



## **Students' Attitudes about School Counseling**

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### **Authors' contributions**

*This work was carried out in collaboration with all authors. Author DK designed the study, helped with the thematic analysis, and conducted the final editing of the manuscript. Author MNSC wrote the literature review, collected the data and conducted the thematic analysis. Author NDUV wrote the first draft of the article, the discussion section and completed the references. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.*

### **Article Information**

DOI: 10.9734/ARJASS/2020/v12i230186

#### Editor(s):

(1) Dr. Alina Georgeta Mag, "Lucian Blaga" University of Sibiu, Romania.

#### Reviewers:

(1) M. P. Vani, India.

(2) S. Premini, Kerala University of Health Sciences, India.

Complete Peer review History: <http://www.sdiarticle4.com/review-history/62659>

**Original Research Article**

**Received 03 September 2020**

**Accepted 09 November 2020**

**Published 27 November 2020**

### **ABSTRACT**

School counseling is a learning process. It facilitates student achievement and improves student behavior and attendance and helps students develop socially. There are diverse attitudes about school counseling in students. The main objectives of this research were to identify student's attitudes about school counseling and the type of attitudes which is common in students towards school counseling. Six students participated in this research and they were selected using a convenience sampling method. A qualitative survey design was used as the research design and semi-structured interviews were also conducted. Data analysis was undertaken using thematic analysis. Although the results showed that the students have both negative and positive attitudes towards school counseling, students have more negative attitudes than positive attitudes, and gender influenced in forming their attitudes. Further, students from different categories of schools have different attitudes about school counseling. These attitudes are formed due to factors such as lack of professionalism in counseling teachers, lack of resources, lack of practical knowledge, and lack of student's awareness about school counseling. It is recommended that students' awareness about school counseling should be enhanced and all facilities must be provided to develop school counseling. Thereby, it would be possible to change the attitudes of students about school counseling positively.

**Keywords:** *Student; student's attitudes; school counseling.*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

A student is a person who goes in search of knowledge and experience. Students have different kinds of attitudes; Positive, negative, or mixed. They show their attitudes through behavior. Attitudes can control students by controlling their behavior. The term attitude has different meanings. Crano and Prislin [1], stated that an attitude represents an evaluative integration of cognitions and affects experienced in relation to an object. Attitudes are evaluative judgments that integrate and summarize these cognitive/affective reactions. These evaluative abstractions vary in strength, which in turn have implications for persistence resistance and attitude-behavior consistency. Eagly and Chaiken [2], reported that an attitude is a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor.

Counseling has a long history. The word 'Counselium' came from the Latin language. It was originally referred to as 'Advice' and later changed as 'counseling'. According to Gladding [3] the British Association for Counseling defined Counseling as the skilled and principled use of relationships to facilitate self-knowledge, emotional acceptance, growth, and the optimal development of personal resources. The overall aim of counseling is to provide an opportunity to work toward living more satisfyingly and resourcefully. Counseling will vary according to need but may be concerned with developmental issues, addressing and resolving specific problems, making decisions, coping with crisis, developing personal insights and knowledge, working through feelings of inner conflict, or improving relationships with others.

Counseling has different fields and School counseling is one of them. Students need counseling to know how they should deal with or tackle the problems they face in their daily life situations. School counseling helps remove barriers to academic achievement, support social-emotional development, and guide college and career readiness. Cooper [4] determined that school counseling has been used to refer to a range of school-based helping activities, delivered by a variety of professionals, paraprofessionals, and peers.

Identifying students' attitudes about school counseling are important. Western countries have conducted many research studies on students' attitudes about school counseling. In

the Sri Lankan context, there is a dearth of research studies about school counseling. Sri Lanka has a different cultural background and education system; therefore there is some difficulty to apply findings of studies from the western countries to the Sri Lankan context. Also, in Sri Lanka, there are different categories of schools and they have different facilities. Students from two categories of schools participated in this study and the study aimed to explore school students' attitudes about school counseling in the Sri Lankan context.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

An attitude is a set of emotions, beliefs, and behaviors toward a particular object, person, thing, or event. Attitude can be positive, negative, or mixed. McLeod [5], explained attitude as a relatively enduring organization of beliefs, feelings, and behavioral tendencies towards socially significant objects, groups, events, or symbols. Hogg and Vaughan [6], indicated that a number of research studies mentioned attitudes towards counseling. Chandra [7], determined counseling as an art that helps other people solve their problems and crises in their lives. Counseling is a process that can be developmental or intervening. Counselors focus on their clients' goals. Thus, counseling involves both choice and change. In some cases, counseling is a rehearsal for action Chaudhry [8], School counseling is a branch of Counseling Psychology and began in the early 1890s. School counselors play a main role in school counseling and provide advice to build up student's attitudes, achievement, and performance. According to American School Counseling Association [9], a comprehensive school counseling program is an integral component of the school's academic mission. Comprehensive school counseling programs, driven by student data and based on standards in academic, career, and personal/social development, promote and enhance the learning process for all students. The role of school counseling has been redefined and modernized, oftentimes to meet the needs of a changing society or in response to societal events.

The school counselor is a professional member of an educational team who assists students in their personal, social, academic, and career development aspects of education through services such as individual counseling, small group counseling, and classroom teaching, and provides leadership in education reform

(advocacy); traditionally known as a guidance counselor, although this term is deemed inaccurate by most professionals today [10]. Chandra [7] explained that the school counselor needs to engage in student counseling and doing academic and administrative tasks, such as scheduling, which school administrative personnel often require them to do.

Much research was conducted to find out about the student's attitudes in different fields. Some of them mentioned student's attitudes about school counseling. Eyo, Mary, Joshu, and Esuong [11] investigated secondary school students' attitudes towards guidance and counseling services. The main purpose of the study was to determine the nature of the attitude of secondary school students towards guidance and counseling services. Attitudes of male and female students were different, with female students having more positive attitudes than male students. Geographical location was also a strong determinant of students' attitudes towards guidance and counseling services in school with the students in urban schools being more predisposed to guidance and counseling services than students in rural schools. Mwangi and Otanga [12], studied students' perceptions and attitudes towards the role of guidance and counseling. The research found that students had a positive evaluation and appreciation of the role of guidance and counseling services and that their perception and attitudes were developed from information accessed independently of gender and year of study. Ogoda [13] examined students' attitudes towards guidance and counseling in public secondary schools. He emphasized the need to make students more aware of the importance of the school counseling service and stated that the factors that hinders the success of counseling interventions other than lack of professionalism of school counselors area lack of a counseling office, lack of clear time set for counseling, non-availability of the school counselor, poor prior counseling experiences and the negative attitude of students toward counseling.

Shaterloo and Mohammadyari [14] researched about school counseling and academic achievement. Their study explained that school counseling programs are more effective in developing students' achievement, discipline, and relationships among teachers and students. Agi [15] examined the connection between perception and attitudes of students toward school counseling and the distribution along sex,

class and school. The research strongly suggested that location, number of years spent in school, and socioeconomic status significantly influenced the perceptions and attitudes towards school counseling. The sex of students was found to be insignificant with regard to perceptions of and attitudes towards counseling. School counseling is a powerful vessel to change student's attitudes among other things. Lynass, Pykhtina and Cooper [16] investigated young people's views on the effects of school-based counseling and what they found helpful and unhelpful. The authors stated that young people viewed counseling as a valuable intervention, had very positive views about counseling and that counseling helped them achieve many positive interpersonal, emotional, and behavioral changes. Fox and Butler [17] while describing the growth of school counseling in the UK emphasized that school counseling is overall effective.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted using the qualitative research method. Semi-structured interview method was used to collect data. The participants agreed with the researcher to answer pre-planned open-ended questions related to the topic of research in order to gather relevant information from the participants' experiences. All the interviews were conducted using the same set of questions but the participants were given sufficient flexibility and opportunity to explain their opinions and ideas in-depth about the questions posed.

The target group was six school students chosen from two different school categories of Sri Lankan schools, national schools, and central schools. The participants were selected based on age and gender for the study from a convenient sampling method. They were all in the 15 to 18 age group and comprised of two males and four females. Each interview lasted for about 30-40 minutes. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the participants using the set of questions from the interview guide. These questions included ways to find solutions to problematic incidents at school, Attitudes towards school counseling, School counseling facilities, School counseling teacher, the importance of school counseling, strategies of school counseling, and sufficiency of school counseling. A pilot study was conducted before the actual gathering of data to fine-tune the questions used in the study. The participants

were given a detailed explanation of the research project and its main focus before getting their consent to participate in the research. The interviews were recorded using a portable tape-recorder. Participants were allowed to request to stop recording at any moment and to withdraw from the study if they so wish. The interviews were conducted in the Sinhala Language because Sinhala was their mother tongue. All recorded data were transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis.

#### 4. RESULTS

The objective of the study was to identify the student's attitudes about school counseling. The Sample consisted of 06 participants from two schools. The researcher transcribed all the collected data at the beginning of the data analysis process. The letter A and B were used to represent the two types of schools. The letter 'A' represents the national school and the letter 'B' represents the central school. The letter 'M' and 'F' is used to represent gender. The letter 'M' represents Male and the letter 'F' represents female. The data revealed 07 main themes and numerous sub-themes. The main themes and sub-themes are shown below.

1. Ways to find solutions for a problematic instance at school Teachers' advice; Friends' advice; Elder students' advice; counseling teachers' advice
2. Attitudes towards school counseling Students' positive attitudes; Students' negative attitudes; Students' mix attitudes
3. School counseling service School counseling unit; other resources
4. School counseling teacher Communication skills
  1. Acceptance; Empathy; Problem-solving skills; Rapport building skills
  5. Importance of school counseling
  6. Techniques of school counseling Lecture method; Practical method; Individual counseling
  7. Sufficiency of school counseling

**Theme 01- Ways to find solutions for a problematic instance at school:** A student is a person who goes in search of knowledge and experience. They build their attitudes based on the types of knowledge and experience that they gain. Accordingly, they can solve their problems. But students try to find different solutions for the problems that they face at school. They get advice from teachers, friends, elder students,

and counseling teachers. These advices are very important to solve their problems at school.

**Teachers' Advice:** Many teachers help to solve students' problems. They will point out where their students are going wrong by giving them advice. Two participants pointed out that they are very close to teachers and that they get advice from them.

"I talk to my class teacher. She is the best person for me to talk about problems" (F2-A)

"If there is a problem that cannot be solved by our gang, we tell it to our sports sir. He is very friendly with me and he has solved my problems" (M2-B)

**Friends' Advice:** Friends always help to solve other friends' problems. Two out of six participants have reported getting advice from their friends to solve their problems at school. Friends' advice is very powerful and they can even change their attitudes.

"We can solve any problem together. Our boys get together, and we talk and figure out some solution. Then there's no problem" (M2-B)

"I talked to my friends about my problems. Above all, I talk to my best friend. I trust her a lot. If I reveal my problem to other friends, the entire class knows about it" (F4-B)

**Elder students' Advice:** One participant reported that he gets elder students advice to solve his problems at school. He is very close with elder students so he tries to solve his problem with elder students' advice. He thinks that elder students have good solution for his problems, more so than teachers, friends, and others.

"I know some senior guys and they are very serious in solving problems. They have 'super' ideas and solutions, so I tell them any case" (M1-A)

**Counseling teachers' Advice:** Two participants out of six take advice from the school counseling teacher.

"I meet counseling teacher. I like to tell my problems to her. Earlier, I was a little bit afraid to tell her about my problems, but later everything was fine. My mother is not with me, I feel her like my mother. Not only school issues she is also the best person to talk about any problem" (F1-A)

“I talk to the counseling teacher about my problems because she is good. She is very close to me” (F3-B)

**Theme 02- Attitudes towards school counseling:** School counseling services supplies information to be academically successful, help solve problems, and provide social and emotional support to students. But students have different attitudes about school counseling services. There are positive attitudes, negative attitudes, and mixed attitudes. The researchers strived to get direct answers from participants about this topic.

**Students’ positive attitudes:** Students’ positive attitudes provide a state of mind that envisions and expects favorable results. One participant out of six discussed positive ideas about school counseling.

“I talk to the counseling teacher about my problems. That is good and provides strength for children like me. I have lost my parents. Apart from my best friend, only Miss X looks after me. My friends and I; we see counseling as a good thing” (F1-A)

**Students’ negative attitudes:** When the Students have negative attitudes, they ignore the good things and they always think it is a useless service. Three participants out of six discussed their negative ideas about school counseling.

“We know that there is something called counseling because they come to our classes and inform about it. I know nothing much about it. We think it’s stupid” (M1-A).

“I really don’t know anything about the counseling Unit. There are two teachers, and they both teach us. Others say that they are

there to solve our problems. Can they really do that?” (M2-B).

**Students’ mixed attitudes:** Some students have both positive and negative ideas about school counseling. In this study, two out of six participants presented both types of ideas about school counseling.

“There is a specific place and a lady. Her advice is good, but sometimes it’s boring. It seems as if the lady is talking too much” (F2-A).

“I meet the teacher, and I talk about my problems. And she has given me good solutions. It is good for me, but my friends think that I am crazy. They blame me and say that these teachers have nothing else to do”(F3-B).

**Theme 03- School counseling facilities:** many Sri Lankan schools have few facilities for school counseling. Students discussed some of the school counseling facilities such as the counseling unit, professional school counselors, and resources.

**Counseling unit:** Counseling unit is necessary for school counseling. Five out of six participants talked about the school counseling unit. They talked about the place of the counseling unit, its arrangement, and its security.

“It’s good that there is a specific room. It’s neat, but not spacious enough. The location is hidden, so I can go there without being noticed by anyone Also, no one can hear what’s being talked inside the room.” (F1-A).

“Towards the end of our building, there is a room with a board named the counseling unit. The room is very untidy and we have never seen anyone going there. The teachers don’t stay there. They go to regular classes” (F4-B).

**Table 1. Details of ways to find solution for a problematic instance at school**

Participants	School Category	Teacher’s Advise	Friends’ Advise	Elder Students’ Advise	Counseling Teachers’ Advise
M1	A			✓	
F1	A				✓
F2	A	✓	✓		
M2	B	✓	✓		
F3	B				✓
F4	B		✓		

**Table 2. Details of Attitudes towards school counseling**

Participants	School Category	Students' Positive Attitudes	Students' Negative Attitudes	Students' Mix Attitudes
M1	A		✓	
F1	A	✓		
F2	A			✓
M2	B		✓	
F3	B			✓
F4	B		✓	

**Table 3. Details of school counseling Facilities**

Participants	School Category	Counseling Unit	Other Recourses
M1	A		
F1	A	✓	✓
F2	A	✓	
M2	B		
F3	B	✓	
F4	B	✓	

**Table 4. Details of school counseling teacher**

Participants	School Category	Communication Skills	Acceptance	Empathy	Problem-Solving	Rapport Building Skills
M1	A	✓				
F1	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	
F2	A				✓	✓
M2	B					
F3	B	✓		✓	✓	
F4	B	✓				✓

**Table 5. Details of strategies of school counseling**

Participants	School category	Lecture method	Practical method	Individual counseling
M1	A	✓		
F1	A	✓	✓	✓
F2	A	✓	✓	
M2	B			
F3	B			✓
F4	B			

**Other resources:** Schools do not have a lot of resources for school counseling. One participant out of six discussed other resources of school counseling.

“There is a special lady for counseling. She uses projectors to do programs. She gives us lectures using presentations. So it's very nice and I like her programs. Sometimes our counseling teacher invites doctors and teachers from other schools to conduct programs” (F1-A)

**Theme 04-School counseling teacher:** All participants presented details about school counseling teachers. The school counselor focuses on individual student's needs. He or she helps students with academic, career, and social development. Therefore, school counseling teachers should have good qualities. The students mentioned qualities such as Communication skills, Acceptance, Empathy, Problem-solving, and Rapport building skills of school counseling teachers.

**Communication skills:** Communication skills are important for a school counselor. The school counselor should have the ability to listen carefully and be able to clearly explain ideas and thoughts to others. Most of the participants like this quality of school counseling teacher.

“Teacher is very nice. She talks to us kindly whenever she sees us” (M1-A)

“There are two teachers for counseling and they also teach us. They talk to us nicely, calling us ‘duwa (daughter)’ and ‘putha (son)’ (F4-B)

**Acceptance:** Acceptance is nonjudgmental. One out of six participants discussed about the quality of acceptance. She reported that she doesn’t like to be blamed for her problems. Since the school counseling teacher doesn’t blame her school counseling teacher is her most favorite teacher.

“I have revealed many of my problems to the counseling teacher. She has never blamed me. She listens to me and then provides good solutions” (F1-A)

**Empathy:** Empathy is the ability to feel another person’s feelings. According to the data from the present study, two out of six participants mentioned the quality of empathy regarding the school counseling teacher.

“I feel bad even for a simple thing. I go to her and I cry. She tries to console me. She understands my problems very well and looks like she feels them” (F1-A)

“I talk to Miss ‘Y’ about my problems. She considers them as her own and helps me to solve them” (F3-B)

**Problem solving skills:** A School counselor must have good problem-solving skills. Problem-solving skills enable the counselor to help identify a client’s problems, help make changes to negative thought patterns and other harmful behaviors, and also give good solutions. Three participants out of six explained about problem-solving skills of the school counseling teacher.

“She is always there for my problems. She gives me a lot of options and is good at solving problems. Today I am doing my A/L s because of her” (F1-A)

“Miss ‘Y’ was always with Me. she gave me a lot of solutions. The way she solves problems is excellent” (F3-B)

**Rapport building skills:** Rapport building skills are a strong set of interpersonal skills to help establish rapport quickly with a client in order to develop a strong relationship. Two out of six participants mentioned about this skill of the school counseling teacher.

“She always talks to us and smiles at us. She became friendly with us quickly. We talked to her just once, after that she was like our friend” (F2-A)

“We have two teachers. Between them Miss ‘Y’ became very friendly with us” (F4-B)

**Theme 05-Importance of School counseling:** All participants revealed different ideas about the importance of school counseling. Two out of six participants said that school counseling is important. Others said that it’s not important.

“I think counseling is a valuable thing. It has taught me to do good things while staying away from bad things” (F1-A)

“It is never relevant to me, and I don’t see its importance. Even the students don’t know about it” (F4-B)

**Theme 06- Strategies of school counseling:** Strategy is a high-level plan to achieve one or more goals under the condition of uncertainty. A strategy is important to manage resources and achieve a goal. The school counseling teacher uses good strategies to solve students’ problems. The strategies include the lecture method, the practical method, and individual counseling. These strategies are very effective in managing limited school counseling resources.

**Lecture method:** The lecture method is one way of disseminating information. The school counseling teacher uses the lecture method to discuss some topics. Three out of six participants reported about the lecture method.

“There are specific lectures relevant to different classes. They are conducted monthly on relevant topics. Recently there was a lecture on sexuality. When we were in the O/L class there were weekly lectures” (F1-A)

“There are lots of topics related to students. The way they conduct lectures is very interesting. It is not at all boring” (F2-A)

**Practical method:** Practical method is an active, hands-on approach. It is more effective for school students since they like to do activities.

Two out of six participants discussed about the practical method. They also like to do activities very much. .

“There are many practical and group activities. We remember those things well and we like them very much” (F3-A)

**Individual counseling:** Individual counseling, though time consuming, gives more benefits to clients. In this method, clients tell their whole story or problem to a counselor without any fear. Some school students like this method. Two out of six participants mentioned individual counseling.

“I have been to meet her alone. It is better like that. Then I can talk to her freely” (F1-A)

“Miss ‘Y’ helped me to solve my problems. She asked me to come alone and talk about everything. I was given advice once in every two days until I was able to solve my problem” (F3-B)

**Theme 07- Sufficiency of school counseling:** Sufficiency is a quantity that fulfills a need. The participants mentioned two types of answers under this topic. Some stated that school counseling is not sufficient. Some others said that it is sufficient. All participants reported details about the sufficiency of school counseling.

“I think this is sufficient. There are a number of programs, and it is good if they can add a few more things” (F2-A)

“I should know something about it to state whether it is sufficient or not. I know nothing. The counseling unit is there only for its name. I know nothing about its purpose and functions” (M2-B)

“The students in our school are unaware of this Unit. There should be more awareness of this. There are a lot of students who suffer from problems and without getting help to solve them they destroy their lives. Even I got to know of this only when I was in grade 10” (F4-B).

## 5. DISCUSSION

The main objective of this study was to find out about student’s attitudes on school counseling. The results revealed that the attitudes of students about school counseling fall under seven main themes and numerous sub-themes. In this section, we intend to explore the reasons for the results obtained.

**Theme 01- Ways to find solutions for problematic instances at school:** It is important to identify how the students find solutions to their problem faced at school. Students find solutions in many ways. They get advice from their teachers, friends, elder students, and counseling teacher. According to this research, many students get solutions from their friends. They think friends can solve their problems and also that they can understand the reality of their problems. Most of the time boys try to solve their problems with the help of their peer groups. Students, especially male students, don’t like to get solutions from teachers. They seek the advice of their teachers only when it comes to a very serious problem.

This study mainly focused on the ways in which students get help/advice from the counseling teacher to solve their problems. Many students, both male and female, don’t like to get advice from their counseling teachers. But some female students solved their problems by getting advice from the counseling teachers. One of the participants of the study got advice from an elder student to solve problems. Overall, students do not have faith in counseling teachers and their advice. Therefore, students find diverse ways to solve the problems they face at school.

**Theme 02- Attitudes toward school counseling:** The student’s attitudes towards school counseling are positive, negative, and mixed. Many factors affect student’s positive attitudes such as school counseling environment, qualities of school counseling teachers, and different types of programs, especially awareness programs on school counseling. The research also identified that gender differences and differences in terms of school categories affect positive attitudes. Most of the female student participants have more positive attitudes towards school counseling than male students. Moreover, students from national schools have more positive attitudes than students from central schools. Students who have negative attitudes about school counseling think that it is both a useless and unnecessary thing. They primarily prefer to seek solutions for their problems from their peer group. Students who have mixed attitudes about school counseling prefer it and they think it is important. However, when they don’t get satisfactory counseling service they think it is useless.

**Theme 03- School counseling facilities:** All participants presented their views about school



counseling facilities. They especially talked about school counseling units, professional school counseling teachers, and some other resources. The research identified certain changes in the two school categories concerning school counseling. Students of the national school have a lot of school counseling facilities such as a school counseling unit and a school counseling teacher and the school counseling unit conducts a variety of good awareness programs. Moreover, the counseling unit is well-equipped, secure, confidential, and presentable.

In contrast, the central school does not have many counseling facilities and the students are not satisfied with what they have. One participant mentioned that their school counseling unit was an untidy, disorganized, insecure place located without any privacy; they do not have professional school counselor teachers either. Their class and subject teachers are engaged as their school counselors. Furthermore, the counseling unit has a lack of resources. The discussion above shows that the facilities available for school counseling affect the student's attitudes about school counseling.

**Theme 04- School counseling teacher:** All the participants talked about their school counseling teachers. The role of a school counseling teacher is crucial in building student's attitudes about school counseling. The School counseling teacher should possess good qualities. The results of the research highlighted five main qualities of school counseling teachers. They are; communication skills, acceptance, empathy, problem-solving skill, and rapport-building skills. Many students from both schools emphasized that their school counseling teacher has good communication skills. Moreover, all the participants had positive attitudes about school counseling teachers and these attitudes did not change concerning the school category or gender. Even though the students have positive attitudes toward school counseling teachers they do not have a good understanding of school counseling because they do not have a good awareness of the role of the counseling teacher.

**Theme 05- Importance of school counseling:** The research data revealed that only two participants talked about the importance of school counseling positively and all others negatively. Two female students from the national school had a good understanding and awareness about school counseling therefore they talked about the importance of school

counseling services. It had helped them to solve their academic problems and personal issues. Their male counterpart though disagreed with their assessment and thought of it as unnecessary. Students from the central school are less informed about the entire school counseling service. They have a negative attitude about it and think that this service is useless. Although they have a school counseling teacher, many students do not know who the teacher is, and what she is doing. The above discussion shows that national school students have a good awareness of the importance of school counseling than central school students and that female students prefer this service more than male students.

**Theme 06- Strategies of school counseling:** The school counselors used different strategies for school counseling, especially lecture method, practical method, and individual counseling. Students prefer the individual counseling method in solving their particular problems and prefer practical method over lecture method to solve their common problems. National school students are aware of many counseling strategies than central schools. Female students are better aware of them than male students.

The central school participants talked about the individual counseling method and didn't know about other methods. Lack of knowledge about school counseling strategies by the school counseling teacher of the central school may have affected in creating negative attitudes about school counseling in her students. In contrast, the national school teacher's use of different strategies has helped her students develop a positive attitude about school counseling.

**Theme 07- Sufficiency of school counseling:** All the participants contributed to the discussion about the sufficiency of school counseling. They provided diverse opinions and views. National school students think that this service is sufficient, especially female students because of good facilities and good services. However, central school students say that it is insufficient because they do not have a good understanding of school counseling and because they do not have good resources including a professional school counseling teacher.

## 6. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the attitudes of students about school counseling. The analysis of the study elicited seven main

themes and several sub-themes. The main themes were, Ways to find solutions for problematic instances at school, Attitudes towards school counseling, School counseling facilities, School counseling teacher, the Importance of school counseling, Strategies of school counseling, and the Sufficiency of school counseling. Data were collected from students of both a national school and a central school through the use of semi-structured interviews. The finding of the study indicated that a majority of the participants had negative attitudes about school counseling with male students and central school students having greater negative attitudes than female students and national school students; National school students have more facilities and resources for school counseling and they have a good awareness of school counseling compared to central school students; Lack of resources, facilities, and awareness influence to develop negative attitudes among students about school counseling; and that all students have positive attitudes about the school counseling teacher. The students indicated school counseling teacher's good communication skills, acceptance, empathy, problem-solving skills, and rapport building skills very positively. This study sought to establish students' attitudes about school counseling. Overall results imply that the attitudes of students towards school counseling are mainly negative.

## CONSENT

The participants were given a detailed explanation of the research project and its main focus before getting their consent to participate in the research.

## COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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