The scale revision of help-seeking attitude of online and face-to-face counseling with college students in Taiwan
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Abstract
As young people are in the transitional period from adolescence to adulthood, some developmental and environmental factors affect college students because they are entering into a totally different environment from high school; consequently, this period is a very significant and interesting study area (Ercana, 2010). As the use of the internet has become the norm for young people, web-based mental health services could play a more important role in improving their mental health; understanding young peoples’ perspectives about online services would be essential in further research (King, Bambling, Lloyd, Gomurra, & Smith, 2006). Stallard et al. (2010) found that 61% of parents felt that computer programs could help young people understand their psychological problems, with 55% feeling computer programs could help them cope with distress. Sixty-seven percent of parents thought potential benefits of computer programs were increasing opportunities for peer support; anonymity reducing potential embarrassment; opportunities for independent help seeking and the provision of good quality information; and computers being a familiar aspect of everyday life (p.82).

For young people, with nearly all subjects of study having access to computers at home using computers and the Internet for more than four hours each week, half of them used the Internet to seek information or to cope with problems (although this method may be not very helpful for them). (Stallard, et al., 2010). The aspect of the help-seeking pathway is still relatively uncharted, therefore should be the focus of future research (Zwaanswijk, et al., 2003). From a literature review, there were few studies using face-to face counseling attitude to predict online counseling attitude, so the main research purposes were: (1) Revise the scale of the attitude in seeking face-to-face and online counseling to be suitable for Taiwanese college students. (2) Understand the condition of the attitude in seeking face-to-face and online counseling in Taiwanese college students. (3) Explore whether the attitude in seeking face-to-face counseling is the predictor of the attitude in seeking online counseling in Taiwanese college students.

The subjects in this study were college students from one university in Taiwan. We used purposive sampling and collected 100 copies from May 2012 to June 2012. Missing answers in any of the sub-scales were excluded from analysis. In the end, 73 valid questionnaires were analyzed. The author used 26 items (each subscale) to measure Taiwanese college students. The Instruments used the scales of Rochlen et al. (2004), included the attitude toward face-to-face (FCAS) and the attitude toward online counseling (OCAS); each scale included two dimensions; the dimension of “Discomfort” meant emotional feeling toward online or face-to-face counseling; the dimension of “Value” meant
perceptions how they and others would have benefits. The instruments all used a 6-point Likert scale; scored 1-6 from “Almost disagree” to “Almost agree”. The revised instruments provided good validity and reliability. The author analyzed the data by SPSS12.0, and used stepwise regression to predict the help-seeking attitude of online-counseling.

Using item analysis, FCAS was finally revised from 26 to 20 items and OCAS from 26 to 21 items; the proportion of variance explained in the two factors was 60.273% (FACS) and 52.180% (OCAS). The revised instruments had good validity and reliability. Taiwan college student’s help-seeking attitude was positive. The important predictor of help-seeking attitude with online counseling was “help-seeking attitude with face-to-face counseling”, and the proportion of variance explained was 30.1%.

Counselors can use this scale to understand the view about college students’ concept about counseling, which could offer counselors to decisive which counseling methods could service clients. Once when counselors want to use online counseling to service students, counselor can first explore clients’ face-to-face counseling attitude, and then assess the possibility of using online counseling. There are more researches in different behaviors of people in cultural and ethnicity is in needed. How to improve using online counseling for students, use online counseling to maintain the effects of face-to-face counseling, and look for which person is suitable for online counseling need to explore in the future.

**Key Words**: help-seeking attitude, online counseling, face-to-face counseling, college students