



## Notice for the PhD Viva Voce Examination

Ms Aroline K Tom (Reg. No. 1750074), PhD scholar at CHRIST (Deemed to be University), will defend her PhD thesis at the public viva-voce examination on Thursday, 4 March 2021 at 10.30 am on the Webex Meeting platform.

- Title of the Thesis** : **Self-Care Practices, Professional Quality of Life and Challenges: An Exploration among Counsellors in Kerala**
- Discipline** : **Psychology**
- External Examiner** : **Dr S Gayatridevi**  
(Outside Karnataka) Associate Professor & Head  
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Coimbatore – 641043  
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- External Examiner** : **Dr V Premanand**  
(Within Karnataka) Associate Professor  
Department of PG Psychology  
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- Supervisor** : **Dr Vijayalaya Srinivas**  
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The members of the Research Advisory Committee of the Scholar, the faculty members of the Department and the School, interested experts and research scholars of all the branches of research are cordially invited to attend this open viva.

**Place:** Bengaluru  
**Date:** 26 February 2021

  
**Registrar**

## ABSTRACT

The profession of counselling continues to prove its importance in today's fastpaced world, where pausing down and listening to someone are becoming an odd and luxurious concern of people. The counsellor may feel as though they are in a marathon, which demands them to continuously offer unconditional positive regard and empathy for their clients. This may leave them incapacitated to look into themselves and to recognize what is happening to them in this process of caring for others. Though profound discourses take place in the international scenario about the criticality of rendering to the need and wellbeing of counsellors, evidence-based studies, and effective interventions in this regard are still lacking in the Indian context. This study seeks to fill this gap by exploring, how the positive and negative feelings of continuous caring can affect the professional quality of life of counsellors, what are the self-care mechanisms they adopt, and which are the professional issues they find most concerning. To meet these objectives, the present research employs a mixedmethod design in a sequential explanatory fashion. The study encompasses three different phases wherein phase I and II; the sample consisted of counsellors working in various government projects in Kerala selected through dense sampling method and purposive sampling method respectively. In phase III, counsellor experts with more than 20 years of experience in the field are considered through purposive sampling. Findings describe that counsellors tend to follow an unbalanced self-care routine with significantly less focus on professional aspects. The presence of a high risk of burnout and secondary traumatic stress with a moderate feeling of compassion satisfaction call for immediate interventions for counsellors. Lack of benefits, safety issues, concerns about professional identity, poor working conditions, absence of career prospects, and lack of professional credentials are the major challenges identified by the counsellors. Considering these challenges, a set of recommendations are proposed by counsellor experts, which suggest ix reformations at both the systemic level and academic formation. Specific recommendations are also listed on the development of personal self and professional self for safe, effective and ethical practice of counsellors across a variety of practice settings. Implications exist for policymakers and counsellor educators to create an avenue for supporting a healthier and sustainable counsellor workforce.

*Keywords: counsellors, self-care practices, professional quality of life, challenges, Kerala*