

CHALLENGES FACED BY THE ACADEMIC STAFF IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COUNSELING PROGRAMS IN SCHOOLS

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School counseling can be identified as one of the current trends very popular among School teachers, principals, parents and students. Therefore, the present study focuses on the challenges faced by school academic staff in the implementation of counseling programs in schools. Challenges reveal that troubles or any other inconvenience can happen. This research identifies academic challenges, social challenges and weaknesses prevailing in the system due to lack of sufficient facilities. Many researchers have followed the field of school counseling but without paying attention to its challenges and people's ideas for implementing the school counseling programs. This research paper aims to complete the Sri Lankan research gap through a new approach. The main aim of this research topic gives good guidance on academic development, career development, personal and social development of students through school counseling programs for school staff and parents. The other sub objectives are to identify the types of challenges for implementation counseling programs in schools and classify some barriers and problems faced by the academic staff to develop counseling in schools. The research utilized qualitative survey design as the research design and semi-structured interviews were also conducted. Ten participants were selected. They are academic staff including 7 teachers and 3 principles. The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis (Five main themes namely; the views on school counseling, the necessity of school counseling programs, promoting the process of school counseling programs, the challenges in the implementation of school counseling programs, The significance of school counseling facilities, The awareness of various kinds of school counseling programs).Some of the problems that arise during the implementation of counselling are: lack of professional counselling teachers, lack of sufficient facilities, time and space problems, lack of awareness and knowledge about counselling amongst the academic staff. Finally, they should be given with some technical and systematical knowledge about school counseling programs. Then, this research is an exposure about the necessity and importance of the counseling programs in schools. Furthermore, school counseling programs can be categorized on the basis of student's age, teacher guidance, students' differences and mentality-based counseling programs and the national standard of counseling programs etc. Some counseling techniques are applied through the above counseling programs.

Keywords: Challenges, School counseling programs, Academic staff, Implementation