

Education Quarterly Reviews

Kuş, M., & Aydın, M. K. (2022). Teachers' Views on Guidance and Counseling Services at Schools during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Challenges and Opportunities. *Education Quarterly Reviews*, 5(3), 9-18.

ISSN 2621-5799

DOI: 10.31014/aior.1993.05.03.520

The online version of this article can be found at:
<https://www.asianinstituteofresearch.org/>

Published by:
The Asian Institute of Research

The *Education Quarterly Reviews* is an Open Access publication. It may be read, copied, and distributed free of charge according to the conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license.

The Asian Institute of Research *Education Quarterly Reviews* is a peer-reviewed International Journal. The journal covers scholarly articles in the fields of education, linguistics, literature, educational theory, research, and methodologies, curriculum, elementary and secondary education, higher education, foreign language education, teaching and learning, teacher education, education of special groups, and other fields of study related to education. As the journal is Open Access, it ensures high visibility and the increase of citations for all research articles published. The *Education Quarterly Reviews* aims to facilitate scholarly work on recent theoretical and practical aspects of education.



ASIAN INSTITUTE OF RESEARCH
Connecting Scholars Worldwide

Teachers' Views on Guidance and Counseling Services at Schools during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Challenges and Opportunities

Metin Kuş¹, Mehmet Kemal Aydın²

¹ Ministry of National Education, Türkiye

² Hitit University, Distance Education and Research Centre, Çorum/Türkiye

Correspondence: Metin KUŞ, Ministry of National Education, Nişantaşı Anatolian High School, Teşvikiye Mah. Valikonağı Caddesi Poyracık Sokak Sk. No65 Nişantaşı/Şişli/İstanbul. Tel: +90 212 234 18 29.
E-mail: metinkus@gmail.com

Abstract

With the emergence of Covid-19 pandemic, guidance and counseling services at schools have been impeded. In line with this, teachers' experiences and views on counselling services have gained importance since they tried to reach the students via online teaching platforms in most cases. The main purpose of this study is to reveal challenges and opportunities encountered by the teacher counsellors in the implementation of guidance and counseling services remotely during the global pandemic. To achieve this overarching aim, two research questions (RQ) were addressed. This descriptive qualitative study employed both qualitative content analysis and thematic analysis for qualitative data analysis process. The participants of the study were 56 counselor teachers who accepted to participate in the study. Data collected through online google survey form. Findings illustrated that 18 subcategories were gathered under the challenges category. We extracted 13 subcategories with different frequencies under opportunities category. As for the thematic analyses results, we identified 4 themes and 21 subcategories under the school counselors' opinions about challenges encountered however, there were 2 themes and 10 subcategories under the school counselors' opinions about opportunities encountered. As a result, challenges included school counselors' quest for supportive, clear direction and job description in a virtual classroom setting. Opportunities included elimination of the time-space-distance restrictions, in-service training opportunities and ease of access to those services.

Keywords: Challenges and Opportunities, Global Pandemic, Guidance and Counseling Services, Teachers' Views

1. Introduction

As the 21st century unfolds, the world continues to undergo substantial changes in its occupational, social and economic structures. Occupational and industrial specialization continues to increase dramatically. Social structures, social and personal values also continue to change and become more diverse. All these changes are creating complex challenges for students as they anticipate the future. These changes have substantial impact on

the personal, social, career and academic development of students (Gysbers, 2001). Because of these conversions the roles of school counselors have changed dramatically over time. For many years, school counselors have been taught to define their role by the three “Cs:” counseling, coordination, and consultation. However, these three roles are too limiting because they do not provide a basis for serving all students. As a result, the roles of the school counselor have been broadened so that a school counselor’s work is more inclusive, and thus, helpful to more students. Today, school counselors strive to be leaders, advocates, collaborators, counselors and coordinators, and data utilizers. These roles enable school counselors to create supportive pathways that allow all students to succeed (Erford, 2003). The main function of education is to provide opportunities for each student to reach his full potential in the areas of educational, vocational, personal, and emotional development. Guidance is an integral part of education and is centered directly on this function. Guidance and counseling services prepare students to assume increasing responsibility for their decisions and grow in their ability to understand and accept the results of their choices (Gibson, 2008). Counselors world-wide seek ways of providing appropriate professional assistance to all students (Glasheen, et al., 2013). The major goals of counseling are to promote personal growth and to prepare students to become motivated workers and responsible citizens. Educators recognize that in addition to intellectual challenges, students encounter personal, social, educational, and career challenges. School guidance and counseling services need to address these challenges and to promote educational success. The guidance and counseling services are an integral part of a school's total educational program; it is developmental by design, focusing on needs, interests, and issues related to various stages of student growth. The scope of the guidance and counseling services in today's school include Personal/social, educational and career aspects (Cooley, 2010). According to MoNE (Ministry of National Education) on the basis of the continuity and integrity of personal development, guidance and counseling services are provided in the social emotional, academic and career development areas for individuals to fulfill their developmental tasks and gain the necessary competencies (MoNE, 2020). Guidance and counseling services are the vital part of fulfilling developmental tasks of individual in education. Expectations from guidance and counseling services spread to such a wide range, the problem of how to fulfill these expectations in pandemic conditions emerges as an outstanding current problem.

Insights from school counselors can be used to obtain a better understanding of the social and emotional effects of global pandemic. The Coronavirus (COVID-19) global pandemic has brought about many changes to our society, which will have long-term effects. During global pandemic, students have exposed to social isolation and technology addiction. Students are facing unprecedented concerns with mental health and behavioral issues related to the global pandemic, Government lockdowns, social isolation, home issues, death and sickness, and uncertainty related to global pandemic 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). Other mental health issues have been heightened including trauma, suicidality, technology addiction, drug and alcohol abuse, family dysfunction, and more (Hou et al., 2019). School counselors have addressed all students’ academic, career, and social/emotional developmental needs and make a positive impact on student achievement, attendance, and behavior. Appropriate duties, for school counselors that will be helpful as students return to school after the global pandemic include providing counseling to students who are tardy or exhibiting behavior problems, providing short-term individual and small group mental health counseling, social emotional classroom lessons for promoting coping skills, and the previously noted consultations with administrators, teachers, parents, families, and community stakeholders (ASCA, 2019). During and after the pandemic, school counselors may be the only source of mental health counseling in school buildings, assisting students with their social emotional needs. While no one knows with certainty the degree this pandemic will affect students when they reenter school, school counselors will be able to mitigate the aforementioned issues and address the individual needs of affected students. School counselors play important role in attending to students’ social/emotional needs and retain them to assist students, staff, families, and the community in this time of crisis (Springer et al., 2020). During times of crisis, the role of the counselor is critical. Counselors are expected to provide counseling for students, coordinate all counseling activities, communicate with faculty and parents, seek support from the crisis team, and contact neighboring schools. Counselors provide direct counseling services during intervention and postintervention phases of the crisis. They are expected to serve students and personnel during times of crisis by providing individual and

group interventions; to consult with administrators, faculty, parents, and professionals; and to coordinate services with the school and the community (Jackson-Cherry & Erford, 2018).

This study not only contributes to a better understanding of implementing guidance and counseling services during global pandemic, but it also accounts for challenges and opportunities. Public awareness on how to implement guidance and counseling services during and post global pandemic processes has risen dramatically. The present study provides insights for educators, researchers and all the stakeholders of the community on the issue of guidance and counseling services during global pandemic. The main purpose of this article is to reveal challenges and opportunities encountered by the counselors in the implementation of guidance and counseling services during the global pandemic. To achieve this overarching aim, the following research questions (RQ) were addressed in the present study:

1. What are the challenges encountered while implementing guidance and counseling services during global pandemic?
2. What are the opportunities encountered while implementing guidance and counseling services during global pandemic?

2. Method

2.1 Research Design

The present descriptive qualitative study employed both qualitative content analysis and thematic analysis in order to determine counselors' opinions on guidance and counseling services during the global pandemic. Counselors' opinions regarding the guidance and counseling services were taken by questionnaire form consisting of open-ended questions. The aim of descriptive qualitative research was to describe a phenomenon and its characteristics. Thus, the present study is more concerned with what rather than how or why something has happened (Gall et al., 2007; Smith et al., 2011; Vaismoradi et al., 2013).

2.2 Participant (Subject) Characteristics

School counselors School counselors working various regions of Türkiye were invited to complete an online survey in 2021. The survey consisted of 2 open ended questions. 57 counselors working 11 different cities accepted to participate this study. They accessed through the Google Form and completed the survey online.

Table 1: The regional distribution of counselors who accepted online survey

City/Region	n	Code names
İstanbul	27	İ1, İ2, İ3, İ4, İ5, İ6, İ7, İ8, İ9, İ10, İ11, İ12, İ13, İ14, İ15, İ16, İ17, İ18, İ19, İ20, İ21, İ22, İ23, İ24, İ25, İ26, İ27.
Diyarbakır	2	D1, D2
İzmir	5	İz1, İz2, İz3, İz4, İz5
Bursa	3	B1, B2, B3
Adana	2	A1, A2
Eskişehir	7	E1, E2, E3, E4, E5, E6, E7
Antalya	2	An1, An2
Gaziantep	2	G1, G2
Muğla	2	M1, M2
Burdur	2	Bu1, Bu2
Samsun	3	S1, S2, S3

N =57

2.3. Data Collection and Analysis

The data were collected by means of online survey form which consists of two open-ended questions. In descriptive qualitative study survey tools are often used to gather data. After questions have been developed using principles of question construction, researcher pilot tests the questions. This helps determine that the individuals in the sample are capable of completing the survey and that they can understand the questions. A pilot test of a survey is a procedure in which a researcher who completes and evaluate the instrument. The participants in the pilot test provide written comments directly on the survey, and the researcher modifies or changes the survey to reflect those concerns. Because the pilot group provides feedback on the survey, we exclude them from the final sample for the study (Berg & Lune, 2015; Creswell, 2007, 2012, 2015; Saldana, 2014, Stake, 2010; Yin, 2011).

The online survey for counselors is subjected to qualitative content analysis and thematic analysis which are classified under the qualitative descriptive design. They are sets of techniques used to analyse textual data and elucidate themes. Their key characteristic is the systematic process of coding, examining of meaning and provision of a description of the social reality through the creation of theme (Gall & Borg, 2007). The process of descriptive qualitative data analysis includes in this study, classification of data, determining major themes and frequency distribution tables (Creswell, 2007, 2012, 2015; Yin, 2011; Stake, 2010; Saldana, 2014; Berg & Lune, 2015). The school counsellors participated in this study given a code number which contains the initials of their region and respective numbers for example counselors participating from İstanbul coded from İ1 to İ27, counselors participating from Diyarbakır D1 to D2, counselors participating from İzmir İz1 to İz5, counselors participating from Bursa B1 to B3, counselors participating from Adana A1 to A2, counselors participating from Eskişehir E1 to E7, counselors participating from Antalya An1 to An2, counselors participating from Gaziantep G1 to G2, counselors participating from Muğla M1 to M2, counselors participating from Burdur Bu1 to Bu2, counselors participating from Samsun S1 to S3.

3. Results

In this section of the study, research findings given related to challenges and opportunities encountered while implementing guidance and counseling services during global pandemic. Initially, qualitative content analysis results given in table 2 and table 3 then, thematic analysis results given in figure 1,2,3 4,5,6.

Table 2: The distribution of school counsellors' opinions about challenges encountered while implementing guidance and counseling services remotely

<i>Descriptive Results</i>	<i>Sources</i>	<i>f</i>
Failure to provide privacy policy.	İ1, İ2, İ3, İ4, İ5, İ6, İ9, İ11, D1, İz1, İz4, İz5, Bu1, Bu2, A1, A2, B1, B2, B3, E1, E2, E3, E4, E5, E6, E7, G1, G2, M1, M2, S1, S2, S3.	33
The necessity of providing resources, documents, and support to psychological counsellors who will work in the digital setting	İ3, İ4, İ6, İ12, İ15, İ20, İ21, İ26, D2, İz4, İz5, B3, A1, B1, B2, B3, E1, E2, E3, E4, E7, G1, G2, M1, M2, S1, S2, S3.	28
The difficulties inherent in psychological counselling and guidance service.	İ5, İ6, İ17, İ18, İ19, İ20, İ23, D1, D2, İz1, İz2, İz3, B1, B2, B3, A2, An1, An2, E1, E2, E4, E5, G2, M2, S1, S3.	26
Difficulty in reaching the messages given by body language.	İ3, İ4, İ15, İ21, İ25, İ26, İ27, D1, İz5, B2, E1, E2, E3, E4, E5, E6, E7, An1, Bu1, Bu2, S1, S2, S3.	23

The necessity of determining the job descriptions of psychological counsellors who will work in the digital setting.	İ2, İ6, İ10, İ14, İ18, İ19, D2, İz4, İz5, B3, A1, A2, An2, E1, E2, E3, G1, G2, M2, S1, S2, S3.	22
Limited access to information technologies.	İ6, İ9, İ15, İ17, D1, D2, İz4, İz5, B2, Bu1, Bu2, A1, A2, An1, An2, G1, G2, M1, M2, S1, S2, S3.	22
Failure to establish healthy face-to-face communication with students.	İ5, İ7, İ11, İ13, İ17, İ19, D1, İz2, İz3, B1, A1, A2, An1, E1, E2, E4, E6, G2, M2, S1, S3.	21
Students' lack of motivation.	İ4, İ5, İ8, İ13, İ14, İ12, İ23, İ24, D1, İz3, B1, A1, An2, E4, E6, G2, M2, S1, S3.	19
The necessity of determining the application principles of psychological counselling and guidance services in the digital setting.	İ5, İ7, İ11, İ13, İ17, İ19, D1, İz2, İz3, B1, A1, An1, E4, E6, G2, M2, S1, S3.	18
Lack of knowledge about the use of information technologies.	İ14, İ22, İ25, D1, D2, B1, Bu1, Bu2, A1, A2, E3, E6, G1, G2, M1, M2, S1.	17
Failure to provide individual psychological counselling services effectively	İ7, İ12, İ16, İ17, İ25, İ27, D1, İz5, B1, B3, A2, An1, G2, M2i	14
Difficulty reaching students online.	İ5, İ12, İ13, İ17, D2, İz1, B2, A1, E1, E2, E4.	11
Failure to use the observation method in natural setting.	İ1, İ5, İ23, İz2, B3, E6, M1, S2, G1, G2.	10
Student indifference.	İ4, İ7, İ8, İ13, İz3, İz4, İz5, E6, An1, S2.	10
Guidance and counselling services are not suitable for distance education.	D2, B3, G1, M2, Bu1.	5
Decreased subjective well-being of psychological counsellors.	İ13, D2, İz3, G1, S2.	5
Difficulty communicating with other teachers and parents online.	İ18, B3, İz2, An2.	4
Digital (Zoom) fatigue.	B1, İz2, E2, E3.	4

In Table 2 the distribution of school counsellors' opinions about challenges encountered while implementing guidance and counseling services during global pandemic given. As it is seen in table 2, under challenges theme there are 18 subcategories with different frequencies. According to school counselors the first three challenges they faced during global pandemic were failure to provide privacy policy(n=33), the necessity of providing resources, documents and support to psychological counselors who will work in the digital setting (n=28), the difficulties inherent in psychological counseling and guidance services (n=26). Some of the school counsellors' opinions related to challenges categories were given as in vivo codes below:

İ5: *I personally had difficulty in reaching the student. I did not have the chance to consult as much as I did in face-to-face education with distance education tools. I also think that remote interviews are not reliable and effective.*

E1: *It is very challenging as it is a face-to-face communication-based job. Being visible and accessible was only thanks to the screen, it was very difficult for me.*

A1: *The guidance service, which is difficult even in the school environment, has become more difficult with the pandemic. We cannot make conversations. Students cannot attend the live lessons we hold. It has become difficult to organize activities. National education constantly asks for reports and numbers as if there was nothing and we were in normal education. Questionnaires created in the form of e-form students It has become*

more difficult to follow the students during the exam process. The uncertainty in the process is tiring us and the students.

An2: In particular, we are progressing without a therapeutic process. Many students have families in their problems. And they can't open up enough to us by making online calls with their families.

B1: Students are less involved in activities due to digital fatigue. In addition, face-to-face repetitive activities for students who do not participate in counselling activities become boring for other students.

i9: I think that there is uncertainty and lack of support about how to apply Guidance and psychological counselling services during the pandemic process.

The distribution of school counsellors' opinions about opportunities encountered while implementing guidance and counselling services during global pandemic was given in Table 3.

Table 3: The distribution of school counsellors' opinions about opportunities encountered while implementing guidance and counseling services remotely

<i>Descriptive Results</i>	<i>Sources</i>	<i>f</i>
Increased awareness of psychological health.	İ1, İ2, İ3, İ5, İ8, İ9, İ14, İ17, İ19, İ21, İ25, İ27, D1, D2, İz1, İz2, İz3, İz4, B1, B2, A2, E3, E4, E6, E7, An1, G2, M1, Bu1, Bu2, S1, S2, S3.	33
Elimination of time-space-distance restrictions	İ2, İ5, İ11, İ16, İ19, İ21, İ15, D1, İz1, İz2, İz3, İz4, İz5, B3, A1, A2, E1, E2, E3, E4, E5, E6, E7, An1, G2, M1, Bu2, S2, S3.	29
The online psychological counselling provides the opportunity to reach more students	İ1, İ3, İ6i, İ18, İ19, İ23, İ24, İ25, İ26, İ27, D1, D2, İz1, İz5, B2, A2, E3, E7, An1, G2, M1, M2, Bu1, Bu2, S1, S2, S3.	28
Increased use of images and videos.	İ4, İ5, İ7, İ9, İ12, İ17, İ19, İ20, İz1, İz3, İz4, B1, B2, E6, E7.	15
Ease of meeting teachers and parents online.	İ2, İ5, İ8, İ10, İ11, İ17, İ21, İ22, İ24, İz5, E2, E3, An1, S2.	14
Ease of accessibility	İ1, İ5, İ8, İ9, İ11, İ12, İ13, İ16, İ17, İ19, İ20, İz2, İz4, E3.	14
The concept of online psychological counselling is an alternative method	İ4, İ5, İ10, İz1, G2, M1, M2, Bu1, Bu2, S1, S2, S3.	12
Making survey and questionnaires easier online	İ13, İ17, İ21, İ24, İ25, D1, İz2, İz3, B1, A2, E2	11
Increased in-service training opportunities.	İ6, İ13, İ15, D1, İz2, E3, G1, M2, Bu1, Bu2, S1.	11
Proliferation of digital data sources.	İ3, İz2, B1, A2, E3, S2.	6
No convenience.	İ13, İz5, E3, A1.	4
Making the principle of volunteering work more.	İ6, A2, E5.	3
Offering the opportunity to work from home.	İ7, İz3.	2

As it is given in Table 3, under opportunities theme there are 13 subcategories with different frequencies. According to school counsellors the first three challenges they faced during global pandemic were: increased awareness of psychological health (n=33), elimination of time-space-distance restrictions (n=29), the online psychological counselling providing the opportunity to reach more students (n=28). Some of the school counsellors' opinions related to opportunities theme were as follows:

İ16: Easy access to a vast number of parents and students, time saving, time-independent guidance and counselling services.

İ8: Thanks to mass media and online platforms, time and space savings have been achieved in the field of education. The use of online media has become more common. Reaching education and university teachers has

become easier. The trainings received provided equipment and competence for the studies and field applications in the field of guidance and counselling services.

I3: Provided time savings and ease of transportation, more participation can be achieved in events that normally few people would spare time for.

E2: It was easy to carry out the seminars in the field of guidance organized for parents-student-teachers remotely. Particularly in the evening hours and remotely planned seminars, parent participation was higher.

S1: People/ teens/ children became more aware of their positive and negative emotions and psychological health

A1: It's not easy at all, it's also a very unpleasant working period. There is no one-to-one face-to-face relationship with the student and the parent, and unfortunately everything is done on the computer and on the phone all the time.

As for thematic analyses results there were 4 themes and 21 subcategories under the school counselors' opinions about challenges encountered while implementing guidance and counseling services during global pandemic. However, there were 2 themes and 10 subcategories under the school counselors' opinions about opportunities encountered while implementing guidance and counseling services during global pandemic. Themes and subcategories related to challenges given in Figures 1, 2, 3, and 4. Additionally, themes and subcategories related to opportunities given in figure 5 and 6 respectively. Themes under the heading of challenges encountered while implementing guidance and counseling services were given in Figure 1 and listed as: (1) challenges arising from the education system, (2) challenges arising from the nature of counseling and guidance services, (3) challenges arising from the students, (4) challenges arising from the online education. Likewise, themes under the heading of opportunities encountered while implementing guidance and counseling services were illustrated in Figure 2 and labeled as follows: (1) opportunities for the educational system and (2) opportunities for the Guidance and Counseling Services.

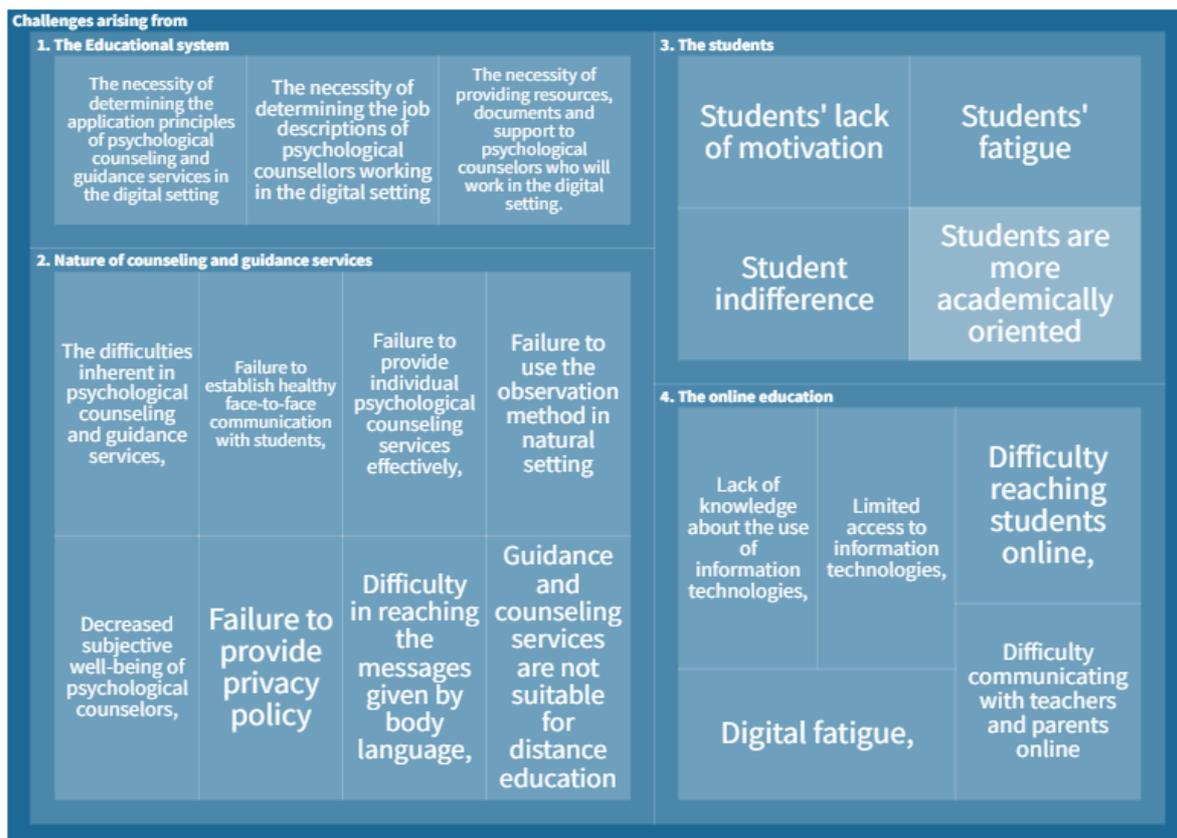


Figure 1: The themes emerged from the challenges that the counsellors encountered

As it is shown in Figure 1 themes emerged from the challenges that counselors encountered classified under four headings. First, challenges arising from the education system theme had 3 sub categories. Second, challenges

arising from the nature of counseling and guidance services theme had 8 sub categories. Third, challenges arising from the students theme had 4 sub categories. Fourth, challenges arising from the online education theme there are 5 sub categories. We conclude from the figure 1 that school counselors had difficulty in application principles and job descriptions of online counseling. And also, school counselors had difficulty in nature of guidance and counseling activities online. Moreover, school counselor had difficulty because of student inclination online counseling and nature of online education.

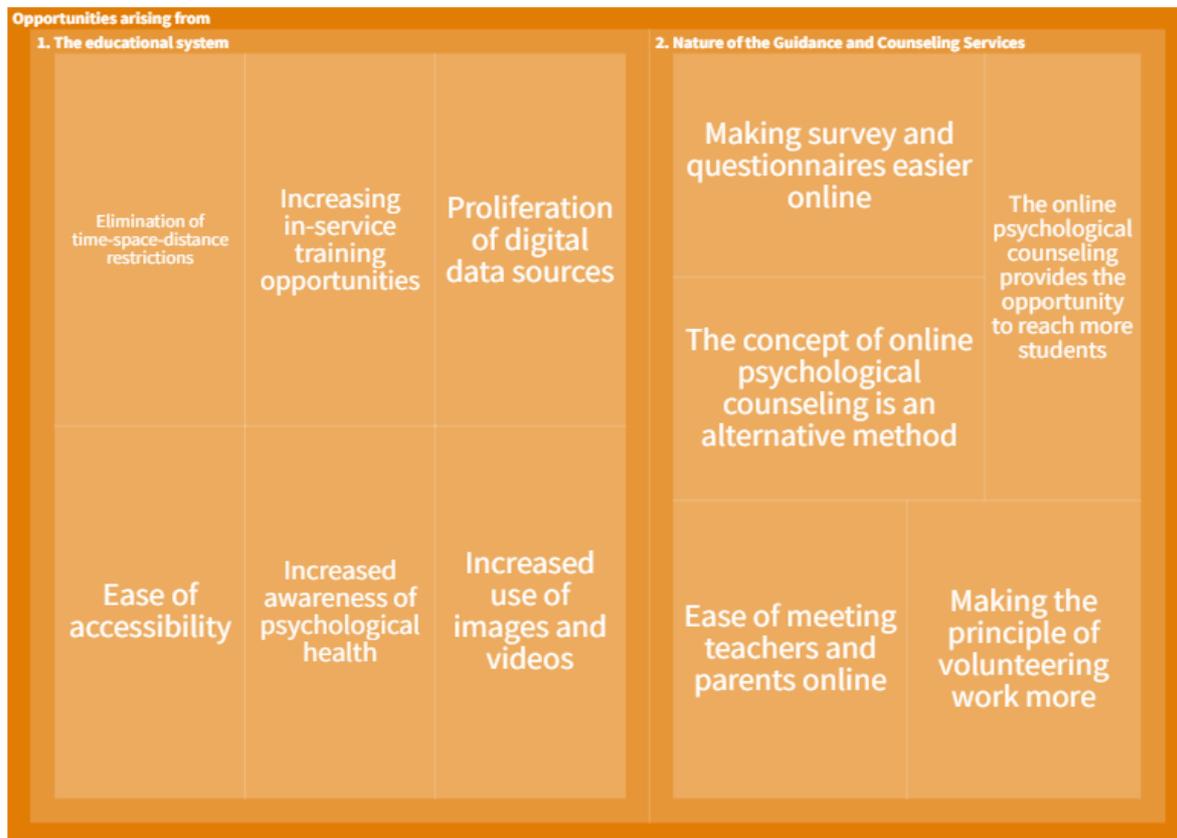


Figure 2: The themes emerged from the opportunities that the counsellors have experienced

Given in Figure 2 themes emerged from the opportunities that counselors encountered classified under two headings. First, opportunities arising from the education system theme had 6 sub categories. Second, opportunities arising from the nature of counseling and guidance services theme had 5 subcategories. We conclude from the figure 2 that school counselors had the opportunity to eliminate time, space, distance limitations and they also get the opportunity of easy accessibility. Moreover, school counselor had the opportunity to reach more students and it is easier to apply survey and questionnaires online.

4. Discussion

This study aims to describe challenges and opportunities encountered by the counselors in the implementation of guidance and counseling services during the global pandemic. As a results of descriptive content analysis, challenges were explained under 18 subcategories with different frequencies and opportunities can be explained under 13 subcategories with different frequencies. Similarly, the result of thematic analysis challenges classified under 4 themes and opportunities classified under 2 themes. Challenges themes are: challenges arising from the education system, challenges arising from the nature of counseling and guidance services, challenges arising from the students, Challenges arising from the online education while opportunities themes are: opportunities for the educational system and opportunities for the Guidance and Counseling Services. According to school counselors it is necessary to determine application principles, job descriptions of psychological counseling and guidance services and it is necessary to meet counselors' material needs in the digital setting. Regarding the

challenges, it is necessary to determine application principles, job descriptions of psychological counseling and guidance services and it is necessary to meet counselors' material needs in the digital setting, School counselors needs to be supported difficulties arising from the nature of counseling and guidance services. Students attitude towards online counseling affect counseling and guidance services. School counselors need to be supported on online education and Information Technologies, Regarding the opportunities guidance and counseling services eliminate the time-space-distance restrictions, in-service training opportunities and easy accessibility. With the concept of online psychological counseling guidance and counseling services have an alternative method and this method provides opportunity to reach more students. The findings of this study supported by the report school counseling during pandemic (Savitz-Romer et al., 2020). As school counselors shifted to remote schooling, they received little counseling-specific direction from school, district, and state leaders, leaving them unclear about expectations for their work. Most reported receiving less support from these leaders than during pre-COVID times (Savitz-Romer et al., 2020).

School Counselor 1 *"I believe that the role of a school counselor in remote learning needs to be clearly defined and shared. There was a lot of confusion as to what we should and/or should not be doing and we spent a lot of time trying to figure out exactly what our role should be during this time that could've been spent supporting our students, families, and staff."*

School counsellor voices were notably absent from COVID-19 planning processes. Like all educators, school counsellors experienced personal stressors such as balancing work and family demands, managing their own mental health/anxiety, and adjusting to new forms of technology (Savitz-Romer et al., 2020).

School Counselor 2 *"It has been very difficult trying to work from home, while homeschooling my children, and taking care of a baby. Our household was full of stress and anxiety."*

The focus of school counseling shifted to meet students' immediate needs due to the remote learning environment and the COVID-19 pandemic (Savitz-Romer et al., 2020).

School Counselor 3 *"My students and their families were in much greater need of emotional support... So many families fell apart because of illness, loss of jobs, and fear."*

School counselors faced unique challenges while lacking sufficient role-specific professional learning (Savitz-Romer et al., 2020). Technology both supported and posed barriers to school counselors (Savitz-Romer et al., 2020).

School Counselor 4 *"Lack of communication has impeded my ability to counsel in all areas. Many students do not have internet due to the rural setting and others quit checking electronic communication."*

As a conclusion, the COVID-19 global pandemic has brought about many changes to our society, which will have long-term effects on our youth and adolescents. During the global pandemic, many youths and adolescents are encountering trauma due to social isolation and adverse and childhood experiences causing an increase in mental health issues. If unaddressed, cases related to suicidality, technology addiction, and school safety may continue to rise. Consequently, schools will need to be prepared not only to address the academic deficiencies resulting from the COVID-19 quarantine, yet they must also develop and employ interventions to assist students with their emotional and social development. School counselors are trained in the areas of human growth and development, group counseling, and counseling theories and techniques; therefore, they have the capability to effectively offer and conduct short-term mental health services to those students in need. Moreover, school counselors have also been taught how to serve as leaders, to advocate, and to collaborate to promote systemic change (Pincus et al., 2020).

Based on the findings and after qualitative synthesis of the results, we extracted four main results and concurrently proposed some recommendations accordingly.

- There is a lack of clear guidelines for counselling services in the digital educational settings. Thus, school leaders should devise a clear plan and communicate it widely in order to enhance counseling services and support in virtual settings.
- Students' social, emotional, and psychological well-being rather than academic achievement has become more prominent during and in the after math of COVID-19, thus school leaders should establish a structured time frame for counselors to meet with students and families via online teaching platforms.

- There is a lack of support for school counsellors. Regarding this, school leaders should ask counselors what type of support they need to facilitate connecting with students and to provide counseling via virtual platforms.
- There are also some opportunities emerged in online educational settings like, ease of access, accessing more people without boundaries of time and space and so forth. Yet, school leaders should provide counselors with online resources and opportunities for training on counselor specific topics to foster their professional development.

References

- American School Counselor Association. (2019). *The ASCA National Model: A framework for school counseling programs* (4th ed.). American School Counselor Association.
- Berg, B. L., & Lune, H. (2015). *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences*. Pearson Education.
- Cooley, L. (2010). *The power of groups: Solution-focused group counseling in schools*. Corwin Press.
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Sage Publications.
- Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative Research*. Pearson
- Creswell, J. W. (2015). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage Publication.
- Erford, B. T. (2003). *Transforming the school counseling profession*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson, Education, Inc.
- Gall, M. D., Gall, J. P., & Borg, W. R. (2007). *Educational Research: An introduction*. Pearson.
- Gibson, R. L. (2008). *Introduction to guidance and counseling*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Glasheen, K., Campbell, M., & Shochet, I. (2013) Opportunities and challenges: School guidance counsellors' perceptions of counselling students online. *Australian Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, 23(2), pp. 222-235.
- Gysbers, N. C. (2001). School guidance and counseling in the 21st century: Remember the past into the future. *ASCA. Professional School Counseling*, 5(2).
- Hou, Y., Xiong, D., Jiang, T., Song, L., & Wang, Q. (2019). Social media addiction: Its impact, mediation, and intervention. *Cyberpsychology*, 13(1), <https://doi.org/10.5817/CP2019-1-4>
- Jackson-Cherry, L. R., & Erford, B. T. (2018). *Crisis assessment, intervention, and prevention* (3rd ed.). Pearson.
- London, R., & Ingram, D. (2018). Social isolation in middle school. *School Community Journal*, 28(1), 107-127.
- MoNE (2020). Ministry of National Education Regulation of Guidance and Counseling Services. Ankara.
- Pincus, R., Hannor- Walker, T., Wright, L. S., & Justice, J. (2020). COVID-19's effect on students: How school counselors rise to the rescue. *NASSP Bulletin*, 104(4) 241– 256. SAGE Publications.
- Savitz-Romer, M., Rowan-Kenyon, H. T., Nicola, T. P., Carroll, S., & Hecht, L. (2020). *Expanding support beyond the virtual classroom: Lessons and recommendations from school counselors during the COVID-19 crisis*. Harvard Graduate School of Education & Boston College Lynch School of Education and Human Development.
- Smith, J., Bekker, H., & Cheater, F. (2011). Theoretical versus pragmatic design in qualitative research. *Nurse Researcher*, 18(2): 39-51.
- Springer, S., Paone, C. H., Colucci, J., & Moss, L. J. (2020). Addressing suicidality: Examining preservice school counselors' perceptions of their training experiences. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Counseling*, 6(1), 18-36. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23727810.2018.1556990>
- Stake, R. E. (2010). *Qualitative research: Studying how things work*. The Guilford Press.
- Talmus, L. (2019). Tackling social isolation in middle school. *Childhood Education*, 95(6), 42-49. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00094056.2019.1689058>
- Vaismoradi M., Turunen H., & Bondas, T. (2013). Content analysis and thematic analysis: Implications for conducting a qualitative descriptive study. *Nursing & Health Sciences*, 15(3): 398-405.
- Yin, R. K. (2011). *Qualitative Research from Start to Finish*. Guilford Publications