectively. This is contrary to the views of McLeod (2009) who expressed that there is gap between email from the client, response from therapist and difficulty in expressing emotions through text communication. 4(13.3%) of the respondents took a neutral position, indicating their uncertainty about trust and emotional closeness as a contributing factor to establishing online psychotherapeutic alliance.

The researcher asked the tutors to cite whether counseling process can take place regardless of geographical location. The results from the respondents show that counseling process can take place regardless of geographical location. According to Sussman (2004) online psychotherapy can bring services to persons in geographically isolated areas, as well as to those who cannot leave their home due to illness, physical limitations, transportation difficulties or family obligations. The outcome indicates that 13(43.3%) and 15(50%) cited strongly agree and agree respectively. The research claim is retained that online psychotherapy can take place regardless of the geographical location. However the counselor may not have any feelings for the client regardless of the separate location, even though willing to engage in online psychotherapeutic

relationship with the clients. However Child (2011) argued that providing online psychotherapy services over the internet can be a challenge with respect to client identification. The psychotherapist may be unable to establish the clients' mental status to consent to the psychotherapy process. Lack of confidentiality, limited internet and negative attitude were cited as other factors that limit online therapeutic relationship. This explains the outcome that 2(6.7%) of the respondents took a neutral position.

The means obtained when the tutors were asked if honesty is a condition that contributes to a strong psychotherapeutic relationship, if trust and emotional closeness depends on both the client and trainees and if counseling process can take place regardless of geographical location were 4.17, 4.16, and 4.37 respectively. This showed that the responses made by the tutors were that they agreed and strongly agreed with the above statements. The standard deviations obtained were 0.69, 0.65, 0.62 which are all less than 1 indicating that the responses made were close to the mean obtained further supporting the conclusions made. When asked if the counselor's feelings for a client led to a strong online psychotherapeutic relationship the mean obtained was 3.90 showing that the respondents view was between being neutral on the matter and agreeing with the statement. The standard deviation was 0.76 which is less than 1 indicating that the responses given by the tutors were close to the mean generated.

The researcher also collected from the teacher trainees on the factors that influence online psychotherapeutic relationship and the results were as documented below. The items included counselors' feelings for the client that leads to a strong relationship, that honesty contributes to a strong online psychotherapeutic relationship, that trust and emotional closeness depend on both the counselor and the client, and that counseling can take place regardless of the geographical location. The results indicated that most respondents cited factors that lead to a strong psychotherapeutic relationship as shown in table 4.2

Table 4.2: Factors that influence psychotherapeutic relationship

ITEM	D	SD	N	A	SA	Mean	SD
Counselor's feelings for the client leads to a strong online psychotherapeutic relationship	22 (8.8%)	9 (3.6%)	28 (11.2%)	94 (37.6%)	97 (38.8%)	3.96	1.19
Honesty is a condition that contributes to a strong psychotherapeutic relationship	8 (3.2%)	11 (4.4%)	16 (6.4%)	84 (33.6%)	131 (52.4%)	4.29	0.98
Trust and emotional closeness depends on both the client and trainee	8 (3.2%)	8 (3.2%)	33 (13.2%)	97 (38.8%)	104 (41.6%)	4.12	0.99
Counseling process can take place regardless of geographical location	15 (6%)	15 (6%)	26 (10.4%)	83 (33.2%)	111 (44.4%)	4.02	1.18

The first concern in this area was to find out from the respondents whether counselors' feelings influence online psychotherapeutic relationship. This was important in this study as it contributes to a strong online psychotherapeutic relationship between the counselors and the clients. This was important as it would show counselors' empathy to the clients. The results indicated that most respondents cited counselors' feelings as a factor that leads to a strong psychotherapeutic relationship as shown in table 4.6.1. Table 4.6.1 showed 22 (8.8%) respondents disagreed and said that counselor's feelings for the client do not lead to a strong online psychotherapeutic relationship while 9 (3.6%) of the respondents strongly disagreed. 28 (11.2%) of the respondents had a neutral opinion while 94 (37.6%) and 97 (38.8%) agreed and strongly agreed that counselor's feelings for the client leads to a strong psychotherapeutic relationship.

A significant number of trainees strongly agreed and agreed that counselors' feelings lead to a strong online psychotherapeutic relationship. NIHM (2016) reported that psychotherapeutic relationship begins with establishing empathy and sensitivity to the needs of the client. The therapist's ability to understand and communicate the client's needs and feelings play a key role in therapeutic relationship. In addition, Schultze (2006) stated that over 80% of the positive outcomes of therapy may be due to the therapeutic relationship with the contributing elements being the manner in which the therapist exhibits warmth, empathy, and respect for the client. This implies that for a strong psychotherapeutic relationship to established empathy, genuineness and unconditional positive regard as core conditions are required. Therefore it can be concluded that counselors feeling is significant in establishing online alliance that enhance online psychotherapeutic relationship.

In the next item the respondents were asked to state whether honesty influence online psychotherapeutic relationship. This factor was important in this study as it enhances the interaction between the counselors and the trainees. The participants identified honesty as a contributing aspect in establishing a strong online psychotherapeutic relationship between the counselors and the trainees as indicated in table 4.6.1 which showed that 8 (3.2%) respondents disagreed that honesty was a condition that contributes to a strong psychotherapeutic relationship while 11 (4.4%) of the respondents strongly disagreed. 16 (6.4%) of the respondents had a neutral opinion while 84 (33.6%) and 131 (52.4%) agreed and strongly agreed that honesty is a condition that contributes to a strong psychotherapeutic relationship. This is in agreement with

Young (2006) who pointed out that clients experienced the sense of freedom to express themselves online without embarrassment or fear of judgment from therapist's honesty and openness.

In this item the respondents were asked to state whether trust influence online psychotherapeutic relationship between the counselors' and the clients. This was important in this study because trust encourages openness between the counselors and clients. The outcome show that most respondents agreed that trust influence online psychotherapeutic relationship between the counselors and the clients as displayed in table 4.2. It can be seen that 8 (3.2%) respondents disagreed that trust and emotional closeness depend on both the client and trainee while 8 (3.2%) of the respondents strongly disagreed. 33 (13.2%) of the respondents had a neutral opinion while 97 (38.8%) and 104 (41.6%) agreed and strongly agreed respectively that trust and emotional closeness depends on both the tutors and trainees.

The first item on table 4.2 had a mean of 3.96 which indicated that on average the responses from the trainees showed that most of them were neutral and agreed that the counselor's feelings towards the client led to a strong online psychotherapeutic relationship. The standard deviation obtained was 1.19 which indicated that the responses given by the trainees were not clustered around the mean but instead were more spread out. The second and third items obtained had means of 4.29 and 4.12 respectively. This showed that most of the trainees agreed and strongly agreed that honesty is a condition that contributes to strong psychotherapeutic relationship and that trust and emotional closeness depends on both the trainees and counselor. The standard deviation obtained is 0.98 and 0.99 which is less than 1 indicating that the responses given by the trainees were clustered around the mean value obtained.

In the next item the respondents were required to state their level of agreement on counseling process and geographical location as a factor that influences online psychotherapeutic relationship between the counselors and the clients. This area was important to the study because the factor can enhance easy access between counselors and clients in separate locations. Results showed that most respondents agreed that counseling process can take place regardless of geographical location as displayed in table 4.6.1. It showed 15 (6%) respondents disagreed that counseling process can take place regardless of geographical location while 15 (6%) of the respondents strongly disagreed. 26 (10.4%) of the respondents had a neutral opinion while 83 (33.2%) and 111 (44.4%) agreed and strongly agreed respectively that counseling process can take place regardless of the geographical location between the client and counselor. This was contrary to the views of Child (2011) who argued that providing online psychotherapy services over the internet can be a challenge with respect to client identification. The psychotherapist may be unable to establish the clients' mental status to consent to the psychotherapy process. However the counselor may not have any feelings for the client regardless of the separate location, even though willing to engage in online psychotherapy with the clients. Lack of confidentiality, limited internet and negative attitude were cited as other factors that limit online psychotherapeutic relationship between the tutor counselors and the clients.

This section further sought to identify factors that influence online psychotherapeutic relationship between the tutor counselors and the clients. Items in this section included the counselor's feelings for the client, honesty and online psychotherapeutic relationship, trust and emotional closeness and that counseling process can take place regardless of geographical location. These factors are important to the study because they enhance a strong psychotherapeutic relationship between the tutor counselors and the clients. Kenya Counseling Association (2011) noted that psychotherapy is ineffective unless the therapist is genuinely caring, empathetic and has the ability to bond with the client. The outcome was as displayed in table 4.3

4.4: Summary, Conclusion and recommendations

The goal of this summary is to highlight important research findings on the factors that influence online psychotherapeutic relationship

The study found out that counselors' and clients' feelings, honesty, trust and emotional closeness and geographical location influence online psychotherapeutic relationship as explained below.

- i. The findings reveal that 24.64% of the respondents indicated that counselors' feelings lead to a strong online psychotherapeutic relationship between the counselors and the clients, while 6.79% of the respondents disagreed with the research claim. The study also obtained a mean of 3.96 and a standard deviation of 1.19.
- ii. In addition, 81.07% % of the respondents showed that trust enhances online psychotherapeutic relationship between the counselor and the clients. Moreover 7.14% of the participants disagreed that trust and emotional closeness lead to a strong online psychotherapeutic relationship. The mean obtained was 4.12 and a standard deviation of 0.99.
- iii. Furthermore, 79.29% and 15.36% of the respondents indicated that online psychotherapy relationship can take place regardless of the geographical location respectively. The mean obtained was 4.02 and a standard deviation of 1.18.

Other factors which influence online psychotherapeutic relationship identified by the respondents include empathy, congruence and unconditional positive regard.

The results also led to the conclusion that tutor counselors' and clients feelings, honesty, trust, emotional closeness and geographical location influence online psychotherapeutic relationship between the counselors and the clients. The respondents further noted that empathy, congruence and unconditional positive regard influence online psychotherapy practice in teachers training colleges. With regard to trainees' and tutors' usage of online psychotherapy, psychotherapy should be included in the primary teacher education syllabus with emphasis on online psychotherapy practice. The study was based in public teacher training colleges which may not be generalized to private teacher training colleges. Therefore a similar study should be carried out in private teacher training colleges to ascertain the ideal findings. Future researchers should develop a soft wear for online psychotherapy in teacher training colleges and other learning institutions in Kenya.

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