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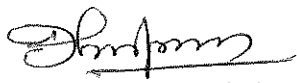
Notice for the PhD Viva Voce Examination

Ms Anne Zachariah, Registration Number: 1630088, PhD Scholar at the School of Psychological Sciences, CHRIST (Deemed to be University) will defend her PhD thesis at the public viva-voce examination on Friday, 08 May 2026 at 03.30 pm in Room No. 628, 6th Floor, R&D Block, CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Bengaluru - 560029, Karnataka, India.

- Title of the Thesis** : **Intervention to Reduce Vicarious Trauma in Trauma Workers Working with Survivors of Sex Trafficking**
- Discipline** : **Psychology**
- External Examiner - I** : **Dr Seena M Mathai**
Associate Professor
Department of Psychology
Union Christian College, Aluva
Karumalloor, Kerala - 683102
- External Examiner - II** : **Dr Akriti Srivastava**
Associate Professor and Head
Department of Psychology
Central University of Andhra Pradesh
Ananthapuramu (Administrative Building)
Andhra Pradesh - 515002
- Supervisor** : **Dr Viju P D**
Professor
School of Psychological Sciences
CHRIST (Deemed to be University)
Bengaluru - 560029
Karnataka
- Co-Supervisor** : **Dr Tony Sam George**
Professor (Former)
School of Psychological Sciences
CHRIST (Deemed to be University)
Bengaluru - 560029
Karnataka

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-voce examination.

Place: Bengaluru
Date: 06 May 2026


Registrar (Academics)

ABSTRACT

Professionals who engage empathically with trauma survivors are commonly described as trauma workers and may experience psychological consequences such as secondary traumatic stress and vicarious trauma. Although these risks are well documented, there remains limited consensus regarding effective interventions that address the cognitive and relational processes underlying vicarious trauma. Conceptualized within Constructivist Self-Development Theory, vicarious trauma involves changes in core meaning systems, highlighting the need for interventions that engage cognitive and narrative processing.

This study examined the effectiveness of a Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT)-informed intervention for trauma workers engaged in rehabilitation work with survivors of sex trafficking in India. A mixed-method single-case experimental design (SCED) was employed with seven participants (N = 7). Quantitative measures assessing secondary traumatic stress, vicarious trauma, posttraumatic stress symptoms, and self-care were administered across three assessment points. Qualitative data from reflective journals, thought records, and session documentation were analyzed to explore changes in cognitive appraisals and meaning making.

Findings indicated reductions in trauma-related symptoms and improvements in selected domains of self-care following the intervention. Vicarious trauma-related cognitive patterns were observed even in the absence of clinically significant secondary traumatic stress symptoms, underscoring the importance of examining schema-level processes beyond symptom indicators. Qualitative findings revealed shifts in participants' interpretations of responsibility, professional boundaries, and relational engagement following structured trauma narrative processing.

Overall, the study provides preliminary evidence supporting structured cognitive-narrative interventions for addressing vicarious trauma among trauma workers. It also contributes contextually grounded insights from sex trafficking rehabilitation settings in India and reinforces the importance of integrating trauma-informed support systems for professionals working in high-exposure trauma environments.

Keywords: *trauma workers; vicarious trauma; trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy; single-case experimental design; trafficking rehabilitation*

Publication:

1. **Zachariah, A., & George, T. S.** (2025). Breaking down vicarious trauma: Supporting trauma workers who work among survivors of sex trafficking in India. *Indian Journal of Social Psychiatry, 41*(4), 428–432. https://doi.org/10.4103/ijsp.ijsp_333_24