

**CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES ENCOUNTERED BY SCHOOL COUNSELLORS  
DURING COVID 19 FIRST WAVE**

**MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK**

## CONTENTS

<b>SL NO</b>	<b>CHAPTERS</b>	<b>PAGE NO.</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1-8</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	<b>9-12</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>20-25</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>CASE DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>26-59</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>DATA ANALYSIS</b>	<b>60-75</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>FINDING, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION</b>	<b>76-81</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>82-86</b>
	<b>APPENDICES</b>	<b>87-89</b>

## ABSTRACT

A **school counselor** is a professional who works in schools to provide academic, career, college access/affordability/admission, and social-emotional competencies to all students through a school counseling program. During the Covid 19 pandemic first wave time the school counsellors in Kerala has given the duty to provide psychosocial support to quarantine and Covid positive people. Through this study the researcher aimed to know about the role, challenges, opportunities and coping strategies of school counsellors during those works. And also aimed to understand about the attitude of working environment including parents, teachers, colleagues', students and school management towards the school counsellors.

The study was qualitative in nature, the researcher first contacted one counsellor and then contacted the other counsellors by snowball sampling method. The researcher did pilot study and on the behalf of that the researcher prepared a semi-structured interview guide. The study looked at five cases, from Trivandrum districts of Kerala and the semi structured interview guide was used to gather information from the respondents. The samples are from 5 different government schools in Trivandrum district. After collecting the respondents from counsellor through direct in-depth interview, thematic analysis was done to analyze the data. The thematic analysis helped the researcher to understand about the roles, challenges and opportunities encountered by school counsellors and also examined about their coping strategies and the attitude of their working environment.

The findings of the study indicates that the experience of school counsellor includes both positive and negative that is they experience both challenges and got some opportunities. That is they get some opportunities and as well as the job during that time was challenging. The challenges includes the long hours of work, lack of technological awareness, work from home difficulties, lack of proper trainings in the initial days of work, transportation issues, financial problems and the opportunities mainly include better family understanding, get time to polish their knowledge and skill. The attitude of students, colleagues are satisfying but the attitude of school management, other teachers and parents are different in different schools. The coping strategies mainly used by them are practicing yoga, find time for their selves, being alone for some time and watching entertainments.

**Keywords:** *School counsellors, opportunities, challenges, Covid 19, attitude*

**CHAPTER 1**  
**INTRODUCTION**

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

A **school counselor** or **guidance counselor** is a professional who works in primary (elementary and middle) schools or secondary schools to provide academic, career, college access/affordability/admission, and social-emotional competencies to all students through a school counseling program (wikipedia). The actual role of school counsellor is to conducts various activities for the elementary, secondary and higher secondary students. Which include Individual Counselling, organising and conducting counseling groups, classroom and other group guidance activities, standardised test administration and interpretation, nonstandardised assessment (i.e. case studies, observation, information gathering interviews, questionnaires), needs assessment (to determine the priority needs of the target population), consultation activities, providing career guidance and information, providing educational guidance and information (including scholarships, college placement, student scheduling) prevention planning and implementation activities, developmental activities and also include administrative activities (eGyanKosh).

Corona virus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered corona virus. Most people infected with the COVID-19 virus experienced mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment. Older people and those with underlying medical problems like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer are more likely to develop serious illness. The first wave of Covid 19 starts in Kerala by March 2020. First starts with 3 cases in Pathanamthitta district and then it spread all over Kerala. Then the country gone for lock down thus Kerala also followed the same. During this time more people become Covid positive and many went for Quarantine during this time many doubts the common people had and only one helpline service that DISHA for clearing their doubt. But when more calls come to DISHA then it's become not possible, meanwhile the mental state of people became more and more weak. Thus the District Mental Health Program Trivandrum has come with a new source for quarantine people, Covid positive patients, and migrant labours all to clear their doubts and for assessing their mental state and providing mental support. The DHMP provided special online trainings to school counsellors and a list of people had been provided for them, then they wanted to call this list of people on all days and want to make list of people who didn't attend the calls and also want to conduct follow up call.

During the initial days of work school counsellor wants to do this work at DMHP Trivandrum, then transportation for them was a big problem for them then they were asked to do it from their home. And also during the initial days of work they have to call about 60-70 calls per day then after sometimes it expand up to 80 – 120 calls. They have to do follow up calls and their department has asked them to provide psychosocial support and enquire about the mental status of school students. This duty has created some opportunities and many challenges for them from working from their house. One of challenging factor is that they did get any leave or weekly off, all the seven days of a week they want to work. Works at home duties

were very much challenging for most of the school counsellors in Trivandrum district. For many they have many works in the home, their children were young; work at home was challenging that they have responsibility as a mother. These small children are not aware about the work of their mother; they always want their mother to be with them.

## **1.2 BACKGROUND OF THEMES**

### **1.2.1 SCHOOL COUNSELOR**

A school counselor or guidance counselor is a professional who works in primary (elementary and middle) schools or secondary schools to provide academic, career, college access/affordability/admission, and social-emotional competencies to all students through a school counseling program (wikipedia).

School counselors know how to listen and help. They'll take your problem seriously and work with you to find a good solution. School counselors are trained to help with everything — and it doesn't have to be just school stuff. A counselor can help you deal with the sadness when someone has died as well as advise you on taking the right classes to get into your dream college. It takes a lot of training to be a school counselor. Most not only have college degrees but also master's degrees, as well as special training and certification in counseling. One of the many good things about school counselors is that they are up-to-date on all the top things that affect students, including any trends that might affect your school.

School counselors can give you all sorts of tips and support on solving problems and making good decisions. Chances are that whatever problem you have, your counselor has seen it before and has lots of good advice on how to help you work through it. Counselors can give you tips on standing up for yourself if you're being bullied, managing stress, talking to your parents, and dealing with anger and other difficult moods. Counselors also can advise you on problems you may have with a teacher, such as communication difficulties or questions over grades. School counselors are plugged in to the rest of the school community and, in many cases, the outside community as well. So they can refer students to outside resources like substance abuse treatment centers, professional therapists, and even health clinics (kidshealth).

### **1.2.2 COVID 19**

Corona virus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered corona virus. Most people infected with the COVID-19 virus experienced mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment. Older people and those with underlying medical problems like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer are more likely to develop serious illness. The best way to prevent and slow down transmission is to be well informed about the COVID-19 virus, the disease it causes and how it spreads. Protect yourself and others from infection by washing your

hands or using an alcohol based rub frequently and not touching your face. The COVID-19 virus spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes, so it's important that you also practice respiratory etiquette (WHO).

COVID-19 affects different people in different ways. Most infected people will develop mild to moderate illness and recover without hospitalization. Most common symptoms: fever, dry cough, tiredness. Less common symptoms: aches and pains, sore throat, diarrhea, conjunctivitis, headache, loss of taste or smell, a rash on skin, or discolouration of fingers or toes. Overview Statistics Symptoms testing prevention coping new treatments people also search for COVID-19 vaccine (India).

### **1.2.2 SCHOOL COUNSELLING**

The primary objective of every guidance and counseling programme is to adjust the perceptions and ambitions of the target (the client) to match the expectations of the deliverer (the counselor or guidance professional). Guidance and counselling are normalisation mechanisms, designed to eradicate non-standard / undesirable / anomalous behaviours and attitudes from the recipient group. The School Counseling Program is comprehensive in scope, developmental in nature, proactive in design, and differentiated in order to address individual and societal needs. The role of the school counselor is multidimensional. School counselors ascribe to the ASCA Code of Ethics and participate in on-going professional development. School counselors incorporate leadership, advocacy, counseling, consultation, coordination, collaboration and teaming, and the use of data to ensure students' success in the domains of academic, career, and personal/social development. School counselors are shared stakeholders working in collaboration and partnership with students, families, educators, and community members in a variety of settings at a building, district and community level. School counselors, in collaboration with stakeholders, are invested in helping students make the transition from school to school, school to work, or school to higher education or career and technical training. All students benefit from an interdisciplinary delivery system, which includes a school guidance curriculum, individual student planning, responsive services, and system support. The ongoing use of a variety of data sets, including process, perception and results data, is integral to ensure that every student receives the benefits of the School Counseling Program. The data is used to identify and address individual student needs and issues, examine current practices, and determine the best ways to make systemic changes in order to seek continuous improvement. The School Counseling Program delineates a framework of specific, measurable outcomes in the three domains of academic, career and personal/social development.

Role of school counselors in the United States began as a vocational guidance movement at the beginning of the 20th century. In 1907, Jesse B. Davis became the principal of a high school and encouraged the school English teachers to use compositions and lessons to relate career interests, develop character, and avoid

behavioral problems. From that grew systematic guidance programs, which later evolved into comprehensive school counseling programs that address three basic domains: academic development, career development, and personal/social development. 41 Counselling in Schools in North Carolina, one has to complete an approved master's degree in school counseling program in a regionally accredited college or university in order to be a licensed school counselor. Within these counselor education programs, several standards are studied such as the professional identity of school counseling, cultural diversity, human growth and development, and career development. Also required are the core components for helping relationships, group and individual work, assessment, research and program evaluation, knowledge and requirements for school counselors, contextual dimensions of school counseling, foundations of school counseling and an internship under a highly qualified school counselor. School counselors are expected to apply their professional training in schools in order to support student academic success. Through comprehensive school counseling programs of developmental, preventive, remedial, and responsive services, school counselors address academic development, career development, and personal/social development of students. This job description is a guide for the implementation of such comprehensive school counseling programs in the public schools of North Carolina. Professional school counselors, formerly referred to as "guidance counselors," are professional educators who have a master's degree or higher in school counseling (or the substantial equivalent), and are certified or licensed by the state in which they work. Professional school counselors possess the qualifications and skills necessary to address the full array of student's academic, personal, social, and career development needs. Professional school counselors advocate for and care for students, and are important members of the educational team. They consult and collaborate with teachers, administrators and families to help all students be successful academically, vocationally and personally.

The role and function of school counselors may be based on how they spend their time. Individual counseling, guidance activities, consultation and group counseling are major activities as measured by time commitments. It is noted that for senior high counselors, paper work, scheduling and administrative tasks are seen as significant time robbers that deter counselors from allotting more time for individual and group counseling. The variety in school settings will also account for some differences in the ways counselors may carry out their roles. However, some common influences determine the role and function of counselors regardless of the setting. These influences are: (1) Professional constants or determinants: These indicate what is appropriate and not appropriate to the counselor's role. These include guidelines and policy statements of professional organisations, licensing or certification limitations, accreditation guidelines and requirements, and the expectancies of professional training programs.(2) Personal factors: These factors involve the interest of the counselor such as what he or she likes to do, what the counselor gets encouraged to do and is rewarded for doing by the school, community or his peers, what the counselor has resources to do, what the counselor perceives as the appropriate role and function for a given setting and finally how life



in general is going for the counselor. The counselor's attitudes, values and experiences both on and off the job can influence how he or she views the job.

### **1.2.3 ROLE AND FUNCTIONS OF THE SCHOOL COUNSELLOR**

The actual role of school counsellor is to conduct various activities for the elementary, secondary and higher secondary students. Which include Individual Counselling, organising and conducting counseling groups, classroom and other group guidance activities, standardised test administration and interpretation, nonstandardised assessment (i.e. case studies, observation, information gathering interviews, questionnaires), needs assessment (to determine the priority needs of the target population), consultation activities, providing career guidance and information, providing educational guidance and information (including scholarships, college placement, student scheduling) prevention planning and implementation activities, developmental activities and also include administrative activities (eGyanKosh).

### **1.2.4 ROLE OF SCHOOL COUNSELLORS DURING COVID 19, TOWARDS SCHOOL STUDENTS**

Schools are facing unprecedented concerns with mental health and behavioral issues related to the COVID-19 stay-at-home orders as K-12 students are returning to school buildings. Government lockdowns, social isolation, home issues, death and sickness, and uncertainty related to COVID-19 could cause mental health issues such as depression, sleep deprivation, and anxiety, which in turn could adversely affect students' motivation for academic success and create behavioral issues in schools (London & Ingram, 2018; Talmus 2019). London and Ingram noted in a longitudinal study that elementary aged students reporting loneliness had higher depressive symptoms. The researchers noted that students' loneliness and isolation from other people forecasted later depression and anxiety in their lives.

Other mental health issues have been heightened including trauma, suicidality, technology addiction, drug and alcohol abuse, family dysfunction, and more (Gallo, 2017; Hou et al., 2019; Wan, 2020). Consequently, school safety may become an additional concern if these mental health issues are not appropriately addressed in order to avoid tragedies such as Columbine or Stoneman Douglas (Goff, 2019; Rasberry et al., 2020). However, Yablon (2019) noted schools can be safe zones for students suffering from trauma. School counselors are the main mental health professionals in most school building on a daily basis dealing with students who are emotionally at-risk (Robert Pincus, 2020).

### **1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Mental health experts predict high expected levels of depression, substance abuse, posttraumatic stress disorder, and suicide in students returning to school after the COVID-19 lockdowns (Wan, 2020). The

corona virus bills passed by Congress included little support for the upcoming mental health issues in the country—with much less support in schools. Wan noted nearly 20% of the United States population is expected to be unemployed during the summer of 2020 due to the COVID-19 shutdowns, affecting financial stress and subsequent family issues. Frasilho et al. (2016) noted a clear connection between parental distress due to unemployment and financial struggles with adolescent emotional problems due to the tension in the home as a result of COVID-19.

There is a concern among experts that many students will be reentering schools from the COVID-19 lockdowns with family, after experiencing or witnessing multiple Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) including abuse of a child; whether it is sexual, emotional, or physical in nature. School counselors are on the front line in assessing needs and providing care to school-age children in a PK-12 setting (Robert Pincus, 2020).

The life of people in Kerala during this time was also the same. During this time more people become Covid positive and many went for Quarantine during this time many doubts the common people had and only one helpline service that DISHA for clearing their doubt. But when more calls come to DISHA then it become not possible, meanwhile the mental state of people became more and more weak. Thus the District Mental Health Program Trivandrum has come with a new source for quarantine people, Covid positive patients, and migrant labours all to clear their doubts and for assessing their mental state and providing mental support. The DHMP provided special online trainings to school counsellors and a list of people had been provided for them, then they wanted to call this list of people on all days and want to make list of people who didn't attend the calls and also want to conduct follow up call. During the initial days of work school counsellor wants to do this work at DMHP Trivandrum, then transportation for them was a big problem for them then they were asked to do it from their home. And also during the initial days of work they have to call about 60-70 calls per day then after sometimes it expand up to from 80 – 120 calls. They have to do follow up calls and their department has asked them to provide psychosocial support and enquire about the mental status of school students.

#### **1.4 RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY**

Like all other the school counsellor were also placed at home during Covid 19 and asked to provide their service from home. The actual job of school counsellor is to provide Individual Counselling, organising and conducting counseling groups, classroom and other group guidance activities, standardised test administration and interpretation, nonstandardised assessment (i.e. case studies, observation, information gathering interviews, questionnaires), needs assessment (to determine the priority needs of the target population), consultation activities, providing career guidance and information, providing educational guidance and information (including scholarships, college placement, student scheduling) prevention planning and implementation activities, developmental activities and also include administrative activities.

And on Saturdays and during summer vacation they have to do the same for adolescent student who comes for regular meeting in the Anganwadi under the ICDS they are working. But during Covid 19 lock down period the school counsellor in Trivandrum district are assigned with new duties by DMHP and women and child department, they are asked to provide psychosocial support to quarantine person and Covid positive persons. During first one month they are asked to provide this service by going to DMHP Peroorkada, Trivandrum and other one month they have complained transportation problems and high risk of spreading disease they are placed in their houses and asked to provide this service from home through telephonic interview. But this was ok during the initial days because the number of calls was almost 60-70. But when Covid cases become more, the number cases become more and they are also asked to provide psychosocial support to school students and follow up calls for Covid positive patients, then the number of calls extended to 80 – 120.

This was challenging for them to do these much calls and also wants to do their works in their home. Many of them become stressed, no leave were provided for them, all the 7 days of a week they wants to do this calls. If they are week pr Covid positive then also they were asked do the same duty. This made them stressed thus some had practised their own stress management strategies to reduce their stress. And even though they were stressed and faced many challenges they got some opportunities to improve their professional knowledge and personal knowledge. And some had polished their ability to knowledge in different hobbies.

This study helps to understant about the experience of school counsellors during Covid 19 which include their opportunities and challenges, their coping strategies, attitude of working environment towards them. This study helps other researchers also to know about the experience of school counsellors during first wave of Covid 19 in Kerala. All know that the school counsellors are the people who give metal support to other. They provide services to other who are stressed; they provide services to almost 80-120 per day. But they didn't get any support from others. They didn't get any support from others, they didn't get any leave , they were asked to work all days in a week, on second Saturdays, Sundays and during all public holidays they were asked to work. As the social work trainees we want to address their life during this time and their situations. This research help the other researcher to understant the opportunities and challenges experienced by school counsellors during the first wave of Covid 19.

## **1.5 TITLE OF THE STUDY**

“CHALLENGES AND OPPERTUNITIES ENCOUNTERED BY SCHOOL COUNSELLORS DURING COVID 19 FIRST WAVE”

**CHAPTER -2**  
**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

## 2.1 INTRODUCTION

**A literature review is a comprehensive summary of previous research on a topic.** The review should enumerate, describe, summarize, objectively evaluate and clarify this previous research. It should give a theoretical base for the research and helps the author determine the nature of your research. The literature review acknowledges the work of previous researchers, and in so doing, assures the reader that your work has been well conceived. It is assumed that by mentioning a previous work in the field of study, that the author has read, evaluated, and assimilated that work into the work at hand. (Coffta, 2020). In this study, literature review is done based on the theme with which research questions are framed.

## 2.2 SCHOOL COUNSELOR

“School counselors: Becoming key player in school reform” is a study conducted by **Reese M House and Richard L Hayes** on Professional School Counselling. More students African-American and Latino-American students are graduating from high school and entering college but these high diplomas are limited value. Many poor from these areas leave school because of lack of skill training and skill here school counsellor play important role (Reese M House, 2002)

According to a study conducted by **Duane Brown and Jerry Trusty** on the topic “School counselors, comprehensive school counselling programs, and academic achievement: Are school counselors promising more than they can deliver?” in the journal Professional School Counselling. According to ASCA National model the school counsellor’s primary mission is the improvement of academic achievement. This article examines the literature review related to the topic and finds that there is little support for the supposition that comprehensive school counselling programs improve achievement (Duane Brown, 2005).

According to a study conducted on the topic “School counselors and school reform: New direction” by **Howard S and Linda Taylor**. The researches face many legal mandates and barriers to learning have given variety of counselling, psychological and social support programs and to initiatives for school-community collaborations. Fragmentation and marginalisation of efforts to address barriers to learning stem from the specialised focus and relative autonomy of a district’s various organisational divisions. At school level, this translates into situations where teachers simply do not have the support that is having learning difficulties (Taylor, 2002).

## 2.3 SCHOOL COUNSELING AND COVID 19

“School counselling in the time of Corona virus” is a study related to many roles of school counsellors such as social and emotional educator, academic adviser, conflict mediator, wellness coach, mental health

therapist, student champion, educational collaborator and family liaison. The study was conducted by **Laurie Meyers** in September 28, 2020. The study tells about the actual role of school counsellors during Covid 19, that is they have become connectors and comforters-in-chief not just students but to parent and school staff. For this school counselors establish good relationship with family by checking regularly via phone or visits. School counsellor practical awareness on hand washing, made video through demonstration (Meyers, 2020).

“Pandemic has changed main challenges of School” is a study conducted by **Dian Schaffhausen** in January 2021. Each counsellor has provided counsellor session to 455 students the job responsibilities of school counselors before and after Covid has many different. It was a quantitative study; survey method was used for data collection (Schaffhauser, 2021)

## **2.4 ROLE OF SCHOOL COUNSELLORS**

“The role and training of the school counselor: Background and purpose” is a study conducted by **Doris Rhea Coy**. The study was published in 1999 in sage journal the study finds that the School counselors are part of the total educational team and have important knowledge to share concerning the needs of students. Their knowledge, skills, and expertise are vital for the success of our future leaders, workers, and citizens. As part of the total educational team, school counselors can help students to build a bridge to the future (Coy, 1999).

A study was conducted on the topic “conceptions of the school counselor role” by **Ellen S Amatea and Mary Ann Clark** in the year 2005. The study was a qualitative study utilized a grounded theory methodology to assess the conceptions about the school counselor role held by 26 administrators employed in public elementary, middle, or high schools. The study was designed to build a deeper understanding of how school administrators conceptualized the school counselor role. Four distinctive role sets were found. They were differentiated in terms of primary work activities valued, extent of counselor-staff work role coordination, and type of specialized knowledge required. Findings suggest that there is a need for a more conscious development of counselor leadership skills and role expectations by counselors themselves and by counselor preparation programs (Ellen S Amen, 2005).

“The role of school counselors in meeting students’ mental health needs: Examining issues of professional identity” is a study conducted by **Lorraine Dekruyt, Richard W Auger and Shannon Trice Black** in the year 2015 finds that the professional identity of school counselors has evolved over time. The article traces the historical context driving this evolution, and suggests it is time for the profession to conjoin the roles of educational leader and mental health professional. This study is prompted by heightened awareness of unmet student mental health needs, referrals that go unmet, school counselors displaced by other mental health

providers in schools, the potential loss of the unique school counselor role, and the natural link between the mental health professional role and the array of personal-social factors that impact student achievement. A conjoint professional school counselor identity that includes the roles of both educational leader and mental health professional positions school counselors to better respond to all students, including those with mental health needs (Lorraine Dekruyt, 2018).

The study conducted by **Lieberman and Aaron** in the topic “Confusion regarding school counselor functions: school leadership impacts role clarity” in the year 2004 suggest that there is Significant changes are emerging which will notably impact the implementation and scope of both school administration and school counseling practices. The study also tell about the New York State Education Department, which is revising the requirements for administrative certification parallel to a robust reform movement on national standards for school performance and demonstrable school effectiveness. The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) is concurrently working to update the rule functions for the nations' school counselors. The study argues that these distinct goals are in concordance, and that the promotion of clarity in the appropriate role of the counselor can be pro-actively adopted towards increased efficiency in utilizing resources, thereby enhancing reform objectives. The article presents a synthesis of the counseling and administration literature demonstrating significant confusion regarding the appropriate roles for counselors and the resulting inefficiency and misuse of this viable resource. The study suggests that it is incumbent upon educators to familiarize themselves with the forthcoming counselor role statement as an initial step towards increasing school effectiveness (Lieberman, 2004).

“ The school counsellors role in school dropout prevention” is a study conducted by **Susan Williams White and F. Donald Kelly** in the year 2011 the study discuss about that the role of the school counselor has undergone numerous revisions over the past few decades. The current emphasis on accountability and academic performance of students has forced counselors to scrutinize their role in promoting students' academic success and school completion. In the study, the authors reviewed the problem of school dropout from the school counselor's perspective and offer guidelines for how school counselors can deliver empirically supported strategies to address this problem as part of their comprehensive guidance programs (Kelly, 2011).

A study was conducted by **H George McMahon, ECM Mason** in the year 2018 on the topic” {School counselors education as educational leaders promoting systematic change” suggests that if the full impact of the transformation of the school counseling profession is to be enacted, it is incumbent upon school counselor educators to model the same skills and professional mindset that are expected of practicing school counselors. Specifically, school counselor educators can serve as leaders within their educational communities in order to promote systemic change that will remove barriers to student success. The notion of school counselor educators as educational leaders represents a philosophical and behavioral congruence that churns the professional ecosystem, from the professor to the practitioner to the P-12 student. This study

outlines the role that school counselor educators can play in modeling leadership and other essential skills for the profession (H George McMahon, 2018) .

## **2.4 STUDIES ON PROFESIONAL CHALLENGES FACED BY SCHOOL COUNSELLORS**

A study of on “professional challenges faced by women school counselors” conducted in Kerala using qualitative study using case study design reveals that Social workers are underpaid in Kerala compared to other mental health professionals and their teacher colleagues, they doesn’t have any benefits of a challenging job. The study also highlights about the school environment and attitude of other teachers are not all supportive. The study emphasized on the difficulties faced by the counselors due to insufficient infrastructure facilities and personal attributes such as home environment and mental health were of a great extent influencing their active involvement as school counselors (Semichan Joseph D. N., 2019 february).

The study did by **Semichan Joseph and Dr. Nirmala (2019)** with a view to develop a well established scitifice tool to test the level of professional challenges faced by the school counselors. The data in the study are analysed using SPSS software and generate statistical data then the result revels that SCPCS is a valid instrument in assessing the level of professional challenges faced by the school counselors. Personality characters, family environment, school environment, counselee counsellor relationship are dimension in understanding the challenges of counsellors (Semichan Joseph D. D., Semtember 2019).

**Nancy Bodenhorn** has conducted an exploratory study of common and challenging ethical dilemmas experienced by professional school counselors. The study was conducted in survey method on the public school counselors in Virginia to indicate their most common and challenging ethical dilemmas. The finding of the study is that they face challenges and ethical dilemmas student’s confidentiality, dual relationship with faculty, parental rights (Bdenhorn, 2006).

“Paradigmatic Challenges in School Counselling: Correlates and Reflections on Practice” is the study conducted by **Halis Sakiz and Mehmet Saricali** in their study they examined the paradigmatic position of school counsellors. It was done in a mixed method approach thus survey and interviews were conducted with counsellors, counsellor educators, and teachers. And the findings demonstrated that counsellors lacked skills regarding theoretical orientation and applications, counselling practices remained arbitrary and less effective due to the confusion experienced in the adaptation and application of counselling approaches, and the confusion in paradigms stemmed from problems in the identification of local needs, direct transfer of Eurocentric paradigms, training, and professional roles (Halis Sakis, October 2018).

“Role stress among practicing school counseling” is a study conducted by **John R Culbreth, Janna L Scarborough, Angela Banks-Johnson and Stacey Solomon** published in the novel Counselor Education and Supervision. The study is a quantitative study survey method was used by providing questionnaire to



512 participants. The aim of the study is to determine levels of role conflict, role incongruence and role ambiguity. The study found that elementary school counselors have lower levels of role conflict and role incongruence than high school counselors. Both of their job matched their initial perception, they were adequately trained and peer supervision was available were predictors of reduced role stress among the group for various school level subgroups (John R Culbreth, 2005).

### **2.3 CHALLENGES FACED BY SCHOOL COUNSELLORS AT WORK PLACE**

The study conducted by **Aminu Jilbril Arfasa, Fisseha Mikrie Weldmeskel (2020)** on the topic Practices and Challenges of guidance and counselling services in secondary schools with the purpose of examining the practices and challenges of guidance and counseling services in southwest Ethiopia secondary schools with the intention of understanding the state of secondary school guidance and counseling and forward improvement options to student service. The study conducted in descriptive survey design that involves quantitative and qualitative research methods. The study participants were 392 students and 108 teachers who were selected from the secondary schools of southwest Ethiopia by systematic random sampling and questionnaire were provided and oral interviews were conducted. .It is a qualitative study which focuses on the major challenges of guidance and counseling services in the sampled schools. The result of the study showed that the majority of secondary school students never visit guidance and counseling offices. The result of the study conclude that lack of professionally trained counsellors influence students learning and professional wellbeing (Aminu Jilbril Arfasa, 2020).

A review conducted by **Steve. F. Bain (2012)** in the topic of school counselors and the contemporary issues surrounding the profession provides a comprehensive understanding about today's school counseling profession. The examination of contemporary themes of school counseling includes job descriptions, preparation, mental health issues, families and communities, student success, leadership, and issues in technology. The Counselor's identity, functions, and ethics will seek an understanding about how a counselor comes to relate personally and professionally. The review reveals that the school counseling profession of today's world is dynamically different than its historical beginnings. Contemporary issues, education, structure, challenges, and students provide a complex backdrop for this helping profession. Counseling helps students and promotes their academic, physical, and emotional well-being (Bain, 2012).

A Descriptive survey type research was conducted by **Masoumeh Alavi, Nazanin Boujarian, and Mohd. Tajudin Ninggal** on the topic "The challenges of high school counselors in work place" to determine the challenges that high school counselors confront in work place. By utilizing a multi-stage cluster sampling 213 high school counselors were selected from the high schools of Chahar Mahal-e Bakhtiari province (Iran). And provided questionnaire among them, the sample descriptive and inferential statistics were used. The result of the study is that there is no significant difference between the view points and educational

degree in male and female counselors. The biggest problem of school counselors is lack of necessary facilities and instruments, many counselors are not aware of counseling techniques and principals and are not capable of utilizing these techniques and there is focused communication between counselors with the parents of the students (Masoumeh Alavi, 2012).

A study on the topic “Considering the Challenges of Counselling Practice in Schools” was conducted by **Poi Kee Low** (2009) using descriptive study method he then identified and discussed about the challenges of school counselors in 4 dimensions 1) Internal challenges, which include issues related to clientele groups, teachers’ attitudes towards counselling, and students’ willingness to seek counseling; 2) External challenges, which refer to social-economic changes beyond the school. These include popular culture, globalization and societal trends of more families and students moving across borders; 3) Systems challenges, which are those within the guidance programmes implemented by ministries, schools or counselling bodies. These issues may reside in the guidelines for practice in schools, referral procedures, and resource planning; 4) Personal challenges, which relate to the needs as well as the skills of the counsellor (Low, 2009 June).

“Challenges faced by teacher counselors of secondary schools in the smart city Bhubaneswar, Odisha” is a research carried out by **Subhasish Khanda** seeks to investigate the challenges. The research was in descriptive survey method and participants of the study were principals and teacher counselors of Bhubaneswar city. Study found that teacher counselors were facing many challenges like non-availability of adequate resources, lack of time, lack of professional training & skills, heavy work pressure, lack of parental support and support from school administration. And also suggests that a full time counsellor must be appointed on regular basis for each school, school management should provide minimum basic requirement, sanction necessary funds to the teacher counsellor or counsellor (Khanda, 2018 November).

A study conducted by **Michael Roberts** on the topic “ Ten of the biggest challenges faced by school counsellors in 2017” shows that the 10 biggest challenges faced by school counsellors are mental health issues, Stress, Bulling, Suicide, Gender issues, Inequity, immigration, Balance, Burnout. The statistics show that the one the main issues in counselling is connected to the student-counsellor ratio. It is recommended that one counsellor to 250 children. But the national average in America is one counsellor to 490 children. And in some district around the country its ratio is one counsellor for over 1000 children (Roberts, 2017).

According to a study conducted by University Western Australia gender inequality issues, rising inequality and migration are the challenges school counsellors with their students. In 2017, the American School Counsellors Association Assistant Director Eric Spark identified what he considers the top challenges faced by school counsellors. Many of these challenges are hot button issues that reflect major societal change with effects that go way beyond the hallowed halls of school. Other challenges are college readiness and vocational guidance- a school counsellor would be involved with this process since the student entered

school, providing guidance and study skills and intervening during times of poor or declining school performance, Stress- school counsellor need to know how to connect students with resources that can help them, bullying- counsellor also involved with media education and lesson about how to use social media responsibly, trauma and crises- help students to identify their issues and supports to allocate the needed resources(UWAonline, June 14, 2018).

A study conducted by **Kline and Jennifer** on the topic School counsellors overcome unexpected challenges the role of social worker is help children by providing social and emotional learning as well as academic success and career development. The advances in technology and social media, changes in society and education, and increasing mental needs, the expectations of school counsellors are constantly evolving and roles are miss understood (Kline, 2020)

According to study conducted by Wake Forest University the school counsellor deals with multiple problems including bulling in schools, suicidal threats, home issues, substance abuse. The study shows that about nine of ten elementary students have been bulled by their classmates, children having home issues experience badly affect them emotionally, academically, socially. Peer pressure leads the students into trying illegal substance. Sitting a student down and talking with them about their feeling helps in improving the mental status of children in reducing teenage pregnancy.(university)

#### **2.4 APPROACHES AND ATTITUDES OF PEOPLE IN WORKING ENVIRONMENT TOWARDS SCHOOL COUNSELLORS**

According to a study conducted by **Kasim Karatas, Kaya Ismet** on the topic “An investigation of the perceptions of school administrators towards the roles and duties of school counselors” in 2015 shows that the administrators’ positive perception of counsellors being necessary and important in educational and instructional activities for shareholder of education. The school managements had listed some professional and personal qualification for school counsellors and they have some privilege towards counselors than other teachers. They are aware about the necessity and importance of school counselors. The research was done as qualitative study with phenomenological design. 13 school administrators working in primary and secondary schools in downtown Diyarbakir is selected and conducted semi-structured interview and analyzed collected data in terms of descriptive analyses (Kasim KARATAS, 2015).

Study conducted by **Teodora Tecu, Claudiu Langa** in topic “Influencing students’ attitudes towards school counseling” with objectives (1) highlight students unrealistic beliefs about school counsellors academic training and about their work organization and ethics, pre and post an information session and (2) to evaluate students’ knowledge related to the school counselor’ activity, pre and post participating in the respective session. The research was done by single group pre-test post test experimental design. The result of the study

find that (1) there are statistically significant differences between the averages of students' unrealistic beliefs before and after the informing session and (2) that the students' knowledge level before participating in the information session was significantly lower than after their participation in the session (Teodora Tecu, 2019).

A study conducted by **Kumlan Yu, Sang –Hee Lee, Sang Min Lee** in the journal, *Journal of Employment Counselling* on the topic “Counselors’ collective self esteem mediates job dissatisfaction and client relationship” examined about whether collective self-esteem mediated or moderated relations between job dissatisfaction and client relationship. The study was a quantitative study with 132 participants; the participants were 132 professional counsellors in the United States. The result of the study indicates that collective self esteem partially mediated the relationship between job dissatisfaction was negatively related to greater levels of private collective self esteem , and greater private collective self-esteem was positively related to better client relationships (Kumlan Yu, 2007).

“Mental health services in public school: A preliminary study of school counselor perceptions” is a descriptive survey research study conducted by **Laurie A Carlson and Nathalie L Kees** the study was conducted to examine the self reported comfort level of school counselors perceptions regarding working relationships with school based therapists. The result of the survey indicated that school counselors are generally confident in their counselling skills and comfortable in addressing common issues brought to them by their students. Some counsellors indicated that they experienced some discomfort in working with students living with DSM diagnosis and that specific courses with in counsellor training programs may have mitigating effect on this discomfort. The result of the study also reveals that school counsellors are willing to lead and work with cross disciplinary teams and school based therapists to better meet the mental health needs of their students (Laurie A Carlson, 2013)

The study conducted by **Danesh Karunanayake, KMNS Chandrapala and NDU Vimikthi** on the topic “Students attitudes about school counselling” introduce school counselling as a learning process. It facilitates student’s achievement and improves student’s behavior and attendance and helps in social development of students. The aim of the research is to identify the students’ attitude about school counseling and the type of attitude which are common in students towards school counseling. The research design was qualitative survey method with semi-saturated interview then thematic analysis was conducted. The result of the study showed that the students have both negative and positive attitudes towards school counseling, they more negatives than positives Students from different categories of school have different attitudes about school counseling. These attitudes are formed due to lack of professionalism in counselling teachers, lack of knowledge, lack of resources, lack of professional knowledge and lack of students’ awareness about school counselling. The study recommended that the student’s awareness about school counselling can be enhanced

and all facilities must be provided to develop school counseling. This will help in changing the attitudes of students about school counseling (Danesh Karunanayake, 2020).

A study conducted by **Joan Freeman** in a British Journal with the title “Attitudes of secondary school teachers towards prospective school counsellors” reveals that the attitudes were generally favorable, though there was evidence of considerable ignorance about the counsellor’s role and also of doubt in confidentiality. The study was conducted quantitatively with 100 participants (Freeman, 1973).

“A study of secondary school head teachers’ attitudes towards guidance and counselling programme in Meru central district” is quantitative research done by **Purity K Gitonga**. He provided questionnaire targeted secondary school head teachers as respondents. The questionnaire was divided into 3 parts. The first sought demographic information of the school and respondents its second part consist of attitude items and the third part contained open ended questions. The respondents were 51 head teachers of private and public school in Meru Central District. The teachers from girls, boys and mixed schools were participated. The study established that the success of guidance and counselling programs was mainly hindered by students’ negative attitude, lack of parental support and lack of trained personnel in guidance and counselling techniques (Gitonga, 1999).

“Rural School Principals’ perception of school Counselors’ role” is a study conducted by **G. Bardhoshi and K. Duncan** in 2009. The study was a qualitative study with 538 participants (538 school principals). The study was conducted due to lack of clarity related to the defined role of school counselors. The survey utilized was developed based on professional school counselor as identified by American School counselors Association and listing of identified appropriate and inappropriate school counsellor’s tasks. The result of the study shows that school principle see responsive service provision as an essential task of school counsellor. The school’s principal also shares their views and understanding regarding the roles of school counselors. (Gerta Bardhoshi, 2009).

## **2.6 COPING STAYERGY TO DEAL WITH STRESS**

A study conducted by **S Kent Butler and Madonna G Constantine** in the topic “Collective self-esteem and burnout in professional school counselors” examined about the relationship between collective self management and professio0nal burnout. The study was a quantitative one and a sample of 533 school counselors. There is difference in the professional burnout in counsellors by sex geographical location of work setting and years of services. The study resulted that higher collective self-esteem generally was associated with lower professional burnout. The study also reveals that school counsellors working in urban school environments reports higher levels burnout than in other environment (S Kent Butler, 2005)

“An examination of burnout among school counselors guided by stress-strain-coping theory” is a study conducted by **Maslach S E. Jackson & M P Leiter** in 1996. The objective of the study was to examine the burnout among professional school counsellors. Research was a quantitative research with 198 participants, The research was guided by stress-strain-coping theory, final hierarchical regression models accounted for 49% of variation on the Emotional Exhaustion scale, 27% on the Depersonalization scale, and 36% on the personal Accomplishment scale. Many individual stress and coping variables significantly predicted burnt out among school counselors in the multivariate context.

## **2.7 CONCLUSION**

Many studies have been carried out outside India regarding the challenges and opportunities experienced by School counsellors and India also some studies are conducted on this topic. But there are only a very limited number of studies that were carried out in India regarding the experience of school counselors during Covid19 period. During the time first wave of Covid 19 period the school counsellors play an important role in handling the mental health issues of other but only a few studies have focused on the challenges of school counsellors during that time and these studies only give little importance to the opportunities explored by them during the first wave of Covid 19. Here the researches try to investigate both the opportunities and challenges experienced by school counsellors during first wave of Covid 19.

**CHAPTER- 3**  
**METHODOLOGY**

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1. INTRODUCTION**

The present chapter deals with the methodology adopted for the purpose of this study. This chapter include the research design, the setting of study, population, sampling, tool, and method of data collection and how the data will be analysed appropriately and interpreted in order to arrive at the findings and conclusion.

### **3.2. TITLE OF THE STUDY**

“CHALLENGES AND OPPERTUNITIES ENCOUNTERED BY SCHOOL  
COUNDSELORS DURING COVID 19 FIRST WAVE”

### **3.3 RESEARCH QUESTION**

1. What are the **roles of** the school counsellors **in general**?
2. What were the **challenges** faced by school counselors **during Covid 19 pandemic**?
3. What were the **opportunities** you explored during **Covid 19**?
4. What about the **approach and attitude** of people in your working environment?
5. How did you **manage to cope up with the stress** and challenges during pandemic?

### **3.4 DEFINITION OF CONCEPT**

#### **3.4.1 School Counsellor**

##### **Conceptual Definition:**

School counsellors are professionals with specialized training in personal counselling who work in school settings. They are usually the front-line school personal required to deal with youth suicide (Carley L Christianson, 2008).

##### **Operational Definition:**

School counsellor is one who provided their services during Covid 19 by providing psychosocial support to other.

#### **3.4.2 Challenges**



**Conceptual Definition:**

An objection to something as not being true, genuine, correct, or proper or to a person as not being correct, qualified, or approved (Merriam-webstar).

**Operational Definition:**

The issues, work pressure and demands experienced by school counsellors during Covid 19 pandemic.

**3.4.3 Opportunities****Conceptual Definition:**

An occasion or situation that makes it possible to do something that one want to do or have to do, or the possibility of doing something. (Cambrige)

**Operational Definition:**

New leanings, skill, technological awareness and other knowledge counsellor accrued through different webinar sessions during Covid 19 pandemic.

**3.4.4 First wave****Conceptual Definition:**

The first part of an activity that later happens again or is repeated after a pause (Cambridge dictionary).

**Operational Definition**

The first phase of Covid 19 in Kerala which starts in March 2020 initially starts with 3 cases and it later extended up to 3000 per day. And its 2<sup>nd</sup> wave starts from April 2021 and came up to 38,000 per day.

**3.5 RESEARCH DESIGN**

The research refers to overall strategy that is chosen to integrate the different components of the study in a coherent and logical way, thereby, ensuring that the research problem will be addressed effectively. It constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of Data.

The research question adapted to this study is case study research design considering the researcher's need to understand about the lived experience of School counsellors during Covid 19. The recourses of the study are the school counsellors from different Government Schools in Trivandrum district.

The case study research design is an in-depth study of particular situation rather than a sweeping statistical survey. Case study research involves the study of an issue explored through one or more case within a bounded system.

### **3.6 PILOT STUDY**

The researchers assessed the feasibility of the study and the availability of respondents through the pilot study. The researcher contacted the school counsellors from different school by snowball sampling method. And discussed about their experience in Covid time, both challenges and opportunities and also discussed about the coping strategies. After the pilot study the researcher adopted snowball sampling as the sampling method and then prepared self-developed semi structured interview guide, and made appropriate changes based on the feedback and validation by the client.

### **3.7 RESEARCH SITE AND PARTICIPANTS**

The universe of the study includes all school counsellors working in Government Schools in Trivandrum district.

The unit of study is 5 women school counsellors working in Government Schools in Trivandrum district.

### **3.8 SAMPLE STATERGY**

The researcher takes snowball sampling as the sampling approach. Five subjects were identified for the purpose of the study. All these subjects are identified by the following criteria:

#### **Inclusion Criteria:**

- The subject should be working in any Government School in Trivandrum District.
- The subject should be married and have children.
- The subject should have at least one year of service.
- The subject should be working on ICDS basis.

#### **Exclusion Criteria:**

- The subject should not be working in aided or non Government School.
- The subject should not be school counsellors appointed on contract basis for one year under projects such as Snehadam by Jilla panchayat.

### 3.9 TOOLS FOR DATA COLLECTION

As this is a qualitative research, the researcher, the researcher decided to conduct Semi-structured in-depth interview using a semi-structured interview guide. Data was collected from five respondents, and the interview was done on the basis of research questions.

### 3.10 DATA COLLECTION

In-depth semi-structured interviews were selected as the primary method of data collection. In-depth semi-structured interviews can help to uncover the hidden, complex meanings of travel that may remain shrouded through the use of structured surveys and quantitative analyses (Leiper, 2003). In-depth interviewing is also popular in feminist and gender-aware approaches as it ensures that women are able to describe their experiences in their own words, as well as encouraging a more (balanced) equal relationship between 'researcher' and the 'researched' (Little, 2000). The data was collected from 5 women school counsellors from different government schools in Trivandrum district.

### 3.11 DATA ANALYSIS

The data's collected through in-depth interview was read and documented in order to find out some common themes under which this can be analyzed. Different themes were found in order to group them in a meaningful way. A thematic analysis was done based on the findings.

The basis for data analysis was research questions as detailed below; they are;

1. What are the **roles** of school counsellor **in general**?
2. What were the **challenges** faced by school counselors **during Covid 19 pandemic**?
3. What were the **opportunities** you explored during **Covid 19**?
4. What about the **approach and attitude** of people in your working environment?
5. How did you **manage to cope up with the stress** and challenges during pandemic?

### 3.12 LIMITATION OF STUDY

The researcher conducted the study in a smaller part of the larger population of school counselors and so the findings cannot be generalized. The study is conducted only in Trivandrum district of Kerala.

Researcher could only study the lived experience of School counsellors during Covid 19 Pandemic.

The researcher could not spend much time with school counselors as they were very busy with their works. Most of the interviews were taken at school during duty hours.

Lack of previous experience in research

### **3.13 CHAPTERISATION**

The study is divided into seven Chapters,

#### **Chapter I: Introduction**

Basically this chapter introduces the theme and the subject. It says what the relevance of the work as whole is and how it connects with certain problems that the school counsellors faced during the Covid 19 lock down period like stress full work load along which their other works in home, the opportunities they experienced during that time.

#### **Chapter II: Review of Literature**

The second chapter is titled as ‘Review of Literature.’ The chapter brings out research articles, other articles, news from different sources, information from web portals etc. from global, national and regional studies. It is an attempt to find out research gap.

#### **Chapter III: Research Methodology**

The chapter is concerned with the research methodology of the study. It includes all the aspects of the research. It includes title of the study, research design, sampling technique, methods of data collection, and tools of data collection, data analysis, research questions, and definition of concept and limitations of the study.

#### **Chapter IV: Case Presentation**

It is concerned with the case presentations. Five cases of respondents of the study are described in the chapter.

#### **Chapter V: Case Analysis**

The chapter is concerned with analysis with the aim of linking the findings back to existing literature, and discussion of the data collected for the study.

#### **Chapter VI: Findings, Suggestions and Conclusion**

The chapter is presenting the findings that are derived from the cases and its analysis and suggestions and conclusion.

#### **Bibliography and Appendix**

The final part of the research dissertation covers bibliography and the appendix tool used for data collection in the study. Interview guide follows bibliography. This session contains the entire prepared question for the interview.

**CHAPTER – 4**  
**CASE DESCRIPTION**

#### 4.1 CASE – A

<b>CASE</b>	<b>A</b>
<b>AGE</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>PLACE</b>	<b>PANGODE</b>
<b>EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION</b>	<b>MSW</b>
<b>YEARS OF SERVICE</b>	<b>2 YEARS</b>
<b>MARITAL STATUS</b>	<b>MARRIED</b>
<b>PARTNER'S OCCUPATION</b>	<b>STATISTICAL ASSISTANT</b>
<b>NO OF CHILDREN</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>NO OF FAMILY MEMEBERS</b>	<b>6</b>

Case one is a 31 old woman school counsellor in XYZ School in Trivandrum district. She is post graduated in Social work and qualified NET. She had specialised in Medical and Psychiatry in Social work. Her native is Pothencode in Trivandrum district and now residing in Pangode in Trivandrum district. She is from a middle class family and partner is a state government employee working as Statistical assistant. She has 2 year experience as school counsellor and earlier she worked in Kudumbhasree. She is from an orthodox family with 6 member, father-in-low, mother-in-low, husband, son and daughter.

#### **4.1.1 ROLE OF SCHOOL COUNSELLOR**

##### **4.1.1.1 Role of school counsellors in general**

She started her carrier as school counsellor two year before that is before Covid 19 pandemic. At the earlier time she had to work inside the school that is for students and have to visit the anganwadi under the ICDS she is working and to provide session to adolescents. On Monday to Friday she has to go to school to conduct session to students and provide assistance to them, providing assistance for a group or to provide individual session to student in need, identify cases providing corrective interventions. During Saturday and in summer vacation they have to visit different anganwadi under the ICDS she is working. And have to deal with cases identified by the anganwadi teacher.

*“On school during Monday to Friday I have to be with children to provide proper interventions for their issues and provide awareness classes for children, teachers and parents and during, group sessions and individual counselling to children and also provide awareness session for parents”.*

##### **4.1.1.2 Roles of school counsellors during Covid 19**

During the Covid lockdown period all were placed in home and had got enough time to spent with family but then also the school counsellor were asked to do work assigned by DMHP. At first DMHP asked school counsellors to provide psychosocial support to quarantine people through telephonic interview for that a list of people with their contact number were provided and asked to call this list of person from their home and analyse their situation, provide proper guidance, providing number of helpline servicers and health professionals number.

*“During the lockdown period the DMHP has assigned us to provide psychosocial support to quarantine patients and Covid positive patients”*

#### **4.1.2 CHALLENGES FACED BY SCHOOL COUNSELLORS**

##### **4.1.2.1 Challenges faced during Covid 19 pandemic**

During Covid 19 lockdown days all family member were there in her house and she had lot reponsibilities as a mother, as wife and as a daughter. During the day time she wants to call 80-120 people daily it created lots of mental stress and other works in her home remained pending. On the initial days of work the family was happy in her works but after one or two months family members become opposite to her they asked her to resign from her job, and started asking that all are being placed home and work free at home but why you are always busy with your work. But even though she had the wish to do work and she worked hard then

also all discouraged her in the family. She had two children one at the age of 5 and other at the age of 2 and half, so that her responsibility as a mother is very much important for the wellbeing of her children. But she has a lot of work to complete with in small span of time, other than work assigned by DMHP she was asked to provide psychosocial support to student of the school that she is working ,at least 10 student must be called on each days and she also have all other works in the home. Her children were very much dependentive on her she wants to take of their health, nutritious and all other need. According to children they are not allowed to play with their nearby friends and not allowed to go anywhere and placed in home, thus they need mother's and father's attention. Her house following the patriarchal system that woman wants to do all works and wants to take care the children thus her responsibility become higher. She told that in the initial phases of this tele-counselling the school counsellors were not provided with proper guidance, this created misunderstanding and lots confusions. After some days only DMHP and women and child welfare department provided training by webinar sessions.

*“During lock down days work at home works I was very much stressed because work from home was a challenge for me because my children were there in the house they are very youth so they depend on me for all their needs for their food and other needs they want me. This was a big challenge for me. And another challenge faced by me that I am new in this field and I didn't get proper training before the duty started. Only after some days the training was given”.*

#### **4.1.2.2 Demands and issues needed to handle in socio-familial setting**

During the starting month of initial period of Covid 19 lock down the family members were very much supportive help her in doing her work but later words their attitude changes they dis-encourage her but her husband was very much supportive and help her in some instance. During work at home time in the initial months children were cooperative with her, they do their activities on their own expectially the elder one. But after some time they become very much depend on her this made her very much stressful. Her demanding work load made many problems for her.

Manly the work during Covid time includes the work given by DMHP. She spent their personal time also for professional work this reduce their self esteem and didn't get any time. The work load also made problems for her i.e. DMHP had only provided a protocol and a list of number of people under quarantine. Thus she initially had any idea about the assigned work then the colleagues helped her, by providing proper suggestion. In the initial days she was used to call 80-120 call per day this created many physical and mental issues. No time for food, any time for rest and headache become common in all days. During the work at home in first one and half month she was ok because family support her but after that she become alone to do lots of work this created many personal and professional issues to her.

*“During the lockdown period I was so much stressed that I didn't get enough time to eat on some days and to spent with my family and even though I was with them .During that time all of them in the house then also*



*I am not free and in the initial days they didn't understand my feelings and my words and they discourage me, but after some days they understood my situation and accepted my feelings then they give me full support and help me in my works in home. This sometimes made me free and thus I got some time to spend with them”*

#### **4.1.2.3 Challenges come across financial setting**

The reason for which her family didn't support is that her salary was less as compared to other months and the family sees her sufferings and her work thus they always argue her that she is doing a much stressed job then also salary is less. Then the family says asked her to resign from the job. And also earlier she had an online business but during these work she didn't get any time to concentrate on that. Thus her earning from that source was also lost during that time.

*“Earlier I had an online business but during this works I didn't get enough time to give correct updates my online business. Thus the business become non-profitable for me and salary was also less as compared to other months. But the family try to maintain financial needs with my husband's salary.”*

#### **4.1.3 OPPORTUNITIES EXPLORED DURING COVID 19 LOCKDOWN**

##### **4.1.3.1 Time period utilised for your personal growth (new habits).**

Even though the Covid days were really stressful days then also she experienced some opportunities in between those stressful situations. During that time she had met with an accident and was bedridden for 1 month during that time she didn't get any leave, first it was stressful to work at that time but later all she became very strong that she realise that she have strength to provide psychosocial support to others even she is having some psychosocial issues. This made her very strong that she became ok soon. And her family also realise that this job make her very strong. Then she polishes her skill in painting, dress designing and cooking and also did new experiments in cooking. And cooked many varieties for her children in the time she gets in between.

*“I am proud that I am a mental health supporter that provides me power to handle my mental issues during that time. During that time I had become Covid positive and was highly systematic and also bedridden for one month then also I didn't get any leave. During both these circumstances I did my job this give me mental power to handle my health issues during my illness. I see this as a big opportunity that I did my work even when I am bedridden”.*

##### **4.1.3.2 The social skills you improved during this pandemic period (spending time with family, family get-together)**

She didn't get much time to spent with family, during some times the family didn't support her in job, they she try to convey her situation to understant about her real needs. Then the family try to cooperate with her.

“During this time I realise about the importance of communication if we communicate our problems with others then only they can realise our real situation and pain”.

#### **4.1.4 ATTITIDES AND APPROACH OF WORKING ENVIRONMENT**

##### **4.1.4.1 Attitudes of students**

The attitude of working environment towards her was positive in the case of most of state holders but some treatments are not satisfactory. The attitude of students was very much cooperative they attend meeting, they communicate with her if there is any problem. Student's attitude made her happy. In the lockdown period she was instructed to call at least 10 students a day to provide psychosocial support and enquire about their other attitudes and needs. The school she teaching has both high school and higher secondary. Only boys are there in high secondary. According to her the higher secondary students make more problem than the boys in high school.

*“The students' attitude towards me is good, the high school students obey me and talk with me very friendly but the higher secondary students are sometimes problematic”.*

##### **4.1.4.2 Attitudes of student's parents**

Attitudes of parent are positive in case of 80% parents and the balance 20% parents' attitude are negative. During Covid time she was asked to call 10 students per days beyond the list given by DMHP. During that time when she contacted parents some reacted very positively and other reacted that they are in work don't disturb as like this then asked them to ask their child to call back after parent works, when they reach home then also some didn't call back. In school during parents meeting some parents wait for her to ask her to provide special attention to their child and some calls her to know the progress of the child. In some cases she may ask some parent to come to school and meet her but some parents didn't do it and blame her. In some cases she is asked to meet the parent by home visit along with Supervisor or CDPO or School principal or Anganwadi worker then also some parents treat positively and other react negatively.

*“Most of parent's attitude is positive and always try to maintain a good relationship with me to know about their child. But some parents especially parents who are working in higher job they didn't attend the parents meeting didn't come to school on time if informed also.”*

##### **4.1.4.3 Attitude of school management**

The attitude of school management not much positive they consider her as someone outside the school. They don't give any dignity to her work that. She is very much sad about the attitude of school management. They do not inform her about the staff meeting, doesn't participate her in any such meetings. This can be seen as job discrimination. And also didn't inform her about any new changes occurring in the school or any celebrations the school. The school management doesn't ask her opinion or suggestion for the generation new decision to be taken for the welfare of students and school.

*“The attitude of school management towards her is somewhat not positive because if any meetings are conducted then they will not inform me. Even though if they are not interested to include me in the staff meeting then also they can even inform, but they did not do it at all. They discriminate me in many times.”*

#### **4.1.4.4 Attitude of other teaching staff**

The attitudes of other teachers working in the schools are also same as the management. They didn't inform any new information's to the school. They didn't give dignity to her work. Some teacher's attitudes are satisfactory but others attitudes are not like that they think that they have high salary and position but school counsellor is working for low salary and there is no need of providing dignity for their works. Some teachers realise the need of students of getting special attention for their issues and identify cases then they inform her to provide that service. After the lockdown and Covid time the school reopens, at that time also she had provided class session to all class and individual sessions are taken for students who are in need of individual care. The attitude of School Principal during the initial days of her works was a positive minded, the principal accept her work and dignity of her but now the school principle had changed he does not provide any positive help for her.

*“The other teachers did not provide any dignity to my works. Their attitude is also same us the management, they did not inform me about any meetings and common program. They discriminate me in all sense like salary and other means”.*

#### **4.1.4.5 Attitude of colleagues**

The attitude of colleagues was very much positive during the starting day of duties given by DMHP she was not aware about wants to do then many senior school counselors from other schools helped her by providing suggestions. Then during Covid time she was Covid 19 and was highly symptomatic then her colleagues call her in between some days and ensure that mentally she was ok. And also one month she has bedridden because of an accident then she didn't get proper leave thus at the beginning she was very much stressed to work at that situation then her colleague suggests that they will help her by calling her list of people then she replied no because she that already they have list of 80-120 and want to call 10 students a day. Then her colleagues gave her mental support to work that situation then she worked thus she provided mental support to others and meanwhile she became very strong.

*“During this lockdown period I was Covid positive and highly symptomatic then also I didn’t get proper leave. And I don’t get any support from the department but colleagues helped me, they give me mental support and ask me they will divide my calls and they will contact the list of people that I want to call, and then I tell that I will do it”.*

#### **4.1.5 COPING STRATEGIES USED BY SCHOOL COUNSELLORS**

##### **4.1.5.1 Coping strategies used to deal with stress**

The coping strategies she used are to do gardening and agriculture along with her husband and child, and then she polishes her skills in cooking and painting, spending time with her children. These activities provide positive mentality to her. These activities are planned by her as a self-care method.

*“Actually I did get much time to do some stress reliving I get do some gardening and some agriculture works. Then cooked some new recipes for my children which made them happy, thus I also become happy for some times.”*

##### **4.1.5.2 Coping strategies adopted to manage both family and work affairs.**

According to her she didn’t get much time to practice any stress managing things, the one thing that she tried is to tail with family whenever she get free time, this made her more connected to the family

*“I tried to be with family during free time, and did gardening and agricultural works along with her husband this made her being with family.”*

#### 4.2 CASE - B

<b>CASE</b>	<b>B</b>
<b>AGE</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>PLACE</b>	<b>SREEKARYAM</b>
<b>EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION</b>	<b>MSW</b>
<b>YEAR OF SERVICE</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>MARITAL STATUS</b>	<b>MARRIED</b>
<b>PARNER'S OCCUPATION</b>	<b>RAILWAY EMPLOYEE</b>
<b>NO OF CHILDREN</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>NO OF FAMILY MEMEBERS</b>	<b>4</b>

Case 2 is 49 year old lady who is working in Government higher secondary school Y; she has 11 year service as school counsellor. She is post graduated in Social work, specialised in medical and psychiatry. She is now residing in Sreekaryam in Trivandrum district. She is from a middle class family and partner is working in Indian Railway. Her family consist of 4 members, husband, son, daughter and herself. She takes her post graduation in Social work specialised in medical and psychiatry from Loyola college of Social sciences.

## **4.2.1 ROLE OF SCHOOL COUNSELLOR**

### **4.2.1.1 Role of school counsellors in general**

She started her carrier as school counsellor 10 year before, now she one among the senior school counsellors in Trivandrum. At the earlier time she had to work inside the school that is for students and have to visit the anganwadi under the ICDS she is working and to provide session to adolescents. On Monday to Friday she has to go to school to conduct session to students and provide assistance to them, providing assistance for a group or to provide individual session to student in need, identify cases providing corrective interventions. During Saturday and in summer vacation she has to visit different anganwadi under the ICDS she is working. And have to deal with cases identified by the anganwadi teacher.

*“I have to work for the children to solve their issues and provide proper interventions and provide awareness classes for children, teachers and parents and during Saturdays and during summer vacation I used to visit the anganwadi under the ICDS I am working and provides awareness sessions, group sessions and individual counselling to children and also provide awareness session for pregnant women, lactating mother and elderly people”.*

### **4.2.1.2 Roles of school counsellors during Covid 19**

According to her during the Covid lockdown period all were placed in home and had got enough time to spend with family but then also the school counsellor were asked to do work assigned by DMHP and other duties given by Women and child department. At first DMHP asked their to provide psychosocial support to quarantine people through telephonic interview, for that a list of people with their contact number were provided and asked to call this list of person from their home and analyse their situation, provide proper guidance, providing number of helpline servicers and health professionals number. She told that in the initial phases of this tele-counselling the school counsellors were not provided with proper guidance, this created misunderstanding and lots confusions. After some days only DMHP and women and child welfare department provided training by webinar sessions. During this webinar session doubt were cleared and answers were given to all. During each time that the Covid rate increases the number of people to be called increased. During the cluster period she was asked to call almost 80-120 calls.

*“On the beginning of Covid 19 lockdown days first I was asked to provide psychosocial support to Covid 19 patients and quarantine people through telephonic interview. Then it is following still now, and now the school is reopened then also we the school counsellor wants to go to school , during works in school we are also asked to provide tele counselling services”.*

## **4.2.2 CHALLENGES FACED BY SCHOOL COUNSELLORS**

#### **4.2.2.1 Challenges faced during Covid 19 pandemic**

During Covid 19 lockdown days all family member were there in her house and she had lot responsibilities as a mother and as a wife. During the day time she wants to call 80-120 people daily it created lots of mental stress and other works in her home remained pending. On the initial days of work the family was happy in her works but after one or two months family members opinion change, and started asking that all are being placed home and work free at home but why you are always busy with your work. But even though she had the wish to do work and she worked hard then also family somewhat supported her. She had two children elder one is a girl now working as graduate trainee and the younger one is a boy, he is doing B tech. The children always says that after a long time the parent and children are place in the family for free of work but here only the mother wants to works. They say that in their friends family they all spent time with mother and father they cook together, play games watch movies together but here only mother have always work. Even though she has the wish is with them but because of the work pressure she couldn't do so. She has a lot of work to complete with in small span of time, other than work assigned by DMHP she was asked to provide psychosocial support to at least 10 student form the school she is working. The work during Covid time many includes the work given by DMHP. She spent her personal time also for professional work this reduce their self esteem and didn't get any time for self care and for other personal needs. Earlier she practiced Yoga as an exercise and stress management mechanism but during the initial month of Covid duties she was not able to do it every day. During the starting days of this work she had a confusion regarding the works but later it was cleared during the training given as webinar DMHP. In the initial days she was used to call 80-120 call per day this created many physical and mental issues. No time for food, any time for rest and headache become common in all days.

*“During the starting day of Covid duty the works was ok for me but when the Covid cases increased then the number of class increased then I become strees I didn't get proper time to manage my duties. Now the school reopens during this time we the school counsellors want to do both the duties it is very much time spending I usually didn't get time to manage all these duties”.*

#### **4.2.2.2 Demands and issues needed to handle in socio-familial setting**

During the starting month of initial period of Covid 19 lock down the family members were very much supportive and help her in doing her work but later words their attitude changes they sometime discourage and then accepted her feelings and understant their suffering and mental stress. During work at home time in the initial months children were cooperative then they depend on her that time then they understant her feeling and helped her. These makes her stress reliving and stress free in home duties. According to her when though an issue comes in between then also her family support her. Her children were aged thus they did their own thing by their own and help her at home and husband was very much supportive thus this helped her a lot.

*“During the lockdown period was so much stressed that I didn’t get enough time to spent with my family even though I am with them , and all of them in the house then also I am not free. During the initial days they didn’t understant my feelings and my wards and they discourage me, but after some days they understood my situation and accepted my feelings then they give me full support and help me in my works in home. This sometimes made me free and thus I got some time to spent with them”*

#### **4.2.2.3 Challenges come across financial setting**

School counsellors are appointed by state government even though their post is not permanent the salary is paid by state government so that the salaries were paid at time but a portion of salary was taken government as they take from every government servants. Even though the salary was some less then also her family was able to handle the expense with her and her husband’s family. The expense during this time was less as compared to other period thus they were able to manage it.

*“My salaries were paid on time but salary was less as compared to other month even though we are not permanent our then also 30% of our salary was cut. But these problem didn’t affect my family more because my husband is working in Indian railway thus we manage our financial needs with both of us salaries. According to my family our expense during Covid 19 lockdown period is less us compared to other months”.*

#### **4.2.3 OPPERTUNITIES EXPLORED DURING COVID 19 LOCKDOWN**

##### **4.2.3.1 Time period utilised for your personal growth (new habits).**

Earlier she had practiced Yoga but during initial days she didn’t get any time to do this then after some days she managed her time and restarted Yoga practice. Then she had polished her knowledge in cooking and started trying new recipes. Then she started doing gardening along with her family member.

*“I had restarted Yoga practice, then doing some free time I experimented some new recipes to make my children happy and surprised. Then we the whole family started gardening and we did activities together.”*

##### **4.2.3.2 The social skills you improved during this pandemic period (spending time with family, family get-together)**

During the starting day she didn’t get enough time then after some days her family understant her situation and then help her in family affairs thus she got so time spent her own to explore her hobbies and help in building a healthy family relationship.

*“During the initial days I didn’t get enough time to do something for myself but after some days my family help me in my works in home and then I got some time to do my own, then after some long year we the four our family got some time spent on our own, with talking on common issues, expressing our view on issues thus a healthy family relationship is maintained.”*



## **4.2.4 ATTITIDES AND APPROACH OF WORKING ENVIRONMENT**

### **4.2.4.1 Attitudes of students**

The attitude of working environment towards her includes both positive and negative. The attitude of students was sometimes good positive and others negative some of them communicate with her about all their problems, if any problem arises and also they open up towards her. Student's attitude made her happy. In the lockdown period she was instructed to call at least 10 students a day to provide psychosocial support and enquire about their other attitudes and needs. The school she teaching has both high school and higher secondary. Only boys are there in high secondary. According to her the higher secondary students make more problem than the boys in high school. The school she working does not doesn't have a good image, attitude of the parent also depend up on this. There is mare number of higher secondary students than high school. About 60 % of the higher secondary students in the school have many problems such as disobedience, irrespective towards teacher. The students are not almost interested in studies.

*“The students studying in my school are those who did not get admission in other school, that is these students are not very brilliant in studies and many have family problems and social issues. Most are disobedient and problematic”.*

### **4.2.4.2 Attitudes of student's parents**

According to her only half of the parents attend parents meeting and actually the other does not know the importance of parents meeting and some parent not come to school even though the teachers asked to come to meet them. The one reason for not coming of parents is because the students not inform them about the parents meeting. The other did not know the importance of parents meeting so that if any issues happens and then parents when asked to school sometimes some parents may come but for follow up sessions they do not come.

*“The most of the parents are not aware about school counsellors and school counselling thus when they are asked to come they think about regular meeting and decide not to come in. And one the other reason is that most of parents are doing kooli works thus even one day absence also affects the earning of family thus they decide to do to work other than attending parents meeting In some cases I along with Supervisor or CDPO or School principal or Anganwadi conducted house visits of different students then I realise in also the students cases the family play a very important role in most of cases the attitude of parents, the living situation of the students all were a big challenge for students to study. Their living conditions were not much satisfying.”*

### **4.2.4.3 Attitude of school management**

The school management support her in activities and very much supportive towards her. Give her proper information and guidance; help her in implementing new ideas. They inform her about all staff meetings if she doesn't want to participate then also they inform her about all their meetings.

*“During some days celebrations like children's day, teachers day, international girl child day, women's day and all I has organised and conducted many programs the school management support me in all such activities. . In some cases I along with Supervisor or CDPO or School principal or Anganwadi conducted house visits of different students then I realise in also the students cases the family play a very important role in most of cases the attitude of parents, the living situation of the students all were a big challenge for students to study. Their living conditions were not much satisfying.”*

#### **4.2.4.4 Attitude of other teaching staff**

They give dignity towards the work of school counsellor. Some teachers realise the need of students of getting special attention for their issues and identify some cases then they inform her to provide special attention these students. After the lockdown and Covid time she reopens at that time she had provided class session to all students' in class wise and individual sessions are taken for students who are in need of individual care. The attitude of School teachers and principal are all positive.

*“The principal and other teachers support me in all activities, when I organise they programs they always support me and when any external competition occurs and I used to present students for that competition then also principle allow me take students for competitions.”*

#### **4.2.4.5 Attitude of colleagues**

The attitude of colleagues were very much supportive they support which other by linking them with new ideas, clearing doubts by each other, they respect other. The newly appointed counsellors seek suggestion from old counsellors and help each other and grow as a team.

*“When new works has been assigned from the counsellors we used to discuss in our group about how to take decision regarding new activities. We help each other as somebody face any difficulties. When any doubt comes to me I used to call other then they provide proper measures for me. All we the school counsellors work as a team.”*

### **4.2.5 COPING STRATEGIES USED BY SCHOOL COUNSELLORS**

#### **4.2.5.1 Coping strategies used to deal with stress**

When the Covid rate in the state started decreasing then the number of calls was reduced. Then she did some self care activities to relive from their stressful situation. That is after some days of work she realise that if

her activities goes like this then she will be mentally unstable because of her professional and personal work load and stresses. Thus she had adapted some time management strategies to do self care activities. Afterwards she again started Yoga practice and meditation as stress management mechanism, and then she did gardening along then her children and husband. Then watch T V in free time and watch YouTube video when feel saturated, Then she did cooking experiments in free time this all activities made her capable to handle her work during Covid 19 pandemic situation. The work during Covid 19 situation was very much stress full during many days she was very much tired now also when school reopens then also works given by DMHP still continues thus stress is very high thus for reliving this stress she practises yoga, meditation, do cooking experiments etc

*“During the starting days of Covid 19 duties I was very much stressed earlier I had practiced Yoga during initial days I didn’t get time to practice Yoga, then I try to practice it by time managing”*

#### **4.2.5.2 Coping strategies adopted to manage both family and work affairs.**

When I felt so stressed in one because of my job related work and other works in home then I communicate my problems to my family then they realise my situation and help me in my works.

*“When my stress comes in high I displace that towards my children by scolding them in unnecessary things, then I realise that if I go like this then it affect my family life then gain I scheduled my time and find time for practicing Yoga. After I have restarted Yoga practice my strees were less as compared to starting days.”*

### 4.3 CASE – C

<b>CASE</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>AGE</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>PLACE</b>	<b>POGUMMOOD</b>
<b>EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION</b>	<b>M A PSYCHOLOGY</b>
<b>YEAR OF SERVICE</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>MARITAL STATUS</b>	<b>MARRIED</b>
<b>PARNER'S OCCUPATION</b>	<b>MEDIA</b>
<b>NO OF CHILDREN</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>NO OF FAMILY MEMEBERS</b>	<b>5</b>

Case is 35 year old lady who works in Government higher secondary school P; she has 11 year service as school counsellor. She is post graduated in psychology. She is now residing in Sreekaryam in Trivandrum district. She is from a middle class family and partner is working in Media. She is from a middle class family with 5 members, husband, son, daughter and herself and her mother. She started her carrier as school counsellor 10 year before, now she one among the senior school counsellors in Trivandrum.

#### 4.3.1 ROLE OF SCHOOL COUNSELLOR

##### 4.3.1.1 Role of school counsellors in general

At the earlier time she had to work inside the school that is for students and have to visit the anganwadi under the ICDS she is working and to provide session to adolescents. On Monday to Friday she has to go to school to conduct group session to students and provide assistance to them, providing assistance for a group or to provide individual session to student in need, identify cases providing corrective interventions. During Saturday and in summer vacation she has to visit different anganwadi under the ICDS she is working. And have to deal with cases identified by the anganwadi teacher.

*“I have to work for the welfare of children inside the school and also want to visit the Anganwadi under the ICDS which I am working. I have to conduct sessions in both this cases and I also conduct awareness class to parents on good parenting.”*

#### **4.3.1.2 Roles of school counsellors during Covid 19**

At starting of Covid 19 time she was assigned by DMHP to provide tele counselling to people under quarantine and Covid positive patients. And for the first one month she did from her home and after that she dis continued provide tele counselling from home and then did consolidated work of list of patients and quarantine people to be called by other counsellors and also consolidated the list given by other school counsellors who did calls and provided the response of quarantine patients

*“At the beginning of Covid 19 lockdown days work I was asked to provide psychosocial support to Covid 19 patients and quarantine people through telephonic interview but during that time I find it difficult to work from home thus I choose to do consolidating the data sources given by DMHP to be assigned to other counselors to provide their services and the list given back by them.”*

Now after the lockdown and school reopens the school counsellor’s wants to works at school and engage with children then also school are providing this services.

#### **4.3.2 CHALLENGES FACED BY SCHOOL COUNSELLORS**

##### **4.3.2.1 Challenges faced during Covid 19 pandemic**

According to her during the Covid lockdown period all were placed in home and had got enough time to spend with family but then also the school counsellor were asked to do work assigned by DMHP and other duties given by Women and child department. At first DMHP asked their to provide psychosocial support to quarantine people through telephonic interview, for that a list of people with their contact number were provided and asked to call this list of person from their home and analyse their situation, provide proper guidance, providing numbers of helpline servicers and health professionals number. She told that in the initial phases of this tele-counselling the school counsellors were not provided proper guidance, this created misunderstanding and lots confusions. After some days only DMHP and women and child welfare

department provided training by webinar sessions. During this webinar session doubt were cleared and answers were given to all. During each time that the Covid rate increases the number of people to be called increased. During the cluster period she was asked to call almost 80-120 calls. For the first one month she did this duty then after that she find it difficult to work from home thus she did consolidation duty of this calls did by school counsellors, this include assigning a number of people to a other school counsellor and consolidation of list given by school counsellors. She did this activities by going to District Mental Health Centre, Peroorkada, the transportation during these days was very much difficult no bus or auto, she had faced many difficulties during this time.

*“During the starting day of Covid duty I did work of providing psychosocial support to Covid positive patients and quarantine people from home then I feel it difficult to work from my house then I had chosen the consolidation duty of list of patients. The transportation during this time wise very much difficult then during morning my brother drops me there and in the evening my husband takes me to home. Taking vehicles for all days were very much expensive for me and my family.”*

#### **4.3.2.2 Demands and issues needed to handle in socio-familial setting**

During Covid 19 pandemic school counsellors experience many challenges, like all other they are also placed home they faced unavailability of resources and no family get together. During this time she wants to works from her home it was a challenge her because her role as a mother was very much demanding. Her children want her in all their needs and want they did allow her in her works. And also her husband is working in media thus he need to go for work during this time thus the fear of Covid was very much high.

*“During this time I feel isolated in sometime because not able to meet other relatives, no one come to our home we didn't go to any were. Then during this time many time I children experience with mild fever then we become stress full. And also my husband is working in media thus during this time he wants to go for his works thus the fear of Covid was very much high in other case.”*

#### **4.3.2.3 Challenges come across financial setting**

The salaries for her was paid on time but no TA was provided for counsellors doing consolidation work in DMHP Peroorkada, for her the transportation to DMHP was very much expensive about half of the salary was spent for transportation. And in her case her children were very small and aged parent thus even though some were there were offers for basic needs then also he bayed this from other shops in fear of spread of disease,

*“Transportation cost for me was one of the greater expenses for me during lockdown days; most of my salary was spent for transportation. And also for buying basic needs things form more expensive shops because for offers and less expensive shop rush of people is more”.*

### **4.3.3 OPPERTUNITIES EXPLORED DURING COVID 19 LOCKDOWN**

#### **4.3.3.1 Time period utilised for your personal growth (new habits).**

In her case she didn't get any time to explore any opportunities during this time he had many works to do in home then also some time she spent some time to explore her talent in cooking by making some new recipes for her children.

*"I did get any time to explore my talents or do new thing I just only prepared some new food to my children such as ice creams and shakes".*

#### **4.3.3.2 The social skills you improved during this pandemic period (spending time with family, family get-together)**

During the starting day she didn't get enough time do her personal needs and her personal role as a mother, daughter and a wife then she conveyed her problems to her husband and her mother then they support her and helped her with better suggestions.

*"During the initial days I didn't get enough time to do something for myself and for family then I conveyed her situation that it was very difficult for me to work from home, then my husband and mother support me to work from Peroorkada DMHP thus I understant about the value of family relationships".*

### **4.3.4 ATTITIDES AND APPROACH OF WORKING ENVIRONMENT**

#### **4.3.4.1 Attitudes of students**

Attitude of students toward her is very much positive during Covid time also when she contact 10 students per day in most time student attendant her calls and willingly communicate with her. In school also students are very much cooperative. She regularly conducts group section and identify cases and provide intervention, for this students are very much cooperative towards her when were students were informed to meet her then they will meet and open up their issues. Both higher secondary and high school students are very much cooperative.

*"My students are very much cooperative whenever, I ask any thing they open up their issues to me and obey my suggestions, they are willing to seek group sessions and individual session. For higher secondary students most of their teacher didn't allow them to meet me then also whenever they feel any need then they come to me without informing their teachers".*

#### **4.3.4.2 Attitudes of student's parents**

Most of the parents are cooperative toward her, during the lockdown period she was informed to inquire the state of at least 10 students per day and to provide the psychosocial support that time the parents attend her calls and communicated with her very pleasantly. And in other case parents communicate with her during parents meeting, and if in case parents were asked to come to school then they come.

*“When I call parent to communicate with students during lockdown days then the attitude of parents were very cooperative, during some cases even though the parents were not their then also the parents inform students about the calls and they make sure that the students contacted the me”.*

#### **4.3.4.3 Attitude of school management**

The school management support her in activities. Provide her proper information and guidance; help her in implementing new ideas etc. They inform her about any staff meetings if she doesn't want to participate her then also they inform her about all their meetings. But for some common program they didn't give any importance to her.

*“During some days celebrations like children's day, teachers day, international girl child day, women's day and all I has organised and conducted many programs the school management support me in all such activities but in some instance they organise many programmes during that time nobody inform me about that programs..”*

#### **4.3.4.4 Attitude of other teaching staff**

Attitude of other teachers working in the school towards the school counselors are not much positive. In her case the high school teachers are supportive and communicate with counsellors about the problems among the students and they allow her to take group session and allow individual session when it is needed. But the other school teachers from higher secondary are not much supportive. They things they school counselors are someone from outside and for what they want to sent the students towards her. Even though if student said that they have an issue and wants to talk school counsellor then also the higher secondary teacher doesn't allow the student to her.

*“High school teachers support me in all activities and support me, principal and other teacher sent students with me for our department competitions but in the case of higher secondary teachers they did even respect my job. They consider me as someone outside the school even if the students say that they want to meet me or say they have any issues then also they didn't allow students to come to me.”*

#### **4.3.4.5 Attitude of colleagues**

The attitudes of colleagues were very much supportive, they support each other in doing new practices by sharing their views, new ideas, clearing doubts by each other, and they respect other. The newly appointed counsellors seek suggestion from old counsellors and help each other and grow as a team.



*“We work as a group in doing activities; my colleagues help me doing new things. I was not much aware about new technological innovations and technological works but my colleagues give me support and provide proper suggestions for doing new things this helped me a lot to reduce my stress regarding doing new things.”*

#### **4.3.5 COPING STRATEGIES USED BY SCHOOL COUNSELLORS**

##### **4.3.5.1 Coping strategies used to deal with stress**

The work during Covid 19 lockdown and after the reopening of the school was very much stressed. She had many stresses of living with different roles of women such as mother, daughter and wife and her workload. In order to maintain this stress she always try to go for exercise along which her husband during this time beyond doing an exercise they communicate with each other share their view this help her a lot to think new things other than her works. And on some time she spent for watching T V and watching online entertainment.

*“During the starting days of Covid 19 duties I was very much stressed then I began to go to exercise along with my husband during that one hour we share our thoughts and we even play games this help me to forget all my stress for some times. And another thing I practised is that when I feel stressed I watch T V or watch any entertainment program on online”.*

##### **4.3.5.2 Coping strategies adopted to manage both family and work affairs.**

During the starting day of work she did get time for doing anything then I prepare my activities in order and tried to follow that so that she practiced to do both family and job affairs together. During this time I had to do consolidated duties during night thus I manage to be with family and do family activities on evening.

*“I have practiced a time management technique to release our stress and spent time with family.”*

#### 4.4 CASE -4

<b>CASE</b>	<b>D</b>
<b>AGE</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>PLACE</b>	<b>KANIYAPURAM</b>
<b>EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION</b>	<b>MSW (Medical and Psychiatry)</b>
<b>YEAR OF SERVICE</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>MARITAL STATUS</b>	<b>MARRIED</b>
<b>PARNER'S OCCUPATION</b>	<b>GOVERNMENT SERVENT</b>
<b>NO OF CHILDREN</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>NO OF FAMILY MEMEBERS</b>	<b>5</b>

Case D is 35 year old lady who works in Government higher secondary school D; she has 2 year service as school counsellor. She is post graduated in Social work with specialisation in Medical and psychiatry. She is now residing in Kaniyapuram in Trivandrum district. She is from a middle class family and partner is a state government employer working in PSC office. She is from a middle class family with 5 members, husband, son, herself and her mother-in-law and father-in-law.

#### 4.4.1 ROLES OF SOCHOOL COUNSELLOR

##### 4.4.1.1 Role of school counsellors in general

As per instructions given by the department of Women and Child (earlier by Social Justice department) the school counsellor had to work inside the school for Monday to Friday that is for students and have to visit the anganwadi under the ICDS she is working and to provide group session to adolescents. On Monday to Friday she has to go to school to conduct group session to students and provide assistance to them, providing assistance for a group or to provide individual session to student in need, identify cases providing corrective interventions. During Saturday and in summer vacation she has to visit different anganwadi under the ICDS she is working. And have to deal with cases identified by the anganwadi teacher.

*“I have to school for Monday to Friday and want to conduct group session and individual counselling to students in the school and for Saturdays and during summer vacation I want to go to different Anganwadi under the ICDS which I am working”.*

#### **4.4.1.2 Role of school counsellors during Covid 19**

During the starting of Covid 19 lockdown days DMHP has asked the school counsellors to do special duty of providing psychosocial support and mental support to quarantine people who are under quarantine and Covid positive. Then after some days when the report comes out with the news of increasing mental health issues in school students, the DMHP has asked them to provide tele counselling services to at least 10 students per day.

*“At the beginning of Covid 19 lockdown days work at first I was asked to provide psychosocial support to Covid 19 patients and quarantine people through telephonic interview. Then for fist one month I was asked to provide services from DMHP Peroorkada during first few days. Then transportation was not much possible no public transport system, they get permission to work from their home”.*

Now after the lockdown and school reopens the school counsellors wants to do their duties at school and also wants to do Covid duty to provide tele counselling as per the demands of DMHP.

#### **4.4.2 CHALLENGES FACED BY SCHOOL COUNSELLORS**

##### **4.4.2.1 Challenges faced during Covid 19 pandemic**

For her the Covid 19 lockdown days and Covid duties were very much challenging, demanding and stress full days. From her perspective during the Covid 19 lockdown period all were placed in home and had got enough time to spend with family but then also we the school counsellor were asked to do Covid special duty assigned by DMHP and other duties given by Women and child department. At first DMHP asked their to provide psychosocial support to quarantine people and Covid 19 patients through telephonic interview, for that a list of people with their contact number were provided by DMHP and asked to call this list of person, first asked to do duties from Peroorkada mental health centre then transportation was one of great challenge

then after few days they we asked to do Covid duties from their home. The main aim of these calls is to analyse the situation of people, provide proper guidance, providing numbers of helpline servicers and health professional's number. She told that in the initial phases of this tele-counselling the school counsellors were not provided proper guidance, this created misunderstanding and lots confusions. After some days only DMHP and women and child welfare department provided training by webinar sessions. During this webinar session doubt were cleared and answers were given to all. During each time that the Covid rate increases the number of people to be called increased. During the cluster period she was asked to call almost 80-120 calls. One of the main issue she analysed id that when the class rate comes high then she didn't get enough time to communicate and give attention to each person.

*“During the initials days of work transportation was one of the main problems then after the work at home started and then the number of cases excides 100, then I didn't get enough time to provide proper intervention and equal attention to all people. When the number of calls becomes high I usually try to finish duty as soon as possible thus don't get enough time to give attention to each call and spent enough time to analyse their real situation”.*

#### **4.4.2.2 Demands and issues needed to handle in socio-familial setting**

During Covid 19 pandemic she has experienced many challenges as school counsellors, like all other she was also placed home during this pandemic situation. But all were free and she and the other school counsellors were asked to provide tele counselling services to quarantine people, school students and Covid positive patients. Like all other she had also faced challenges like unavailability of abdicate resources, no family get together, no celebrations, no festival celebrations etc... . And during this time she was asked to work from her home, but it was a challenge for her, because her family demands during this tine were high. She wants do her duties as a mother, daughter and a wife. Her child wants her in all his needs and wants. He did not allow her to works from the house. And also her husband is working in PSC office thus he is busy with his work thus during lockdown period he also need her in all his needs.

*“During this time I feel isolated in sometime because not able to meet other relatives, no one come to our home we didn't go to any were. Then during this time many time I children experience with mild fever then we become stress full. And also my husband is working in media thus during this time he wants to go for his works thus the fear of Covid was very much high in other case.”*

#### **4.4.2.3 Challenges come across financial setting**

Her salaries were paid on time and her husband is a state government employer who is working in PSC office, both of them salary were paid at time thus they didn't face any financial difficulties during this time. Comparatively their expense was less during lockdown period. Only think they used more money is for buying basic utilities that is even though there exits some offers in some shop but they have a small child

and fear of transfer of disease was high thus they brought goods from more high paid shop where comparatively no rush and crowded.

*“In my case, me and my husband’s salaries were paid at time and comparatively expense was less because other experience like festivals, celebrations, family get together were not there during that time”*

#### **4.4.3 OPPERTUNITIES EXPLORED DURING COVID 19 LOCKDOWN**

##### **4.4.3.1 Time period utilised for your personal growth (new habits).**

In her case she gets some time to explore her talents and opportunities during this time she had to handle both family affairs and her work duties. Even though she had many works then also she manages her time and tries to explore her skill in cooking, stitching, gardening etc. She manly spent her time explores her talent in cooking by cooking for her son.

*“Even though I had lot work during that time then also I try to manage this time for exploring my own knowledge and increasing new ideas”.*

##### **4.4.3.2 The social skills you improved during this pandemic period (spending time with family, family get-together)**

During the starting day she didn’t get enough time do her family and relatives and its lockdown period so that not able to go to relatives home but she maintained a regular contact with family members and relatives by using the help of social media. It helps the family to connect together.

*“During the initial days I didn’t get enough time to do spent with family and family engagement but during sometimes I felt that I am alone then contact with my own parent and my other relative by using video calls and group calls this helped us to connect together”.*

#### **4.4.4 ATTITIDES AND APPROACH OF WORKING ENVIRONMENT**

##### **4.4.4.1 Attitudes of students**

Attitude of students toward her is very much positive and supportive. During Covid time also when she contacted 10 students per day in most time student attendant her calls and willingly communicate with her. In school premises also students are very much cooperative. Her approach to identify individual cases and problems among the students is by conducting screening sessions. She regularly conducts group section and screening sessions to identify cases and to provide proper intervention, for this students very much cooperative when they are informed to meet her then they will meet and always take her words as a positive remark.

*“My students are really good when they are informed to meet me then will come to me. I provide both individual session and group session. For group session the teacher and principle arrange my time and for individual session sometimes the teacher suggest me some cases and also I identify students by screening during group sessions”.*

#### **4.4.4.2 Attitudes of student’s parents**

Most of the parents are very much cooperative towards her. During the lockdown period she was informed to inquire the mental state and issues of at least 10 students per day to provide the psychosocial support, most of the parents attend her calls and communicated with her very pleasantly. And during regular class hours when parents are asked to meet her then about 80% of parents try to meet her. And parents are very much supportive towards her.

*“The attitude of parents toward me is positive, when I ask them to me then almost 80% of parent try to meet me and other 20% didn’t cooperate, among this 20 most are government employees who doesn’t have 2 hour to spent for their Child. And during Covid time also when I enquire about the children most replies me positivity”.*

#### **4.4.4.3 Attitude of school management**

The school management support her mist cases in conducting program, to bring out children for different competition, arranging group session, arranging special meeting to parent and inform me about staff meeting and all. But one they have negative attitude is that they did not allow her to bring out cases to outside the school i.e. if any cases occur they didn’t allow her to report it in CWC or police or DCPO they always say that it affect the reputation of the school.

*“During some days celebrations like children’s day, teachers day, international girl child day, women’s day and all I has organised and conducted many programs the school management support me in all such activities. But if any problem arrives like addiction, family issues, abuses then school management always try to solve the problem with in the school but most cases it does not provide any positive impact thus the next step is to inform this to Child line, CWC, DCPO or police but the school management didn’t allow me to do this. The management always argues that it will affect the reputation of the family”.*

#### **4.4.4.4 Attitude of other teaching staff**

Attitude of other teachers working in the school towards the school counselors are almost positive. The teacher allow her to conduct group session and screening and also suggest students for counselling who need it. Whenever teachers take any common decisions then the teacher provide a space for her voice. Both higher school and higher secondary teachers are very much cooperative.

*“Teachers support me all my activities and whenever they organise any think they provide a space for me. And teacher allow me to conduct group session and screening and also suggest student who need counselling. Teacher also links me to parents because for some they didn’t know about counselling and importance of school counselling here teachers play an important role to help me in understand them about counselling .”*

#### **4.4.4.5 Attitude of colleagues**

Her colleagues are supportive, in the ICDS she working has 3 counsellors they share their common ideas, attitudes and discussion. They plan thinks together help each other and communicate with each other about their difficulties then the others provide proper suggestions to overcome from those difficulties.

*“I was appointed 2 years before thus I didn’t had clear cut idea about identifying case and providing proper suggestion but for this my colleagues help me a lot, when any doubt comes to me I used to contact my colleagues then they provide proper measures for me. All we the school counsellors work as a team.”*

### **4.4.5 COPING STRATEGIES USED BY SCHOOL COUNSELLORS**

#### **4.4.5.1 Coping strategies used to deal with stress**

The work during Covid 19 lockdown and its continuation after the reopening of the school was very much stressful. She had started her carrier as a school counsellor one year back thus she is not such an experienced person and now also when sometimes any new duties assigned she always try to get a suggestion from her colleagues. Thus when a new duty Covid 19 special was assigned then she was stressed then she contact her colleagues it was one of her coping mechanism. And sometime when she feel stressed then she simply set alone and enjoys the beauty of nature.

*“Whenever I feel stressed then I try to spent some time for me to set some were alone and enjoy the beauty of nature otherwise I communicate my stress to someone and taking better suggestions from them.*

#### **4.4.5.2 Coping strategies adopted to manage both family and work affairs.**

During the starting day of work she very much stressed and didn’t practice anything to mange her stress. Then she communicate her problems with her husband thus he understand her situation and helped her in managing her works in home. Then she the time spent for each calls thus she got much time than first time.

*“During the initial days I used to spend more than 20 minutes to each calls thus I didn’t get any time to do my activities then I reduced my timing and it effects that I had got more time.”*

#### 4.5 CASE -E

<b>CASE</b>	<b>E</b>
<b>AGE</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>PLACE</b>	<b>VEMBAYAM</b>
<b>EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION</b>	<b>M A PSYCHOLOGY</b>
<b>YEAR OF SERVICE</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>MARITAL STATUS</b>	<b>MARRIED</b>
<b>PARNER'S OCCUPATION</b>	<b>AGRICULTURE</b>
<b>NO OF CHILDREN</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>NO OF FAMILY MEMEBERS</b>	<b>4</b>

Case 5 is 47 year old lady who works in Government higher secondary school V; she has 11 year service as school counsellor. She is post graduated in psychology. She is now residing in Vembayam in Trivandrum district. She is from a middle class family and partner is doing Agriculture. She is from a middle class family with 4 members, husband, son, and daughter. She started her carrier as school counsellor 10 year before, now she one among the senior school counsellors in Trivandrum and earlier she worked as family counsellor.

#### 4.5. ROLE OF SCHOOL COUNSELLORS



#### **4.5.1.1 Role of school counsellors in general**

Regular duty is that she had to work inside the school that is work for welfare of students and have to visit the anganwadi under the ICDS she is working to provide group session to adolescents. On Monday to Friday she has to go to school to conduct group session to students and provide assistance to them, providing assistance for a group or to provide individual session to student in need, identify cases providing corrective interventions. During Saturdays and in summer vacation she has to visit different anganwadi under the ICDS she is working. And have to deal with cases identified by the anganwadi teacher and providing group session to adolescents on adolescent health.

*“I have to go school on Monday to Friday and on Saturdays and summer vacation I have to visit the Anganwadi under the ICDS I am working. In both this cases I had conducted group session, identified cases, provided individual counselling and also provided interventions to cases identified by anganwadi. During this Anganwadi visit I also had conducted awareness session to lactating mothers, parents on anganwadi students, parents of adolescent children and orderly people.”*

#### **4.5.1.2 Roles of school counsellors during Covid 19**

During the starting month of Covid 19 lockdown time she was assigned duty by DMHP to provide tele counselling to people under quarantine and Covid positive patients. During the initial days of work only the list of quarantine people are only given, after that the list include Covid positive cases, Then asked to call the follow up cases which are Covid positive. Then asked to provide psychosocial support to student of the school she is working and asked to analyse the mental state of the child.

*“During the beginning of Covid 19 lockdown days work at first I was asked to provide psychosocial support to Covid 19 patients and quarantine people through telephonic interview. At first I was asked to do my duty in DMHP Peroorkada but it difficult transportation during that time was not so easy then after one they asked to completely work from home.”*

### **4.5.2 CHALLENGES FACED BY SCHOOL COUNSELLORS**

#### **4.5.2.1 Challenges faced during Covid 19 pandemic**

For her this Covid period was challenging with this stressful job. According to all during the Covid lockdown period all were placed in home and had got enough time to spend with family but then also the school counsellor were asked to do work assigned by DMHP and other duties given by Women and child department. At first DMHP asked them to provide psychosocial support to quarantine people expectially people coming from other state and countries, through telephonic interview, for that a list of people with their contact number were provided and they the school counselors were asked to contact this list of person

from their home and analyse their situation, provide proper guidance, providing numbers of helpline servicers and health professionals number and want to give the list of people who attended the call and list of people who doesn't attend the call . She also included that during the initial days of this tele-counselling the school counsellors were not provided with proper guidance or training, this created misunderstanding and lots confusions. After some days DMHP and women and child welfare department provided training by webinar sessions, these help them to clear their doubt. During each time that the Covid rate increases the number of people to be called increased. During the cluster period she was asked to call almost 80-120 calls. These calls include the list of quarantine people, the list of Covid positive patients and follow up calls. For the first one month she was asked to work from DMHP Peroorkada during 2 days of a week then the Covid cases rises thus asked to work from home completely. This transportation during first one moth to DMHP was very much challenging. These duties were there in all days, not even weekly off were there, on public holidays, Sunday, second Saturday all days she had worked. No leave were provided with any reason. And another big challenge she faced is that she was not such an expert in typing note or document using. Even though she has smart phone and whatsapp she didn't have much technological awareness this was one of the main issues during starting days she had suffer a lot because of this then her child then her to overcome from this issues .

*“During the starting days of work in Covid 19 lockdown period even though there were no leaves but the number of calls was adjustable, but when the Covid cases come high then I was totally stressed with this duties on whole days a week. I had some health issues during that time then also I didn't get any leave it was very much stressed during those days. Even though I had many works in the house then also I did my work truthfully but one of the main difficulty I had experienced is that on most of the days I had provided psychosocial support to almost 80-120 people, then during that time some did not attend my calls and they call me back at any time after this long time works I get also small amount of time to spent with my family and doing family work during that time they call me back , even on most they call me during lunch and dinner. On most of the days my lunch was during 4pm. During the starting days of works I was not aware to prepare word document of list people, that times my child help me to type and during some days if he was not there then I had waited for him to come and type the list then after wards he had taught me to prepare document for first few days it was not so easy for me then I studied it. ”*

#### **4.5.2.2 Demands and issues needed to handle in socio-familial setting**

During Covid 19 pandemic she had experienced many challenges, like even though she is in her he didn't get any time to spend with her family. Her children are elder then also they argue for her presence in all time. According to her children this after a long time they four are together in house for long days. But she didn't get enough time to spend with her. After some days children understant her situation and helped her in her works. His husband understant her emotions and mental and physical health state and helped her in all

her works in home like cooking, cleaning, washing and all other works. She also didn't get any time to spend with her parent or calling them also she didn't get proper time.

*“During the initial days of work my children demand me for all their need but after some days they understand my situation and helped me in my works. My husband also helped me a lot he helped me in all my works in home and adjust my situation. But one thing I was not happy that I didn't get enough time to even communicate with my parents.”*

#### **4.5.2.3 Challenges come across financial setting**

The salaries for her was paid on time but no TA was provided and 20% of their salary was cut like other government servants this created some issues that she had some loans and husband is doing agriculture thus during that time the earning from rubber plantation was not there thus her earning was the earning for the family thus this reduction affect her. Thus she and her family come across some financial challenges.

*“During that lockdown period like other government servants salary 20% of our salary was cut thus this affect the financial affairs of my family during that time it was only the earning of my family. I had some loans also to be paid during that time. Thus this reduction affects me and my family”.*

#### **4.5.3 OPPORTUNITIES EXPLORED DURING COVID 19 LOCKDOWN**

##### **4.5.3.1 Time period utilised for your personal growth (new habits).**

During the work at home time she didn't get much time to explore her talents and polishing her knowledge. One of the opportunities she experienced is that during some evenings she helped her husband in his agricultural works. Then she experienced cooking some sweets and snacks for her children.

*“Even though I didn't get some time I try do some interesting experiments in cooking some new recipes for my children. And I also managed some poultry works”.*

##### **4.5.3.2 The social skills you improved during this pandemic period (spending time with family, family get-together)**

For her she didn't get enough time to explore any opportunities during this time he had many works related to both job affairs and home work affairs. But the one opportunity she explored is that she had make one of her challenge into opportunity, that she during the starting one the main challenge she experienced is that she don't have much technological awareness. But after some days with the help of her son she had made it as her opportunity as studying a new thing. When she was stressed with the stress of not having much technological understanding her family give her support and her son teach her.

*“During the initial days it was stress for to work from home that is because of not having much technical awareness then on the initial days my children helped me in doing some and after some days they teach me some technical advancement that helps me in doing my job”.*

#### **4.5.4 ATTITIDES AND APPROACH OF WORKING ENVIRONMENT**

##### **4.5.4.1 Attitudes of students**

Attitude of students toward her is very much positive during Covid time also, when she had contacted 10 students per day as per in the instruction given to her by her department, the student and their parents behave positively. In school also students are very much cooperative. She regularly conducts group section and identifies cases and provides intervention. For every activities students are very much cooperative towards her and when ever students were informed to meet her then they will meet her and become opened towards her. Both higher secondary and high school students are very much cooperative.

*“My students are very much cooperative towards me this is the third school I am working and in all those 3 schools I have maintained a good relationship towards student. This helped me to understand their issues and become capable to provide intervention to them. Whenever, I ask any thing they open up their issues to me and obey my suggestions, they are willing to seek group sessions and individual session.”*

##### **4.5.4.2 Attitudes of student’s parents**

Parents attitude is very much cooperative toward herself. This is well understood during the lockdown period, at that time she was informed to inquire the state of at least 10 students per day to provide the psychosocial support, the parents attend her calls and communicated with her very pleasantly. And in other case parents communicate with her during parents meeting, and if in case parents were asked to come to school then they come. If informed also parents try to communicate her.

*“When I call parents to communicate with students during lockdown days then the attitude of parents were very much cooperative, during some cases even though the parents were not there in the home then also the parents inform students about the calls and they make sure that the students contacted the me. And during the regular parent meeting the about half of the parents try to maintain a contact with me. Also some parent contact me periodically to ask about their how their children are in the school and to know about their changes. Children. If parents are called by me for any cases of children or for any follow up session most of the parents try be there on time”.*

##### **4.5.4.3 Attitude of school management**

The school management support her in conducting programs in relation with different celebration, like girl child day, children's day, elder person's day, and also allow bringing out children for different competition, arranging group session, arranging special meeting to parents. The school management inform me about staff meeting and all new decisions. The school management is her in regarding the failing of complains in police station, CWC, DCPU or Child line.

*“During some day's celebrations like children's day, teachers day, international girl child day, women's day and all I has organised and conducted many programs the school management support me in all such activities. The main complaint given by other school counsellors is that if any cases arise the school management did not allow reporting it to police, CWC, Childline and all such social institutions but here the school management allow me to complaint if needed.*

#### **4.5.4.4 Attitude of other teaching staff**

Attitude of other teachers working in the school towards the school counselors are almost positive. They allow her to conduct group session, help her to arrange individual sessions and also suggest students for counselling who need it and refer children home the feels that they gave any issues. Whenever teachers take any common decisions then the teacher provide a space for her voice. Both higher school and higher secondary teachers are very much cooperative.

*“Teachers support me all my activities and whenever they organise any think they provide a space for me to reflect my ideas. And teachers also allow me to conduct group session and individual sessions and also suggest students who need individual counselling. Teacher also links me to parents because for some they didn't know about counselling and importance of school counselling here teachers play an important role to help me in understanding them about the need counselling .”*

#### **4.5.4.5 Attitude of colleagues**

Her colleagues are supportive they always try to have a good contact with each other and help each other. If any doubt occurs they try to communicate with each other to clear it.

*“I had worked in 3 schools and all this schools are in different ICDS and I have a good contact with all counsellors working in these ICDS, they all are helpful. And all ways try to have a good contact with ourselves”*

### **4.5.5 COPING STRATEGIES USED BY SCHOOL COUNSELLORS**

#### **4.5.5.1 Coping strategies used to deal with stress**

The work during Covid 19 lockdown was very much stressful and the use of smart phone for long hours of day for calling and preparing documents was very much tired job this also affects her health status also. She has migraine thus all days she had headache because of this the main strategy she used is to engage in cooking during free time, then if the list of people come on the day before the day of calling then she write it on previous day thus it will be easy more her to make call and mark who are not attending the calls. Then during some time if headache become very unmanageable she sleep little earlier. After the school reopened after first wave of Corona then she has to manage both the work assigned in school and also this DMHP duty during this time and had other works in home during this time she tries to complete the DMHP duties during school hour that during free hours and lunch break.

*“Whenever I feel stressed then I try to spent some time for on to set with my family, watching videos, managing time for each works etc. Another strategy I used was each work properly on time this help me to manage time.”*

#### **4.5.5.2 Coping strategies adopted to manage both family and work affairs.**

During the starting days of work she very much stressed and didn't practice anything to mange her stress. Then she communicate her problems with her husband thus he understant her situation and helped her in managing her works in home. Then she the time spent for each calls thus she got much time than first time. Her children also understant about her situation and helped her to reduce her stress by helping her in her works in home.

*“During the initial days of work I didn't find any strategies to maintain my work load in both house and professional works then after some days I feel it not easy for me to manage my stress then I communicate my problem with family then they understand my situations and help me in managing my works they help in kitchen, washing cleaning and all related works in home this made me comfortable to do my duties on time, then on some days I find some time engage on cooking new recipes, watching videos , talking with family for long hours”*

**CHAPTER-5**  
**ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

## 5.1. INTRODUCTION

Qualitative data analysis is the processes and procedures in which the qualitative data that have been collected is moved into some form of explanation, understanding or interpretation of the people and situations that is being investigated. Thematic analysis is one of the most common forms of analysis within qualitative research. It helps in focusing on examining and recording patterns or themes within the data available.

## 5.2 SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS

<b>CASE</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
<b>AGE</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>PLACE</b>	<b>PANGODE</b>	<b>SREEKARY AM</b>	<b>POGUMMO OD</b>	<b>KANIYAPU RAM</b>	<b>VEMBAYAM</b>
<b>EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATI ON</b>	<b>MSW</b>	<b>MSW</b>	<b>M A PSYCHOLO GY</b>	<b>MSW (Medical and Psychiatry)</b>	<b>M A PSYCHOLO GY</b>
<b>YEAR OF SERVICE</b>	<b>2 YEARS</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>MARITAL STATUS</b>	<b>MARRIED</b>	<b>MARRIED</b>	<b>MARRIED</b>	<b>MARRIED</b>	<b>MARRIED</b>
<b>PARNER'S OCCUPATION</b>	<b>STATISTIC AL</b>	<b>RAILWAY EMPLOYEE</b>	<b>MEDIA</b>	<b>GOVERNMENT</b>	<b>AGRICULTU RE</b>



	<b>ASSISTANT</b>			<b>SERVENT</b>	
<b>NO OF CHILDREN</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>NO OF FAMILY MEMEBERS</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>

These are the five respondents taken for the research by the researcher. These respondents are school counsellor from 5 different schools in Trivandrum district.

### 5.3 THEMATIC ANALYSIS

Analysis of themes aims to get better understanding about the lived experience of school counsellors during the first wave of Covid 19 period and the works during that time. The themes are arranged according the questions is asked and details are collected from the respondents. Sub themes under main themes are found and analysis of the data is been done according to the themes found.

Sl. No	Themes	Sub-themes
1	<b>ROLE OF SCHOOL COUNSELLOR</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Role of school counsellors in general</li> <li>2. Roles of school counsellors during Covid 19</li> </ol>
2	<b>CHALLENGES FACED BY SCHOOL COUNSELLORS</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Challenges faced during Covid 19 pandemic</li> <li>2. Demands and issues needed to handle in socio-familial setting</li> <li>3. Challenges come across financial setting</li> </ol>
3	<b>OPPERTUNITIES EXPLORED DURING COVID 19 LOCKDOWN</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Time period for your personal growth (new habits)</li> <li>2. The social skills you improved during</li> </ol>

		<b>this pandemic period</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>ATTITIDES AND APPROACH OF WORKING ENVIRONMENT</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Attitudes of students</b></li> <li><b>2. Attitudes of student’s parents</b></li> <li><b>3. Attitude of school management</b></li> <li><b>4. Attitude of other teaching staff</b></li> <li><b>5. Attitude of colleagues</b></li> </ol>
<b>5</b>	<b>COPING STRATEGEIS USED BY SCHOOL COUNSELLORS</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Coping strategies used to deal with stress</b></li> <li><b>2. Coping strategies adopted to manage both family and work affairs.</b></li> </ol>

### **5.3.1 Theme 1: ROLE OF SCHOOL COUNSELLOR**

A **school counselor** or **guidance counselor** is a professional who works in primary schools or secondary schools to provide academic, career, college access/affordability/admission, and social-emotional competencies to all students through a school counseling program (wikipedia). The actual role of school counsellor is to conducts various activities for the elementary, secondary and higher secondary students. Which include Individual Counselling, organising and conducting counseling groups, classroom and other group guidance activities, standardised test administration and interpretation, nonstandardised assessment (i.e. case studies, observation, information gathering interviews, questionnaires), needs assessment (to determine the priority needs of the target population), consultation activities, providing career guidance and information, providing educational guidance and information (including scholarships, college placement, student scheduling) prevention planning and implementation activities, developmental activities and also include administrative activities (eGyanKosh).

#### **5.3.1.1 Sub theme 1 : Role of school counsellors in general**

In the current scenario school counsellor is an essential one in a school by knowing this reality now the Kerala government has ordered the post of school counsellors in all government schools in Kerala. The general role of school counsellors may include the advice and description of job given by the respective

department at the time joining on the point. This includes the day today activities of the school counsellor that want to apply by them in the schools.

Case A: *“On school during Monday to Friday I have to be with children to provide proper interventions for their issues and provide awareness classes for children, teachers and parents and during, group sessions and individual counselling to children and also provide awareness session for parents”.*

Case B: *“I have to work for the children to solve their issues and provide proper interventions and provide awareness classes for children, teachers and parents and during Saturdays and during summer vacation I used to visit the anganwadi under the ICDS I am working and provided awareness sessions, group sessions and individual counselling to children and also provide awareness session for pregnant women, lactating mother and orderly people”.*

Case C: *“I have to work for the welfare of children inside the school and also want to visit the Anganwadi under the ICDS which I am working. I have to conduct sessions in both this cases and I also conduct awareness class to parents on good parenting.”*

Case D: *“I have to school for Monday to Friday and want to conduct group session and individual counselling to students in the school and for Saturdays and during summer vacation I want to go to different Anganwadi under the ICDS which I am working”*

Case E: *“I have to go school on Monday to Friday and on Saturdays and summer vacation I have to visit the Anganwadi under the ICDS I am working. In both this cases I had conducted group session, identified cases, provided individual counselling and also provided interventions to cases identified by anganwadi. During this Anganwadi visit I also had conducted awareness session to lactating mothers, parents on anganwadi students, parents of adolescent children and orderly people.”*

### **Discussion:**

The role of school counsellors in school is providing intervention to children for their problem. The school counsellors is responsible for identifying issues among the children, issues arises in the family of children. Issues occur in the environment. The school counsellors conduct group session to identify children having issues, to provide awareness for children, after identifying a case or get any reference case then they will analyse the issues and provide proper intervention to help children to solve their issues by their own. The services of school counsellor is not only restricted inside the school they are asked to provide the same services to the adolescent children in Anganwadi under the ICDS the counsellor is working.

#### **5.3.1.2 Sub theme 2 : Roles of school counsellors during Covid 19**

During the first wave of Covid 19 the people were not aware about social distancing, quarantine, isolation, Covid 19 these all terms were new for most of people this created lot of confusions among their self. During

that time only one helpline service was only there that is DISHA a large number of call come to DISHA every day thus the quarantine and Covid positive people who need mental support didn't get enough time to share their issues thus the district mental health program in Trivandrum district had organised a new idea, that a list of quarantine people and Covid positive cases will be collected from respective health departments and this list is divided and given school counsellors they want to contact this people.

*Case A: "During the lockdown period the DMHP has assigned us to provide psychosocial support to quarantine patients and Covid positive patients".*

*Case B: "On the beginning of Covid 19 lockdown days work at first I was asked to provide psychosocial support to Covid 19 patients and quarantine people through telephonic interview. Then it is following still now, now the school had reopened then also we the school counsellor wants to go to school, during works in school and also want to provide tele counselling services"*

*Case C: "At the beginning of Covid 19 lockdown days work at first I was asked to provide psychosocial support to Covid 19 patients and quarantine people through telephonic interview. Then for first one month I did that work from my house, during that time I find it difficult to work from home thus I choose to do consolidating the data sources given by DMHP to be assigned to other counselors to provide their services and the list given back by them."*

*Case D: "I have to school for Monday to Friday and want to conduct group session and individual counselling to students in the school and for Saturdays and during summer vacation I want to go to different Anganwadi under the ICDS which I am working".*

*Case E: "During the beginning of Covid 19 lockdown days work at first I was asked to provide psychosocial support to Covid 19 patients and quarantine people through telephonic interview. At first I was asked to do my duty in DMHP Peroorkada but it difficult transportation during that time was not so easy then after one they asked to completely work from home."*

### **Discussion:**

The Covid duty was entirely different from the other duties did by school counsellor. During the lockdown period of first wave of Covid 19 the DMHP has provided them two types of works. During the initial days for both these work initially both their works were done in DMHP then the tele counselling team were asked to work from home and consolidation team were asked to work from DMHP. The research only case C did consolidation work.

### **5.3.2 Theme 2: CHALLENGES FACED BY SCHOOL COUNSELLORS**

Through this research question the researcher try to understand about the challenges faced by school counsellor during the time of pandemic works.

### 5.3.2.1 Subtheme 1: Challenges faced during Covid 19 pandemic

Case A: *“During lock down days work at home works I was very much stressed because work from home was a challenge for me because my children were there in the house they are very youth so they depend on me for all their needs for their food and other needs they want me. This was a big challenge for me. And another challenge faced by me that I am new in this field and I didn’t get proper training before the duty started. Only after some days the training was given”.*

Case B: *“During the starting day of Covid duty the works was ok for me to control but when the Covid cases increased then the number of class increased then I become strees I didn’t get proper time to manage my duties. Now the school reopens during this time we the school counsellors want to do both the duties it is very much time spending I usually didn’t get time to manage all these duties”.*

Case C: *“During the starting day of Covid duty I did work of providing psychosocial support to Covid positive patients and quarantine people from home then I feel it difficult to work from my house then I had chosen the consolidation duty of list of patients. The transportation during this time wise very much difficult then during morning my brother drops me there and in the evening my husband takes me to home. Taking vehicles for all days were very much expensive for me and my family.”*

Case D: *“During the initials days of work transportation was one of the main problems then after the work at home started and then the number of cases excides 100 I didn’t get enough time to provide proper intervention and equal attention to all people. When the number of calls becomes high I usually try to finish duty as soon as possible thus don’t get enough time to give attention to each call and spent enough time to analyse their real situation”.*

Case E: *“During the starting days of work in Covid 19 lockdown period even though there were no leaves but the number of calls was adjustable, but when the Covid cases come high then I was totally stressed with this duties on whole days a week. I had some health issues during that time then also I didn’t get any leave it was very much stressed during those days. Even though I had many works in the house then also I did my work truthfully but one of the main difficulty I had experienced is that on most of the days I had provided psychosocial support to almost 80-120 people, then during that time some did not attend my calls and they call me back at any time after this long time works I get also small amount of time to spent with my family and doing family work during that time they call me back , even on most they call me during lunch and dinner. On most of the days mu lunch was during 4pm. During the starting days of works I was not aware to write document that is write written list after calling, that times my child help me to type and during some days if he was not there then I had waited for him to come and type the list then after wards he had taught me to write document for first few days it was not so easy for me then I studied it. ”*

#### **Discussion:**

For all these five cases the challenges were very same. The main challenges faced by them were the increase in number of calls, not getting enough time to give attention to each call, for getting time for personal engagement. Then Case 3 had transportation issues.

### **5.3.2.2 Subtheme 2: Demands and issues needed to handle in socio-familial setting**

Case A: *“During the lockdown period was so much stressed that I didn’t get enough time to eat on some days, to spent with my family even though I am with them , and all of them in the house then also I am not free. During the initial days they didn’t understant my feelings and my wards and they discourage me, but after some days they understood my situation and accepted my feelings then they give me full support and help me in my works in home. This sometimes made me free and thus I got some time to spent with them ”*

Case B: *“During the lockdown period was so much stressed that I didn’t get enough time to spent with my family even though I am with them , and all of them in the house then also I am not free. During the initial days they didn’t understant my feelings and my wards and they discourage me, but after some days they understood my situation and accepted my feelings then they give me full support and help me in my works in home. This sometimes made me free and thus I got some time to spent with them ”*

Case C: *“During this time I feel isolated in sometime because not able to meet other relatives, no one come to our home we didn’t go to any were. Then during this time many time I children experience with mild fever then we become stress full. And also my husband is working in media thus during this time he wants to go for his works thus the fear of Covid was very much high in other case.”*

Case D: *“During this time I feel isolated in sometime because not able to meet other relatives, no one come to our home we didn’t go to any were. Then during this time many time I children experience with mild fever then we become stress full. And also my husband is working in media thus during this time he wants to go for his works thus the fear of Covid was very much high in other case.”*

Case E: *“During the initial days of work my children demand me for all their need but after some days they understant my situation and helped me in my works. My husband also helped me a lot he helped me in all my works in home and adjust my situation. But one thing I was not happy that I didn’t get enough time to even communicate with my parents.”*

**Discussion:** The challenges faced in socio-familial setting was same for all of the 5 cases they didn’t get time for personal engagement, family get together, no time for doing some new initiatives in family, they didn’t get time to spent with their family and to perform her role in the family.

### **5.3.2.3 Subtheme 3: Challenges come across financial setting**

*Case A: “Earlier I had an online business purpose. I didn’t get enough time to give correct updates to her online business. Thus the business become non-profitable for me and salary was also less as compared to other months. But the family try to maintain financial needs with my husband’s salary.”*

*Case B: “My salaries were paid on time but salary was less as compared to other month even though we are not permanent our then also 30% of our salary was cut. But these problem didn’t affect my family more because my husband is working in Indian railway thus we manage our financial needs with both of us salaries. According to my family our expense during Covid 19 lockdown period is less us compared to other months”.*

*Case C: “Transportation cost for me was one of the greater expenses for me during lockdown days; most of my salary was spent for transportation. And also for buying basic needs for more expensive shops”.*

*Case D: “In my case, me and my husband’s salaries were paid at time and comparatively expense was less because other experience like festivals, celebrations, family get together were not there during that time”.*

*Case E: “During that lockdown period like other government servants salary 30% of our salary was cut thus this affect the financial affairs of my family during that time it was only the earning of my family. I had some loans also to be paid during that time. Thus this reduction affects me and my family”.*

**Discussion:** The main challenge for them in the financial setting is that 30% of their salary was cut during that time. For Case 1, Case 2 and Case 4 their husband is also working in government setting thus their family maintain with that but for Case 3 her husband is working in media his salary was less during the pandemic and for Case 5 her husband had agricultural work thus this reduction in salary affect the whole families functioning.

### **5.3.3 Theme 3: OPPERTUNITIES EXPLORED DURING COVID 19 LOCKDOWN**

#### **5.3.3.1 Time period utilised for your personal growth (new habits).**

*Case A: “I am proud that I am a mental health supporter that provides me power to handle my mental power during this time. During time I had become Covid positive and become highly systematic then also I didn’t get any leave and I was bedridden for one month then also I didn’t get any leave , during both this circumstances I did my job this give me mental power to handle my health issues during my illness. I see this as a big opportunity that I did my work even when I am bedridden and ”.*

*Case B: "I had restarted Yoga practice, then during some free time I experimented with some new recipes to make my children happy and surprised. Then the whole family started gardening and we did activities together."*

*Case C: "I did not get any time to explore my talents or do new things I just only prepared some new food for my children such as ice creams and shakes".*

*Case D: "Even though I had a lot of work during that time then also I try to manage this time for exploring my own knowledge and increasing new ideas".*

*Case E: "Even though I didn't get some time I try to do some interesting experiments in cooking some new recipes for my children. And I also did some poultry farming".*

**Discussion:** The opinion that all the 5 cases share is that they didn't get much time to explore their opportunities during the time of work that home they all were busy with their work. But they also share during this time period also they try to make some that time as an opportunity to release their work load stress. In the case of Case C, D and E, they share common thing that they use these work at home time to practice some experiments in cooking to polish their knowledge in cooking. In the case of Case B she restarted her Yoga practice as stress management technique. In the case of Case A she is the one who gets better benefit that during this work she was bedridden for one then also she was able to work, it was a great opportunity for her.

### **5.3.3.2 The social skills you improved during this pandemic period (spending time with family, family get-together)**

*Case A: "During this time I realise about the importance of communication if we communicate our problems with others then only they can realise our real situation and pain".*

*Case B: "During the initial days I didn't get enough time to do something for herself but after some days my family help me in my works in home and then I got some time to do my own, then some long year we the four of our family got some time spent on our own, with talking on common issues, expressing our view on issues thus a healthy family relationship is maintained."*

*Case C: "During the initial days I didn't get enough time to do something for myself and for family then I conveyed her situation that it was very difficult for me to work from home, then her husband and mother support me to work from Peroorkada DMHP thus I understand the value of family relationships".*

*Case D: "During the initial days I didn't get enough time to do spent with family and family engagement but during sometimes I felt that I am alone then contact with my own parent and my other relative by using video calls and group calls this helped us to connect together".*

*Case E: "During the initial days it was stress for to work from home that is because of not having much technical awareness then on the initial days my children helped me in doing some and after some days they teach me some technical advancement that helps me in doing my job".*



**Discussion:** Here, all of them opinion was almost same during the initial days it was very stressful for them to handle both the works in their home and the job related works then they become stressed then the one thing all this cases do is that they communicate their real issues to other family members then they understand their situation and help them the work in home.

### **5.3.4 Theme 4: ATTITUDES AND APPROACH OF WORKING ENVIRONMENT**

#### **5.3.4.1 Subtheme 1: Attitudes of students**

Case A: *“The students’ attitude to good towards me the high school students obey me and talk with me very friendly but the higher secondary students are sometimes problematic”.*

Case B: *“The students studying this school are those who did not get admission in other school that is these students are not very brilliant in studies and many have family problems and social issues. Most are disobedient and problematic”.*

Case C: *“My students are very much cooperative whenever, I ask any thing they open up their issues to me and obey my suggestions, they are willing to seek group sessions and individual session. For higher secondary students most of their teacher didn’t allow them to meet me then also whenever they feel any need then they come to me without informing their teachers”.*

Case D: *“My students are really good when they are informed to meet me then will come to me. I provide both individual session and group session. For group session the teacher and principle arrange my time and for individual session sometimes the teacher suggest me some cases and also I identify students by screening during group sessions”.*

Case E: *“My students are very much cooperative towards me this is the third school I am working and in all those 3 schools I have maintained a good relationship towards student. This helped me to understand their issues and become capable to provide intervention to them. Whenever, I ask any thing they open up their issues to me and obey my suggestions, they are willing to seek group sessions and individual session.”*

**Discussion:** For all the 5 cases the attitude of student towards them is satisfactory, students are cooperative towards her, seek their advice , always come for follow-up and had maintained a good relationship towards them. In the case of case A higher secondary students are not much cooperative towards her, but high school students are cooperative.

#### **5.3.4.2 Subtheme 2: Attitudes of student’s parents**

Case A: *“Most of parent’s attitude is positive and always try to maintain a good relationship with me and other teachers to know about their child. But some parents especially parents who are working in higher job they didn’t attend the parents meeting didn’t come to school on time if informed also.”*

Case B: *“The most of the parents are not aware about school counsellors and school counselling thus when they are asked to come they think about regular meeting and decide not to come in. And one the other reason is that most of parents are doing kooli works thus even one day absence also affects the earning of family thus they decide to do to work other than attending parents meeting In some cases I along with Supervisor or CDPO or School principal or Anganwadi conducted house visits of different students then I realise in also the students cases the family play a very important role in most of cases the attitude of parents, the living situation of the students all were a big challenge for students to study. Their living conditions were not much satisfying.”*

Case C: *“When I call parent to communicate with students during lockdown days then the attitude of parents were very cooperative, during some cases even though the parents were not there then also the parents inform students about the calls and they make sure that the students contacted the me”.*

Case D: *“The attitude of parents toward me is positive, when I ask them to me then almost 80% of parent try to meet me and other 20% didn't cooperate, among this 20 most are government employees who doesn't have 2 hour to spent for their Child. And during Covid time also when I enquire about the children most replies me positivity”.*

Case E: *“When I call parents to communicate with students during lockdown days then the attitude of parents were very much cooperative, during some cases even though the parents were not there in the home then also the parents inform students about the calls and they make sure that the students contacted the me. And during the regular parent meeting the about half of the parents try to maintain a contact with me. Also some parent contact me periodically to ask about their children and the behaviour of children in the school and to know about their changes. If parents are called by me for any cases of children or for any follow up session most of the parents try be there on time”.*

**Discussion :** The attitude of parents is also same for all the 5 cases, according to them in also most all parents attitudes is positive and they try to build a good relationship with these counsellors and if need they come for follow up cases. But in cases of some perents they does not cooperate with them. Actually they didn't know the real job of school counsellor.

#### **5.3.4.3 Subtheme 3: Attitude of school management**

Case A: *“The attitude of school management towards her is somewhat not positive because if any meetings are conducted then they will not inform me. Even though if they are not interested to participate me in the staff meetings, then also they can even inform, but they did not do it at all. They discriminate me in many times.”*

Case B: *“During some days celebrations like children's day, teachers day, international girl child day, women's day and all I has organised and conducted many programs the school management support me in all such activities. . In some cases I along with Supervisor or CDPO or School*

*principal or Anganwadi conducted house visits of different students then I realise in also the students cases the family play a very important role in most of cases the attitude of parents, the living situation of the students all were a big challenge for students to study. Their living conditions were not much satisfying.”*

*Case C: “During some days celebrations like children’s day, teachers day, international girl child day, women’s day and all I has organised and conducted many programs the school management support me in all such activities but in some instance they organise many programmes during that time nobody inform me about that programs..”*

*Case D: “During some days celebrations like children’s day, teachers day, international girl child day, women’s day and all I has organised and conducted many programs the school management support me in all such activities. But if any problem arrives like addiction, family issues, abuses then school management always try to solve the problem with in the school but most cases it does not provide any positive impact thus the next step is to inform this to Child line, CWC, DCPO or police but the school management didn’t allow me to do this. The management always argues that it will affect the reputation of the family”.*

*Case E: “During some day’s celebrations like children’s day, teachers day, international girl child day, women’s day and all I has organised and conducted many programs the school management support me in all such activities. The main complaint given by other school counsellors is that if any cases arise the school management did not allow reporting it to police, CWC, Childline and all such social institutions but here the school management allow me to complaint if needed.*

**Discussion:** Except in the case of Case 1 for all the other 4 the attitude of school management is positive that is they encourage them in all their works. Whenever they any think the school management support them and also if the school management organise anything then they also inform school counsellors. But in the case of case one the attitude of school management is not so positive whenever the school management organise anything then they won’t inform her and don’t support her in any activities.

#### **5.3.4.4 Sub theme 4: Attitude of other teaching staff**

*Case A: “The other teachers did not provide any dignity to my works. Their attitude is also same us the management, they did not inform me about any meetings and common program. They discriminate me in many sense like salary and all.”*

*Case B: “The principal and other teachers support me in all activities, when I organise they programs they always support me and when any external competition occurs and I used to present students for that competition then also principle allow me take students for competitions.”*

*Case C: “High school teachers support me in all activities and support me, principal and other teacher sent students with me for our department competitions but in the case of higher secondary teachers they did even respect my job. They consider me as someone outside the school if even*

*though students say that they want to meet me or says they have any issues they didn't allow students to come to me."*

Case D: "Teachers support me all my activities and whenever they organise any think they provide a space for me. And teacher allow me to conduct group session and screening and also suggest student who need counselling. Teacher also links me to parents because for some they didn't know about counselling and importance of school counselling here teachers play an important role to help me in understand them about counselling ."

Case E: "*Teachers support me all my activities and whenever they organise any think they provide a space for me to reflect my ideas. And teachers also allow me to conduct group session and individual sessions and also suggest students who need individual counselling. Teacher also links me to parents because for some they didn't know about counselling and importance of school counselling here teachers play an important role to help me in understand them about counselling .*"

**Discussion:** In the case of B, D, E the other teachers help them in all the activities they planed and support them but in case of case C the high school teachers support her but the higher secondary teachers does not, but in the case of Case A the teacher didn't support her and doesn't give dignity to the work done by them.

#### **5.3.4.5 Subtheme 5: Attitude of colleagues**

Case A: "*During this lockdown period I h\was also became Covid positive and highly symptomatic then also I didn't get proper leave. And I doesn't get any support from the department but colleagues helped me, they give me mental support and ask me they will divide my calls and they will contact the list of people that I want to call, and then I tell that I will do it".*

Case B: "*When new works has been assigned from the counsellors we used to discuss in our group about how to take decision regarding new activities. We help each other as somebody face any difficulties. When any doubt comes to me I used to call other then they provide proper measures for me. All we the school counsellors work as a team.*"

Case C: "*We work as a group in doing activities; my colleges help me doing new things. I was not much aware about new technological innovations and technological works but my colleagues give me support and provide proper suggestions for doing new things this helped me a lot to reduce my stress regarding doing new things.*"

Case D: "*I was appointed 2 years before thus I did have clear cut idea about identifying case and providing proper suggestion but for this my colleagues help me a lot, when any doubt comes to me I used to contact my colleagues then they provide proper measures for me. All we the school counsellors work as a team.*"

Case E : "*I was appointed 2 years before thus I did have clear cut idea about identifying case and providing proper suggestion but for this my colleagues help me a lot, when any doubt comes to me I*

*used to contact my colleagues then they provide proper measures for me. All we the school counsellors work as a team.”*

**Discussion:** For all the 5 cases the attitude of colleagues is positive they support each other in their work and provide proper suggestions for the needy situations where they face any difficulties. There is not much discrimination among their self like senior workers and junior works they try to help one another and work as a team.

### **5.3.5 Theme 5: COPING STRATEGIES USED BY SCHOOL COUNSELLORS**

#### **5.3.5.1 Subtheme 1: Coping strategies used to deal with stress**

*Case A: “Actually I did get much time to do some stress reliving I get do some gardening and some agriculture works. Then cooked some new recipes for my children which made them happy, thus I also become happy for some times.”*

*Case B: “During the starting days of Covid 19 duties I was very much stressed earlier I had practiced Yoga during initial days I didn’t get time to practice Yoga, then I try to practice it by time managing”.*

*Case C: “During the starting days of Covid 19 duties I was very much stressed then I began to go to exercise along with my husband during that one hour we share our thoughts and we even play games this help me to forget all my stress for some times. And another thing I practised is that when I feel stressed I watch TV or watch any entertainment program on online”.*

*Case D: “Whenever I feel stressed then I try to spent some time for on to set some were alone and enjoy the beauty of nature otherwise I communicate my stress to someone and taking better suggestions from them.*

*Case E : “Whenever I feel stressed then I try to spent some time for on to set with my family, watching videos, managing time for each works etc. Another strategy I used was each work properly on time this help me to manage time.”*

**Discussion:** For all the 5 cases they didn’t get enough time to practice stress management techniques during the initial days but after some day their stress comes peak and they manage their time to get additional time for practicing stress reducing activities. For all their stress management techniques were different.

#### **5.3.5.2 Subtheme 2: Coping strategies adopted to manage both family and work affairs.**

*Case A: “I tried to be with family during free time, and did gardening and agricultural works along with her husband this made her being with family.”*

*Case B: "When my stress comes in high I displace that towards my children by scolding them in unnecessary things, then I realise that if I go like this then it affect my family life then gain I scheduled my time and find time for practicing Yoga. After I have restarted Yoga practice my strees were less as compared to starting days."*

*Case C: "I have practiced a time management technique to release our family stress."*

*Case D: "During the initial days I used to spend more than 20 minutes to each calls thus I didn't get any time to do my activities then I reduced my timing and it effects that I had got more time."*

*Case E "During the initial days of work I didn't find any strategies to maintain my work load in both house and professional works then after some days I feel it not easy for me to manage my stress then I communicate my problem with family then they understand my situations and help me in managing my works they help in kitchen, washing cleaning and all related works in home this made me comfortable to do my duties on time, then on some days I find some time engage on cooking new recipes, watching videos , talking with family for long hours"*

**Discussion:** For all the five cases the time management was the main problem that affects their family structure that they use their personal time which they want to be with family also for their professional work. This created many problems then the main strategy used by all these five that they communicate with their family about their issues and it provide a positive remarks for them that they helped them in all their works at home.

**CHAPTER VI**  
**FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION**

## **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

Through this chapter, the researcher focuses on the findings, suggestions and conclusion of the whole study. This chapter enables a reader to understand the overall objective and purpose of this study. The study has followed a qualitative method that enables the researcher to have an in-depth understanding about the objectives.

The researcher aimed to study the lived experience of school counsellors during the first wave of Covid 19 lock down period. The data collected from the respondents gives an understanding regarding the objectives. The findings from the analysis have been explained in this chapter. Findings are derived from the insights of case analysis. The analysis from each sub heading, under each question was combined together to give the finding for every research question. These findings are directly connected with the cases that interacted with the researcher. Suggestions arise from the insights of the researcher based on the findings and observation that he made while interacting with the cases. It may helpful to enhance the quality of the program and thus improvement can be observed. Conclusion is the final word of the researcher regarding the paper in general. The tool used for data collection has been given in the Appendix.

## **6.2. FINDINGS**

### **6.2.1 Research questions no 1: What are the roles of school counsellors?**

- The general role of school counsellor is to assist the psychosocial needs of children in the school and to provide proper interventions and follow up their issues. And they need to report issues to corresponding agencies like Child welfare committee, District child protection offices, Childline and other government settings related to children. Then on weekends and during the summer vacation they want to visit the anganwadi under the ICDS they are working and want to provide the same service to adolescent children and want to provide awareness sessions.
- The duties given for them during the Covid 19 lockdown period is especially the duties provided by DMHP to provide psychosocial support to Covid 19 positive cases and other people who are under quarantine and also asked to provide follow up sessions. The other duty is to provide psychosocial support to at least 10 students in the school they are working and assist the mental status. After the school reopens also they were asked to go to school and want to provide these services.

### **6.2.2 Research questions no 2: What were the challenges faced by school counselors during Covid 19 pandemic?**

- The main challenge faced by them is the long hour work assigned by District Mental Health Program, when the duty started they have given only 50- 70 calls per day then later all their duty



extended to follow up calls and also asked to call at least 10 students studying in the school they are working during this time their number of calls extended to 80- 120. It was very challenging for them to calls these much calls every day and some time they even didn't get correct time to have their food. Lack of technical awareness was one the main issues faced by some counsellors.

- During the initial days of work they had some issues of lack of proper guidance but later it was provided through webinar sessions and awareness classes
- They have to work from home thus it was very challenging for them, from the five cases the three of them have small children thus when they are in the home their children want them for all their need thus it was very challenging for them to do this duties from home. And they have to do all works in their house. It was not easy for them to handle both family affairs and professional affairs during that time.
- During the initial days of work they were asked to do their works from DMHP Peroorkada, Trivandrum then transportation was a big problem for them during the lockdown. It was very much expensive and was challenging to work in this time.
- No leave were provided for them all weekends, public holidays they want to do duties if they are not well then also they didn't get any proper leave.
- Then some of them faced financial challenges because during that time about 20% of their salary was cut for salary challenge that for some this was the only earning for the family during this time thus this reduction affected them.

### **6.2.3 Research question no 3: What were the opportunities you explored during Covid 19?**

- During that busy working hour they didn't get much time to explore their opportunities then when Covid rates become controllable no of calls reduced then they get some time to polish their talents in cooking and did gardening along with their family members.
- Some had started body exercise and one of the respondent restarted Yoga.
- During the initial days the counselors were stressed because they wants to do their job from the home and also they have to do works in house but the family was not aware about the stress faced by them then the they started to communicate their problems with family members then the family understand their situation and encourage them in their works. That here this time give them an opportunity to build a healthy family relationship.
- One of the respondents was bedridden during this time and she was Covid 19 but during both these condition she was asked to work but initially she sees it as a challenges but later she realize that it was a big opportunity for her to provide psychosocial and mental support even though she has this issues.

### **6.2.4 Research question no 4: What is the approach and attitude of people in your working environment?**

- The attitude of students towards the school counsellor is positive they always try to maintain a good relationship with school counsellor they obey and truly communicate towards school counsellor; students also come for follow up sessions and are open towards the school counsellors.
- The attitude of other teachers towards school counsellor include both positive and negative attitude in some schools the teachers are very much supportive especially the high school teachers are supportive and in some schools the higher secondary teachers are not much supportive they didn't give any dignity to the work given by school counsellors.
- Attitude of parents towards the school counsellor is positive in the case of most of the cases but in the case of other parent they doesn't give any dignity to their words, these parents do not come for follow up sessions and interventions. In most cases the parents from normal families are cooperative but some parents who are well educated and has better job they didn't attend any session and do not communicate with these counsellors when though they were asked to meet.
- The attitude of school management is different in different schools in most of school the school management is very much supportive towards the school counsellors but in some rare cases the management doesn't provide any dignity to their services.
- The attitude of colleagues is all positive they help and encourage each other in their needs, provide suggestion for improvement. If any common problem arises then they all ways try work as a team.

#### **6.2.5 Research question no 5: How did you manage to cope up with the stress and challenges during pandemic?**

- The coping strategies used by different counsellors were different but they share the common opinion that during the initial days of work their stress was at the peak but during that days they didn't get any time to practice any stress management mechanism, then after some days they think about stress management mechanisms like Yoga practice, using time management mechanisms, watching T V and other videos, spending time with family, sleep etc..
- During the initial days of work they didn't get much time to spent with family they use their personal time also for professional needs then this had created family issues for some then they made some time management mechanisms, this give them time to be with family and they also communicate their issues with the family this also help them that the family understood about their work pressure.

#### **6.3 SUGGESTIONS**

- The proper training can be given to them in needy time as per their need.

- When the number of cases become high the voluntary workers can be selected with same qualification and provide them proper training and class sessions through webinar and they can be assigned to provide such psychosocial support for quarantine people and Covid 19 positive cases.
  - Training on use of technology can be provided because there are counsellors above the age of 45 they are not aware about technological advancement thus they can be given proper awareness classes.
  - Follow up session can be conducted in one in month to know about the progress of works and this will provide a platform for counsellors to clear their doubts.
  - These school counsellors are working in government school with a minimum salary in this Covid period they play an important role in maintaining the mental health of public thus their job can be given a dignity by making their job permanent with a minimum standard of pay.
  - For most of the counsellors the work at home was very much challenging thus they can we provided with transportation facility to work from by their nearby ICDS centre or health center. This will help them to reduce their stress in home to handle both children and their job in the same time.
  - If transportation facilities are not provided they can be provided with transport allowance.
  - The schedule of school counsellors are very tight that they want provide psychosocial support to Covid positive patients and quarantine people, then want to take follow up session and also provide mental support to students. But their actual work doesn't end here on most of the days they have different webinar session and training and are also providing group session to student through online platform. Because this they want to be with phone for more than 10 hours this will affect their mental and physical status.
- Though if they are provided with time schedule they it will help them to reduce their professional strain and they get some personal time.

#### **6.4 CONCLUSION**

The study conducted by researcher aimed to understand about the challenges and opportunities encountered by school counsellors during the first wave of Covid 19. The objective of the researcher is to understand about the roles, challenges and opportunities of school counsellor during the first wave Covid 19 the researcher also studied about their coping strategies .At first the researcher had done pilot study and prepared a semi-structured interview guide. After that the researcher identifies 5 different school counsellors from different government schools in Trivandrum district by snow ball sampling method. Then the researcher contacted different counsellors and conveyed about the research and then conducted in-depth interviews with these school counsellors in their convenient times. The researcher met all these counsellors from their work place. They were very much then also they have given me enough time to interview them and whenever the researcher contacted them they communicate pleasantly and openly.

After collecting the data through in-depth interview the researcher did thematic analysis to analyze the collected data. From the thematic analysis the researcher got better understanding about the role, challenges, opportunities and coping strategies of School counsellors and also understand about the attitude of working environment towards them. From thematic analyses in-depth interview the researcher understand from the 5 school counsellors that, the experience of school counsellors during Covid 19 time was very much challenging for them. They had long hours of work each days. For all other worker the Covid 19 time work was very much easy and many were free but for school counsellors they had work in all days and almost more than 8 hours of work including webinar session and other online session for children. They didn't get any leave for these works all days they have work including Second Saturdays and Sundays and all public holidays. In some cases the school counsellors became Covid positive and had other health issues then also they did get any proper leave. These work time was very much challenging but then also they try to explore their opportunities to develop their personal and professional knowledge. Then after the initial months the school reopens during that time they want to go to school and also want to do these duties.

Now the second wave of Covid outbreak occurs and then the number of calls gets increasing day by day. But now they are asked to conduct house visit and other works regarding their school needs and along with these work they are doing the Covid duties but they are not provided with any extra allowance or extra payment. During the most stressed and mentally weak time, the school counsellors were there to address the psychological and mental health issues of other but there were no such measures to address their own issues. Here through this research the researcher understand about their experience including both challenges and opportunities during that time of first wave of Covid 19 pandemic.

**CHAPTER VII**  
**BIBLIOGRAPHY AND APPENDICES**

## 7.1 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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## **APPENDICES**

## 7.2 TOOL FOR DATA COLLECTION

As this is a qualitative research the researcher decided to conduct semi structured in depth interview using a semi structured interview guide. Data was collected from five respondents, and the interview was done on the basis of the research questions.

### INTERVIEW GUIDE

#### Basic Demographic Details

Name:

Age:

Place:

School:

ICDS:

Education qualification:

Years of service:

Marital status:

Number of family member:

Husband's Occupation:

Number of Children:

#### RESEARCH QUESTION

1. What are the **roles** of school counsellors in general?

- What are the general roles of school counsellors?
- What are the roles of school counsellors during Covid 19?

2. What were the **challenges** faced by school counselors **during Covid 19 pandemic?**

- What are the challenges you faced during Work at Home?
- What was the effect of extra work you had to manage during pandemic?
- What were the demands and issues needed to handle with socio-familial setting during Covid-19?

- What are the challenges you come across with your financial management during this pandemic period?

3. What were the **opportunities** you explored during **Covid 19**?

- How did you utilised this time period for your personal growth (new habits)
- What were the social skills you improved during this pandemic period (spending time with family, family get-together)?

4. What is the **approach and attitude** of people in your working environment?

- What was the approach of school students toward your service?
- What was the approach and attitudes of parents towards your service?
- What was the attitude of the school management towards the service of a school counsellor?
- Do your colleagues and other teaching staff support you in your working place? If yes, justify

5, How did you **manage to cope up with the stress** and challenges during pandemic?

- What are the coping strategies you adopted to overcome the challenges at the work environment?
- How did you manage both family and work affairs during Work at Home in the pandemic period?