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PROFESSIONALS' PERCEPTIONS OF READINESS FOR PROVIDING SERVICES TO SEXUALLY AND COMMERCIALY EXPLOITED YOUTH

Raeven Mayes

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PROFESSIONALS' PERCEPTIONS OF READINESS FOR PROVIDING
SERVICES TO SEXUALLY AND COMMERCIALY EXPLOITED YOUTH

A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Social Work

by
Raeven Mayes
June 2020

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ABSTRACT

Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) is a social phenomenon that is affecting youth in large numbers. This qualitative research study focused on professionals' perceptions of readiness to provide services to CSEC youth based on the professional training and experience they have acquired. The professionals' perceptions were gathered through the use of face-to-face interviews. Participants were debriefed following the interviews and their participation was terminated. The data gathered from the interviews was analyzed using a bottom up approach through the use of open and axial coding. The study found that many employees had a lack of training in regard to CSEC and consequently felt ill equipped to provide adequate services should they encounter a CSEC resident/youth at the agency. Those employees that had training displayed a lack of knowledge about interventions that may be effective when servicing the youth. Per participants, this is attributed to the fact that many trainings did not address interventions. The findings of the research were distributed to the participating agency. The study makes contributions to micro and macro social work by enabling participants to better service CSEC clients and allowing agencies to support their employees in doing so. The study was conducted at one of many agencies that work with CSEC youth; in order to gain a greater idea of whether the study hypothesis is supported across agencies, a larger study must be conducted.

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CHAPTER ONE

ASSESSMENT

Introduction

Chapter one introduces the focus of the research study. The chapter defines the social phenomenon that is commonly referred to as commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC). The paradigm chosen to carry out this study as well as the theoretical orientation is discussed. A literature review was conducted in order to gain a greater understanding of the issue in its entirety. Lastly, this chapter discusses how this study contributes to macro and micro social work.

Research Focus

The focus of this research is the current knowledge of professionals working with youth involved in the juvenile justice/child welfare system, particularly in the residential care setting, and how prepared they feel to provide services to this population of youth. The juvenile justice and child welfare systems contain youth that are oftentimes removed from their homes to receive treatment or services before they transition back to their families, to alternative homes, or to live independently in transitional housing programs. The youth are removed from their homes for reasons including but not limited to the following: offending the law, running away excessively, unsafe living environments, and abuse or neglect committed by caregivers/parents. There

are many risk factors associated with victimization of CSEC. Certain risk factors are particularly relevant to professionals working with youth that are involved in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. According to Kotrla (2010), among these factors are homelessness and involvement in the child welfare or juvenile justice system.

This research focuses on professionals including clinicians, caseworkers, administrators, mental health workers, and other persons employed at residential care facilities that often house these youth. These professionals provide services that range from guided peer group counseling, to individual therapy, to the administration of independent living skills training. This research is necessary in order to prepare professionals to adequately meet the needs of youth that are at-risk and/or have already been affected by CSEC. CSEC is more thoroughly defined later in this chapter in the literature review. In the literature, CSEC is also referred to as the commercial sexual exploitation of youth (CSEY) and domestic minor sex trafficking; the terms may be used interchangeably throughout this paper.

Paradigm and Rationale for Chosen Paradigm

This study was conducted using a post-positivist paradigm. According to Morris (2013) this approach allows you to begin to comprehend and understand aspects of the human experience through observations and words of participants. A post positivist approach states that the naturalistic setting is “the only way to capture the complexity of the human experience” (Morris, p.

41). The goal was to gain professional's perspectives through their descriptions and explanations in response to interview questions. These perspectives were gathered using qualitative data, through interviews and discussions. This paradigm was appropriate because it enabled employees and employers to use the information gathered to determine how to adequately prepare to provide the best service possible to CSEC youth. This is the best way to study the research focus because it allowed the researcher to go beyond simply discovering whether professionals have had training. It allowed the researcher to gain a full picture of participant's understanding of CSEC and to gain an understanding of what steps can be taken to make professionals feel more prepared to provide services and interventions to CSEC youth. The results of the interviews were shared with the agency and participants upon the completion of the study.

Literature Review

In recent history, a great deal of attention has been drawn to CSEC because it is significantly impacting the United States of America and other areas in the world. Professionals including doctors, nurses, law enforcement, child welfare social workers, and so on, have begun to undergo a series of trainings that equip them to better service survivors. This section defines child sex trafficking, the incidence of the social issue is discussed, and risk factors are briefly mentioned. Lastly, this section talks about the importance of

administering trainings to professionals specifically relevant to the effective interventions for working with this population of youth.

Definition

The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act includes the prevention of “sexual exploitation,” which encompasses children engaging in prostitution and/or pornography (CAPTA, 2010). Sexual exploitation is considered a form of sexual abuse per this Act (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2011).

Sexual abuse is an offense that must be reported to law enforcement or the child abuse hotline. According to The Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act (2000), CSEC is defined as “sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age” (p.8).

The youth are targeted and taken advantage of by means that make them feel as if they have no choice other than to engage in sexual activity out of fear for their own lives and the lives of the people they love. There are many avenues of entering the CSEC lifestyle and the phenomenon does not only affect one type of victim. This is a phenomenon that can affect any gender, race, socioeconomic status, and sexual orientation. Of course, there are certain factors that increase the likelihood of victimization. These factors are discussed later in this chapter. Once a youth is involved in this lifestyle it is extremely difficult to get out. Reasons for the difficulty of leaving the lifestyle

include but are not limited to the following factors: youth may have a fear of retaliation from the trafficker, loyalty to the trafficker, and sometimes they do not feel as though they are being victimized (Srikantiah, 2007).

Incidence and Prevalence

Despite the recent attention to the issue, it continues to increase and persist at worrying rates. A report by H.E.A.T Watch (Human Exploitation and Trafficking) from the Alameda County District Attorney's Office collected specific statistics on the incidence of the commercial sexual exploitation of children between the year 2011 and 2016. The statistics reflect the alarming fact that the incidence of this type of maltreatment is increasing with time. H.E.A.T Watch estimates that approximately 100,000 children are exploited for commercial profit within each year. With so many children being affected, it is surprising that national attention was not captured until recently. It was difficult to gain additional statistics that accurately grasp the true magnitude of the incidence and prevalence of CSEC as there are many barriers to estimating victimization. According to Clark, (2003) these factors are under-reporting, victim reluctance to speak up, and the fact that it is difficult to measure trafficking.

The Juvenile Justice System

Due to the rate that the issue is increasing, recent changes in the way the justice system views CSEC has caused a shift in how cases in the juvenile

justice court system are addressed. Multidisciplinary teams have begun to collaborate in order to determine how to best help this population of youth. Previously, the youth involved in this lifestyle were seen as criminals whereas now they are seen as victims. The cause of trafficking has been up for debate; some professionals viewed CSEC as a criminal offense, some viewed it as a choice, and some now view the youth as victims (Countryman-Roswurm & Bolin, 2014). This shift is reflected in SB 738 (2014), which states that reported incidents of trafficking or exploitation must result in a mandated child abuse report if victims are under the age of 18 (2014; SB 738). Child sex trafficking is now being recognized as a form of maltreatment as opposed to a choice that the victims made.

One result of the shift in the way child sex trafficking is viewed is the development of specialized courts that work specifically with victims of child sex trafficking. According to Liles et. al (2016), Los Angeles created the STAR court, Alameda County created Girls' court, San Diego County has a sexual assault court, and Sacramento County has a CSEC court (p.236). These courts were created to deal with the diverse needs of CSEC victims in order to ensure that the cases are handled with care. The juvenile justice and child welfare system are transforming in order to meet the needs of CSEC youth.

Risk-Factors

Many of the clients that are served by professionals in the social work and human services field have an increased likelihood of being manipulated and trafficked by perpetrators. Other risk factors are teen relationship violence, runaway youth, homeless youth, street youth, youth with a history of childhood neglect, and a history of abuse (Countryman-Roswurm & Bolin, 2014). The other risk factors that increase the likelihood for victimization are being female, low socioeconomic status, low academic achievement, and witnessing violence in the home (Hartinger-Saunders, Trouteaud, & Matos, 2017).

Training of Agencies/Professionals

The Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LA DMH) provides a list of trained mental health agencies that have undergone a training titled “Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children 101: Awareness and Clinical Application training”. CSEC 101 is an overview and/or basic education about CSEC. There are a significant number of residential care facilities and mental health agencies on this list, however there are agencies that work with at risk youth and identified victims that are not listed by LA DMH indicating that some residential agencies do not have the necessary basic training about CSEC. Professionals must be trained and equipped to deal with the complex needs that are associated with this population in order to ensure that the youth are receiving adequate services. Among these professionals are teachers, child-care workers, mental health workers, and caseworkers.

Training for professionals should include risk factors, terminology used in the CSEC lifestyle, effects CSEC has on survivors, interventions, and best practices when servicing these youth. Administering the appropriate training and information to the professionals working with this population is crucial because research has shown that specific interventions are needed to help the youth. Liles et al. (2016) list some interventions that have proven to be effective with CSEC youth including creating safety plans, psychoeducation that focuses on education about trauma, education about exploitation, and the development of healthy relationships (p. 241). Psycho-educational groups are effective interventions for victims of domestic minor sex trafficking (Countryman-Roswurm & Bolin, 2014). Groups allow the youth to grow and heal with peers that have gone through similar experiences. Training surrounding effective and evidenced-based interventions is an essential component involved in meeting the needs of CSE youth in the residential care setting.

The literature review provided an overview of CSEC and the increased likelihood that youth in residential care will be or have been impacted by the topic of this study. Views and education about CSEC in the child welfare and legal system has evolved significantly over recent years, unfortunately training and education is still evolving. This leads to the question of whether the current training and education provided to professionals at one specific agency is sufficient enough to give them a feeling of “readiness” in terms of providing

services to CSEC youth. This research examined professional knowledge surrounding risk factors, protective factors, trainings, and interventions that have been proven to be effective with working with youth that have been affected by domestic minor sex trafficking.

Theoretical Orientation

Complex systems theory and experiential learning theory will be used to understand the information gathered about the perspective of the professionals working with CSEC youth. Complex systems theory suggests that several non-linear factors cause and are associated with a phenomenon (Van der Watt & Van der Westhuizen, 2017). CSEC cannot be attributed to one single cause as it is an extremely complex phenomenon, therefore there is not one single solution. Professionals must become knowledgeable about the complex systems associated with CSEC in order to understand and intervene. Van der Watt and Van der Westhuizen (2017) define the complex parts/players involved in the phenomenon that is CSEC as “the actors involved in trafficking (the trafficker subsystem), the victim(s) and their context (victim subsystem), the demand and end-users of the services of the victims, the various criminal justice agencies, other government departments, civil society, and the context in which all these subsystems operate” (p. 222). This suggests that the professionals who provide services to CSEC youth are key players and can have a direct impact in affecting the other systems involved. This

theory supports the inductive nature of the post positivist approach mentioned by Morris (2013).

Experiential learning theory takes different learning styles into account, highlighting the importance of considering learning style when providing instruction/training (Sternberg & Zhang, 2014). Experiential learning theory will allow the researcher to examine and assess what individual employees feel they need regarding learning the best practices for working with CSEY. Complex systems theory and experiential learning theory will aid the researcher of this study in examining and interpreting data gathered from the descriptions of professionals working with CSEC youth.

Contribution of Study to Micro and Macro Social Work Practice

This study can potentially make contributions to macro and micro social work. At the micro level, this study could aid professionals in engaging and intervening with at-risk and identified victims of CSEC. The study gauged the knowledge that professionals currently have regarding effective interventions and assessed whether or not the training that is currently provided at the non-profit agency is thorough enough to equip professionals with the tools necessary to meet client needs. On the macro level, the study can provide larger agencies with an idea of what professionals feel is working with current training and what further training is needed in order for professionals to feel completely confident when working with CSEC youth. The end result will be a

small group of professionals who are more knowledgeable in regard to intervening with this vulnerable population of youth.

Summary

This chapter covered information about the literature relevant to the research study. The literature review defined the commercial sexual exploitation of children. It examined the recent shift in the way that the law views CSEC victims mandating that the maltreatment be reported as child abuse. The incidence and prevalence of CSEC and risk factors that increase the likelihood of victimization were discussed. Lastly, the literature review talked about the training available to professionals as well as some of the interventions that have proven to be effective in helping CSEC youth. The section introduced the theoretical orientation that will be used in the research project. Lastly, this section considered the contributions that this research will potentially make to micro and macro social work practice.

CHAPTER TWO

ENGAGEMENT

Introduction

This chapter discusses details about the site selected to carry out this research. To protect the confidentiality of participants and the agency, the name of the study site will not be mentioned. This chapter addresses how the researcher engaged the gatekeepers and key players of the organization. Details about the types of services provided to clients at the organization are also discussed. This chapter includes information about how the researcher prepared for the study. This section talks about the role that technology played in the study. Lastly, the researcher addresses diversity issues, ethical issues, and political issues that came up during the study.

Research Site

The organization used for this research study is an agency servicing youth between the ages of 13-18. The agency has several purposes. One purpose is to house and provide treatment to young men and women who have been ordered to placement by the juvenile probation departments of various counties in Northern and Southern California. The youth reside in cottages or residences. The organization also has two day-treatment high schools that service youth in the community that are unable to attend public school as a result of law breaking or behavioral issues. The agency provides

mental health services to clients including individual therapy, group therapy, substance abuse treatment, life skills classes, family therapy, and case management.

The employees of the agency that work directly with clients have various educational and professional backgrounds ranging from criminal justice, to psychology, to social work, to sociology. The administrative staff has backgrounds such as business and administration. The agency employees hold the following positions: administrators, caseworkers, mental health care coordinators, supervisors, clinicians, and awake night staff. The employees vary in age, educational background, socioeconomic status, race, and gender.

Engagement Strategies for Gatekeepers at Research Site

The gatekeepers and key players at the organization are the individuals that work in administration. The researcher contacted one administrator to explain the goal of the research and how it could benefit the employees of the agency, the clients, and the organization. The researcher engaged the administrator of the residence that houses young girls to explain the focus and benefits of allowing the researcher to carry out the project at the agency.

Although both girls and boys can be victimized by CSEC, the agency does not have many male youths that have been identified as victims, therefore the researcher decided it would be more beneficial to start the engagement of this project at this particular site. This administrator also oversees one of the day-treatment high schools, which allowed the researcher to gather a larger

population of research participants. The administrator attends weekly management meetings during which she shared details about the proposed research and gained approval from other gatekeepers and key players of the organization.

Self-Preparation

The researcher prepared for the study by examining past literature about the topic. The researcher developed questions to engage employees in conversation about their knowledge and experiences working with CSEC youth. The researcher prepared to gather data by obtaining the journals necessary to document the processes that occurred during the data-gathering phase. The researcher also developed a PowerPoint slide deck to provide participants additional details regarding the risk factors and effective interventions for CSEC youth. The researcher considered topics such as participant beliefs and experiences that may be affected throughout the study in order to be sensitive to their feelings and belief systems surrounding the topic of CSEC. Lastly, the researcher completed a Human Subjects training and gained the approval of a subsection of the IRB at California State University, San Bernardino.

Diversity Issues

The diversity issues that were raised in this study were differences in beliefs about CSEC, gender, age differences, and educational background. As

mentioned in the literature review, the laws used to view CSEC victims as willing participants who were merely choosing to commit a crime. This was reflected in some of the responses of participants feeling like victims could consent or “willingly participate” in the exploitation. The researcher respected the views of all participants. Gender was another diversity issue. Following one interview, the researcher educated a male participant about the precautions and risks associated with CSEC youth, such as the possibility of a victim’s reluctance to work with a male employee. Re-traumatization is a very real possibility when working with this population; this is a theme that at least two participants made mention of. Lastly, differences in educational background served as an advantage or a disadvantage for professionals working with this population of youth in the agency and contributed to their knowledge or lack thereof. Diversity issues were discussed openly as they were presented.

Ethical Issues

The researcher recorded the responses of participants using an audio recorder and then transcribed them using a laptop. The ethical issues in this study were informed consent, respect for anonymity, and beneficence, which means that no harm will be caused to participants. The researcher protected study participants’ confidentiality by ensuring that any names and identifying information were not included in the study. The name of the agency itself was also kept confidential and anonymous. The researcher checked-in with

participants periodically to ask about their comfortability with the subject matter, in order to address beneficence. The researcher fostered an environment where participants were comfortable to have open and honest dialogue. The participants were ensured that if at any time they felt uncomfortable with the subject matter, they could decline to participate. The participants' data was stored in a locked file cabinet at the agency. During any transportation, the researcher utilized a locked bag.

Political Issues

The political issue surrounding this research was the agency administrator initially perceiving the research as one that would imply that employees are not fully trained to deal with servicing the CSEC population. The researcher had a conversation with the administrator to ensure that there is no implication that employees are not trained; rather the researcher sought to assess areas in which the agency can equip their employees with additional tools necessary to feel comfortable and adequate when providing services to clients. There are no other identified political issues for this study.

The Role of Technology in Engagement

Technology was used to engage the key gatekeepers of the site until approval was gained. Upon receiving permission from the gatekeepers, email was used to gather participants for the study and to set up interviews. When the researcher had difficulty obtaining participants via email, the researcher

decided to gather participants at an in-service training (IST). A PowerPoint presentation was used to give participants an overview about the risk factors and effective interventions that are relevant to the CSEC population. This presentation also gave a general overview of additional facts and terminology relevant to this population. The PowerPoint training was provided by the agency; the researcher added slides about interventions that are effective with CSEC youth. It was at this training that the researcher passed out a flyer to invite participants to volunteer for interviews. Interviews were held in person and recorded using an audio recording device. A laptop was used to transcribe the data gathered from the interview.

Summary

This chapter explained how the researcher engaged the gatekeepers, key players, and administrators at the study site. It covered how the researcher prepared for the study. This section examined the diversity issues, ethical issues, and political issues. Lastly, it addressed what role technology played in the research process.

CHAPTER THREE

IMPLEMENTATION

Introduction

This chapter covers the implementation stage of the research study. It discusses who was included in the study and how the researcher chose these participants. The chapter covers the data gathering process and the phases of data collection. The proposed method for data analysis is also mentioned. The chapter includes information about how the findings of the research was communicated to study participants. Lastly, the section discusses termination, follow up, and dissemination.

Study Participants

The participants in the study were employees that work directly with the client population (four caseworkers, one clinician) and indirectly (one administrator, one supervisor, and one assistant supervisor) with the clients at the agency, for a total of eight participants. Ideally, the researcher wanted to interview a minimum of 15 participants, however obtaining additional participants proved to be a barrier in the research process. Nonetheless, the participants were 12.5% Caucasian, 12.5% African, and 75% Hispanic. The participants were 87.5% female and 12.5% male.

Selection of Participants

The participants selected reflected the general make-up of the employee population that works indirectly and directly with the youth that have been identified as CSEC within the agency. The researcher focused on employees that work with clients in the girl's residence, the day-treatment programs, or employees that come to these locations for work-related duties periodically. All participants had at least an associate degree, as it is a requirement to work at the agency, however their knowledge about CSEC varied.

This research aimed to gain knowledge about the amount of training participants have had prior to this study, employee knowledge of common risk factors and interventions, and how prepared employees feel in providing services/interventions to identified CSEC youth. For the purpose of this research, the researcher used a form of purposeful sampling to select participants. The post positivist approach uses purposive sampling to select participants for studies (Morris, 2013). The specific purposeful sampling strategy that was used for this study is stratified purposeful sampling. According to Morris (2013) stratified purposeful sampling is a combination of extreme case sampling and typical case sampling and allows for the researcher to choose members of the participant population who work directly with or come into contact with youth that have been affected by the phenomenon under investigation (Morris, 2013, p.125).

The researcher gathered participants in two ways. Initially, the researcher obtained a list of email addresses from the administrator of the girl's residence. An email was sent out to the employees from the researcher that work at the two day-treatment programs and two residences to send them a flyer (See Appendix A) and invite them to participate. This method produced two participants. The researcher then coordinated with the administrator to allow the researcher to present an annual training to employees. The training PowerPoint was provided by the agency. After the presentation the researcher handed out the flyer inviting participants to notify the researcher if interested in the study. This method produced six participants.

Data Gathering

The data was gathered in the form of qualitative interviews, which allowed for participants to describe the CSEC training they have acquired as well as their perception of their overall preparedness to provide services to CSEC youth. The researcher conducted face to face interviews in order to gather data. The researcher formulated a list of questions that aided in gathering information about employee experiences with providing services to youth that have been identified as or at-risk for experiencing CSEC (see Appendix A). The types of questions asked were descriptive (e.g., What is your day-to-day experience as an employee in the agency?), structured (e.g., Have you had previous CSEC training, if so, what can you recall from that training?), essential (e.g., To what extent do you feel confident that you are

prepared to meet the needs of CSEC youth? What are the barriers to successfully meeting the needs of CSEC youth?), extra (e.g., What do you think about this topic?) and throw away (e.g., demographics) (Morris, 2014). The rationale for using these questions was to gain a greater understanding of the factors associated with employee ability to provide effective services and interventions to clients at the agency.

Phases of Data Collection

For this research study, data was collected in four phases: engagement with key gatekeepers, interviews with participants, notes about the interview/participants, and reflections of the researcher experiences. The stages of interviews included engagement, development of focus, maintaining focus, and termination (Morris, 2014). The engagement stage of the interview process began when the researcher emailed employees about the purpose of the research and/or when the researcher provides the training to the agency employees. Once approval to start research was obtained, the researcher engaged participants through the informed consent process and an explanation of the research focus. During the development of focus the researcher reintroduced the purpose of the interview and maintained that focus throughout the interview by asking questions related to participant experiences with CSEC. Lastly, was the termination of the interview, which was done by debriefing the participant.

Data Recording

Data was recorded using an audio recorder during the interview with participant consent. One participant felt more comfortable with the researcher typing the responses as the interview was conducted. The researcher kept two journals; one for transcribing information gathered from interviews and one for documenting the researcher's rationale and reactions. The journals were utilized to aid the researcher in further developing the research focus (Morris, 2014). The first journal was a record or transcript of what each participant stated in their interview as well as information about their nonverbal communication (body language, tone of voice, facial expressions). These transcripts were developed by the researcher during or immediately following the interview. The transcripts allowed the researcher to analyze the data gathered during the process. The second journal allowed the researcher to reflect on the interviews and also provide rationale for decisions and conclusions that were made during the data gathering process.

Data Analysis Procedures

An exploratory inductive approach was used in order to allow the data to lead the research. A bottom-up approach to research creates the framework as data is collected (Morris, 2014). This approach was carried out in 4 stages: open coding, axial coding, selective coding, and a conditional/sequential matrix (Morris, 2014). During open coding I interviewed key players and used the data to develop themes/categories. Categories that may come up were

adequate training or not enough training, comfortability or lack of comfortability with providing services to CSE youth, knowledge of effective intervention or the need for more knowledge, and lastly feeling like in order to provide services to youth the employees felt the need to receive more specific training about interventions that are effective with the youth.

During axial coding, the researcher made links between the categories. One link was the connection between receiving adequate training and feeling more comfortable with providing services. Selective coding and creating the conditional/sequential matrix identify a unifying theme and evaluates the data on the deeper level in order to develop a theory about the topic (Morris, 2014). One theme is that training and directly working with youth that have been identified as survivors effected participant comfortability with providing services to CSE youth.

Summary

This chapter covered details about the study participants that participated in the research study. The section addressed the sampling strategy that was used to gather participants. This section looked at how the researcher gathered data along with the specific phases of data gathering. Lastly, the section highlighted the data recording and data analysis processes.

CHAPTER FOUR

EVALUATION

Introduction

This chapter focuses on analyzing and interpreting data gathered in response to the research focus: professionals' perceptions of readiness for providing services to sexually and commercially exploited youth. The section will identify and discuss emerging themes regarding the knowledge about commercial exploitation given prior training and experiences working with identified and at-risk victims. Also discussed are the implications for macro and micro social work practice. Pseudonyms will be used in lieu of participants' real names in order to preserve anonymity. The pseudonyms were chosen by participants.

Data Analysis

Participant Demographics

The participants have been employed at the agency for lengths of time ranging from 9 months to 26 years. 25% of participants have been employed with the agency for 1 year or less but report having prior experience working with youth in the residential care setting. 25% of the employee participants report being employed with the agency for between 2 and 5 years. 50% of the employee participants report having been employed with the agency for 15 years or more.

In terms of age, participants in this research project ranged from ages 24 years to 47 years. 50% of participants report being in their middle to late 20s, 12.5% in their 30s, and 37.5% in their 40s. With respect to ethnicity, 75% of participants identified as Hispanic, 12.5% identified as Caucasian and 12.5% identified as African American. In terms of religion, 50% of participants identified as Catholic, 23% identified as Christian, and 25% stated they were not religious.

Regarding their job duties and day to day experiences as an employee at the agency, 50% of the participants (4) were caseworkers at the residences, cottages, and/or day-treatment school. There was 1 Clinician, 1 Assistant supervisor, 1 administrator, and 1 Supervisor/Residence Director. Participants defined their roles at the agency. 62.5% of participants report that they are involved in the direct care and supervision of the youth at the treatment facility. 50% of participants talked about mentorship as an important aspect of their job duties. 62.5% of participants discussed their facilitation of mental health services such as individual therapy, on-on-one counseling, group counseling, and family therapy. Teaching life skills is an aspect of the job that 25% participants identified as an important responsibility. Molly explained, "I am responsible for implementing/creating independent living skills workshops on various topics that will benefit clients in successfully transitioning home".

The amount of trainings attended by each of the participants varied. Two thirds of the participants had attended 1-2 years of training. These participants

were new to the field and the agency and had only attended mandatory trainings about CSEC. They did, however, express interest in attending more trainings in the future. A quarter of the participants had attended 8-9 trainings; these were also mandatory trainings that they accrued over their years working at the agency. Lastly, one participant, Susy, reported attending “12-15 trainings, including the mandatory trainings here at the agency and training through various county probation agencies.”

Qualitative Themes

Understanding of CSEC (Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children).

There were three themes that emerged during participant discussions about their understanding of CSEC overall. Participants expressed ideas about entry pathways into the CSEC lifestyle, profit as a motivator for exploiters, and the idea that victims are often not identified as victims. Participants reported mixed responses about whether victims could willingly participate in CSEC. Mora expressed, “victims are put into situation willingly or against their will. By willingly I mean that I have heard several youths say that it is something they ‘choose’ to do, but I don’t know if I believe that this can be a choice, they are minors.” Jas also talked about the notion of coercion, “this oftentimes means that the youth are coerced and are afraid of the exploiter, or they can be tricked by other means like someone promising to love them or give them nice things.”

Participants talked about profit as the main motivation for exploitation. Jas expressed, “I understand that CSEC is when minors are taken advantage of and exploited for some sort of gain like money, drugs, or other items that can be ‘earned’.” Susy talked about profits other than money, “CSEC is basically any time a person under the age of consent has sex for money, survival, shelter, and things of that nature.”

Lastly, participants acknowledged that it is often difficult to decipher which youth have been victimized. As reported by Maria, “many of the youth have been victimized, but they are not identified as victims ‘on paper’ maybe because they are afraid to speak up, maybe because no one recognized the warning signs... I don’t know.”

General Perspectives About This Topic. Three major themes emerged when participants were asked about their feelings and personal thoughts surrounding the topic of CSEC. The first was a lack of awareness. Becky shared, “I wish there was more that I could do to educate youth and bring awareness to the world.” Peggy expressed, “it is not a topic I feel fully comfortable with discussing because I do not feel fully educated or trained. I think it is extremely important to discuss it more, to be further trained, because in this line of work we will likely encounter victims often.”

Participants also reported feelings of sadness – a second theme – often using the word “heartbreaking”. Peggy shared, “I personally find the topic to be

very heartbreaking. I remember hearing a girl talk about how she entered the life and all of the things she had to go through in group counseling; I had a hard time listening because I can't fathom that any human being could do the horrible things that are done to these kids."

The third theme expressed by participants was feeling angry when thinking about CSEC. Rob expressed, "It just makes me so angry, like I get filled with rage. I feel like the people who do those things are disgusting and should be punished in the worst ways possible."

Risk Factors for Exploitation. Several important themes emerged from participant responses to this question. Participants displayed knowledge about some of the risk factors associated with CSEC victimization.

Participants acknowledged that involvement in the juvenile justice system or child welfare system increased the likelihood of victimization. Mora shared: "at risk youth, such as the ones involved in the juvenile justice and child welfare system have an increased chance of victimization. I learned this in training, but I have also observed this first-hand. You would be surprised how many of the girls have been groomed or have been victimized. It is scary. Sometimes other kids even recruit residents to join the lifestyle."

Participants recognized poverty as a risk factor of victimization. Peggy stated, "familial economic hardships can make the fast money associated with CSEC appear appealing and enticing".

Participants identified dysfunctional family dynamics as a major predictor such as past abuse, emotionally unavailable parents, coming from a “broken home”, and lacking a strong support system. As reported by Susy, “many of the youth I have encountered that have been identified as CSEC youth come from a background that is...um....not the best. Specific factors that I can recall are absent parents, whether that be emotionally or physically absent. A lot of them come from very abusive and dysfunctional homes and they are searching for something...some sort of love from their exploiter”. Peggy shared, “these kids just want to be loved at the end of the day, so many of them come from families or living situations where they feel they are lacking something....safety, love, respect, basic necessities”.

Participants identified youth from the LGBTQ community as youth that are targeted by traffickers. Becky shared,

I learned in trainings that many youth who identify as gay or lesbian are not accepted by their families. They are oftentimes kicked out, I think they were specifically called throw away youth, which is a sad term to even think about. This puts them in a real messed up spot, leaving them to result to getting money, clothes and food via exploiters. I can’t even imagine what that feels like.

Finally, participants identified that being a minority increases the likelihood of CSEC victimization. Becky expressed, “the last training I went to talked about

how minority youth are more likely to be exploited. At first, I was shocked, like, no they aren't but, when I really thought about the youth that I have seen talk about being victimized, they are usually minorities, Hispanic and African Americans”.

Effects of Exploitation. In response to the question, many of the participant responses were uniform and reflected similar ideas about the mental and physical effects of exploitation. Three major themes emerged: mental health effects, effects on reproductive health and effects related to physical harm.

Participants acknowledged that CSEC severely impacts the mental health of youth that are victimized. Maria shared “the youth can also be effected mentally and develop diagnoses like PTSD, depression, substance abuse related disorders to self-medicate, and other trauma related diagnoses.” Becky added “victimization also impacts their self-esteem which is a part of mental health that we often fail to mention”.

Participants mentioned effects related to victim reproductive health as a concern related to CSEC. Becky pointed out that “they can get STI’s because they often do not protect themselves when forced to engage in risky sexual behavior, many of the youth likely do not have adequate education about safe sex.” Susy pointed out details about another outcome of unsafe sex, stating “many of the youth report that they have had abortions and miscarriages after unplanned pregnancies.”

Lastly, participants mentioned the physical harm youth experience at the hands of exploiters and buyers. Maria shared about things she heard about in group counseling with the youth, “the youth are often abused, raped, and beat up by the so-called adults involved in the exploitation.” Other participants had similar thoughts about the physical harm youth experience. One participant, Susy, highlighted a factor that did not come up as a theme in other response. She felt that CSEC leads to “and inability to trust people, especially adult males. Although they are not the only perpetrators, with the female victims I have worked with, the perpetrators have typically been male in my experience.”

CSEC and Gender. There was a clear consensus amongst participants that both male and female youth could be affected by CSEC. A common theme that presented during the interviews is that although trainings taught the professionals that CSEC can affect boys and girls alike, none of them have encountered clients who have admitted victimization or have shown any of the warning signs or risk factors associated with CSEC. Participants expressed the understanding that this does not mean that men are less likely to be exploited. They commonly shared that they would like to learn more about factors associated with male victimization in order to be able to identify barriers and learn whether warning signs are different or like female warning signs. The participants acknowledged that training made them aware of the idea that both boys and girls are affected; however, throughout their career they have not worked with male clients that have openly used treatment to work through CSEC

victimization. Jas shared, “both males and females are affected, so I have learned in the trainings I have gone to, however in my time working in this field I have not come across an identified male victim. Susy expressed similar sentiments, “I know this phenomenon affects males and females alike, but I have never provided services to a male resident that has been affected”. The participants expressed interest in wanting to know more about the factors associated with male victimization. As reported by Rob, “ I used to believe that this type of thing only affected girls, but training proved that assumption wrong, I would like to learn more about the factors related to both male and female victimization so I can know if there is something I can do to recognize the warning signs in the boys and girls I work with”.

The participants acknowledged that although trainings talk about male victimization, it is rare to come across a male that will talk about being victimized or have victim identification somewhere in their probation referral packet. Mora felt that CSEC victimization is simply “more common with female youth”.

Other participants acknowledged that males are less likely to report; they had various proposed explanations for this. Becky felt that “it is less acceptable for boys to admit that they have been taken advantage of, especially when working with a population of male youth that are on probation.” Jas felt the decreased likelihood to report is associated with “the embarrassment of admitting they have been sexually abused.” Peggy felt “There is a stigma that men cannot

be forced or coerced into anything because of strength; maybe men don't want to say anything because they will be seen as weak." Maria added that "sexual exploitation carries many stigmas that decrease the likelihood of reporting." Lastly, Molly felt that "all exploiters care about is profit, so if exploiting both boys and girls will make them more of a profit, then that is what they will do." Most participants were aware that boys and girls can be affected, but statistical measurements and lack of identification affects how often professionals are able to intervene.

Preparedness to Provide Services to this Population. Most of the participants rated their preparedness to provide services as relatively high (above a 5 on a scale from 1 to 10; while about a third rated their preparedness rather low (below a 3). The participants who reported feeling more prepared to provide services to CSEC youth had reasoning that varied. Susy, who rated herself a 7, reported "most of my feelings about being prepared have come less from formal training and more from actual experience with working with CSEC survivors." Peggy reported that although she feels "that given my experiences and what I have learned thus far have helped prepare me for future situations. As a person, I am very empathetic and feel comfortable talking about most subjects; however, I don't feel completely confident in providing all the necessary services because I don't think I have been provided sufficient training to do my job well in regard to CSEC." Molly shared she "learned most of what she knows about CSEC through school as she is currently enrolled in courses to become a social worker." Lastly,

Maria shared she feels “comfortable allowing the youth to talk about their experiences openly”, adding that you must “make the environment a safe space to work through their trauma.”

Those that reported lower feelings of preparedness had similar reasoning for their low reported score. Mora shared she would “like more trainings in order to feel completely comfortable discussing it and providing services and interventions regarding the topic.” Becky rated herself a three and explained she “has the slightest clue about what services victims may need in treatment.”

Effective Interventions. Participants were asked about their knowledge of interventions that are proven to be effective with the CSEC population. Some participants expressed they are not knowledgeable about evidence-based practices that have been effective with victims, while others were able to name at least once therapeutic evidence-based therapy to use with victims. Susy discussed that “Titrated Exposure which is helping them deal with past experiences a little bit at a time” can be helpful to work through trauma. Molly also stated, “Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral therapy is an evidenced based practice that is effective with this population.”

Other participants identified group counseling and support groups as effective for CSEC victims, pointing out that group can be an uncomfortable intervention. Jas pointed out the importance of making group a safe space, stating “group counseling is definitely effective, but we must create a safe,

judgement free space to work through the trauma associated with victimization.” Susy shared, “group support is also important. In the past, victims at our agency were more comfortable using group therapy to discuss some of the trauma, how they got into the lifestyle, and their motivation to change. However, for some reason girls use group less and less to talk about this topic, I’ve hypothesized that it is an extremely uncomfortable topic and they may have shame associated to it.” Becky talked about how clients could feel if no one else in the group has experienced CSEC, “I think that group counseling can potentially be an effective intervention, but then I think I about how uncomfortable it would be to talk about such a traumatic experience with people who may not understand because they may have never experienced it.”

Some participants expressed feeling like interventions should include building self-esteem, teaching life skills, and developing healthy attachments. On positive affirmations, Susy stated, “the use of positive affirmation to build their self-esteem is so helpful. I can only imagine what exploitation does to their self-esteem, especially because many of them may have had low self-esteem to begin with.” On teaching life-skills, Jas shared, “I think it is really important to teach them about healthy relationships, boundaries, effective communication, and other life skills that will strengthen their resistance to falling back into the grasps of traffickers.” Lastly, Jas shared “it is important to attach to something at the treatment facility whether it be a stable caring adult or a healthy age-appropriate peer relationship.” Peggy also shared, “possibly involving their family

to see who they have that they can attach to and gain support in their road to recovery.” Maria expressed, “attachment to positive mentors at the agency or through advocacy programs like Seeking Safety.”

Barriers to Successfully Meeting the Needs of CSEC Youth. The responses to this question were mixed. One theme that most participants agreed on was that a lack of training was a barrier to providing CSEC youth. As reported by Peggy, “it is not a topic I feel fully comfortable with discussing because I do not feel fully educated or trained. I think it is extremely important to discuss it more and to be further trained, because in this line of work we will likely encounter victims often”. Rob explained “It is scary thinking about providing services because I am not fully aware of all that CSEC is, I need more training”.

Some of the other themes that came up were length of time in treatment, lack of victim identification, and staff discomfort with the topic. Susy expressed that, “it takes time to build trust with these youth. Length of stay is only 6 months in placement. When you think about the Stages of Change Model, this is not nearly enough time to see change through.” Maria shared, “having so many new staff come into the agency due to high turnaround rates makes the proper training nearly impossible due to time constraints. I also feel it is hard to know which of the youth to intervene with if some of them have not yet been identified as victims, yes we can see some warning signs, but is that enough?”

What is Needed to Better Prepare Staff to Meet the Needs of CSEC

Youth. Participants identified training as the chief thing that could support them in better meeting the needs of CSEC youth. Maria expressed, “I think providing the time and resources to be able to properly train the staff I supervise and me with more training about ways to intervene and meet the needs of CSEC youth.”

Peggy shared, “I think continuously providing updated training on the subject will help me stay up to date with interventions, statistics, and new knowledge about the subject.” Jas’s response was as follows, “I think it may be helpful for the agency to collaborate with outside agencies for training and seek interventions through outside agencies as well.” Becky elaborated on the trainings she thinks would be helpful, “I would like more training about age appropriate ways to educate youth about this topic.”

Data Interpretation

This study found that knowledge of risk factors, knowledge of the effects of CSEC, the number of trainings taken, and knowledge of effective interventions affected participant perceptions of readiness to provide services to clients that have been affected by CSEC. These concepts emerged during the data analysis of interviews conducted with employees at a residential treatment facility. It is important to note that participants held various positions within the organization, ranging from caseworker, to Clinician, to Assistant Supervisor, to Supervisor, and Administrator.

Knowledge of risk factors is a concept that emerged as a factor related to readiness to provide services. The participants were able to identify poverty, minority status, past abuse, dysfunctional family situations, identifying as LGBTQ, and involvement in the juvenile justice system as factors that increase the likelihood of victimization. A study conducted by Sapiro et. al, (2016) mentioned the risk factors of CSEC when discussing factors related to the effective delivery of services to the CSEC population:

Poverty, interpersonal violence, family distress, and identification as LGBT can elevate a young person's vulnerability to trafficking and complicate service provision to youth and their families. Further complicating service provision is the fact that many young people who are involved in DMST do not identify as victims and are distrustful of law enforcement and other adult authorities. Practitioners who have worked with these youth report that they are more likely to describe themselves as having chosen to sell sex (p. 100).

For the participants who engaged in this study, a great deal of their knowledge about risk factors came from trainings they attended at the agency and outside agencies, as well as from personal experiences working with identified CSEC victims. Many of the participants verbalized wanting to gain a larger knowledge base about additional risk factors associated with CSEC.

The current study found knowledge of the effects of CSEC to be an important aspect of providing services to CSEC youth. Research shows that

complex trauma is an outcome of CSEC, amongst other factors such as mental health diagnoses like PTSD, a mistrust for adults, alcohol and substance use (Hardy, Compton, & Mc Phatter, 2013). The participants in this study presented knowledge about the following outcomes: sexually transmitted infections, unplanned pregnancies, physical abuse from exploiters and “Johns”, depression, and PTSD. Knowledge about the effects of CSEC allows professionals to develop treatment plans specific tailored to the symptoms and behaviors clients are experiencing.

Participants’ knowledge of effective interventions was a factor they reported to be an influencer in their perceptions of readiness to provide services. Participants were mildly aware of services that may be helpful in working with CSEC youth, however most participants expressed feeling that they were unaware of evidence-based practices (EBP) that are helpful when providing treatment. Participants suggested Titrated exposure and Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy as EBPs that have been proven to be effective. Participants also mentioned the importance of creating safe environments. Research has shown that trauma-informed care is an effective form of intervention for CSEC youth, it is based on values of creating safe spaces, developing positive and healthy connections, emotion management and learning to understand the symptoms associated with client’s trauma (Bath, 2008).

Results show that there is a need for more training surrounding interventions for CSEC youth. The integration of screening questions specific to

domestic minor sex trafficking that assess for victimization and trauma aids in the implementation of appropriate intervention strategies (Hardy, Compton, & McPhatter, 2013, p. 13). When asked about what could be done to support employees in increasing their feelings of readiness, there were consistent expressions of the desire to obtain more knowledge in this area.

The number of trainings taken impacted employee perceptions of readiness, however those that had personal experience with working with CSEC youth felt that experience paired with extensive training, they felt ready to provide services. More importantly, the inclusion of education about interventions within those trainings led to reported increased feelings of readiness. Per prior literature, trainings should include “a variety of training techniques, such as handouts, guest speakers, videos, role-plays and mock interviewing, interprofessional collaboration on case studies, and personal action plans” (Ferguson, 2009, p. 571). The study results and research display the importance of modifying existing training to increase readiness and ultimately improve service provision.

Implication of Findings for Micro and Macro Practice

The findings from this study will help social workers, administrators, and other employees of residential treatment facilities obtain the knowledge necessary to provide services to clients that have been affected by CSEC on a micro level. Research shows that in order to provide effective responses and interventions to CSEC youth, professionals such as law enforcement, those in

education, health care workers, and social workers must have knowledge about the wide range of short-term and long-term needs of victims (Sapiro, et. al, 2016). These factors should be included in trainings presented at agencies.

On a macro level, this study will equip training developers at agencies in determining what factors to include in annual mandatory trainings or what additional trainings outside of the agency that employees may benefit from. Furthermore, it will help supervisors and administrative staff to better understand what employees need in order to feel supported in providing those services. In addition, this study can serve as an ongoing tool for agencies to measure employees' feelings of readiness as they attend future trainings in order to assess if any further changes must be made. This study was conducted at only one of many residential treatment facilities in California, and unfortunately only eight employees were interviewed due to time constraints and other unforeseen factors. This study can serve as an example or guide for the agency to interview its employees on a larger scale or for other agencies to duplicate the study in order to determine ways to support the staff in providing services to CSEC youth.

Summary

This chapter provided the demographics of participants in the study. The themes and concepts that emerged during the data analysis stage of the project were discussed next. Lastly, this chapter was concluded with a brief discussion about the implications to macro and micro practice for CSEC youth.

CHAPTER FIVE

TERMINATION AND FOLLOW UP

Introduction

The study examined professionals' perception of readiness to provide services to CSEC youth. This chapter starts with a description of how the researcher terminated with the study site. Next, the chapter looks at how the study findings were communicated to the research site. Lastly, ongoing relationships and the dissemination plan will be discussed.

Termination of Study

At the end of each interview, in order to terminate, the participants were properly thanked for their willingness to participate in the study. The researcher also set up a time to communicate the findings of the study. The complete termination of the study will occur once the final report is submitted to the university.

Communication of Findings to Study Site and Study Participants

The findings of the study were communicated to participants individually in order to protect their confidentiality. Participants were allowed to ask any questions they had about the study. A copy of the findings was printed in pamphlet form and given to an administrator at the site along with recommendations for how to aid employees in preparation to provide

interventions and services to CSEC youth. The researcher also plans to use the results to advocate for the agency to provide the opportunity for employees to attend additional trainings through outside agencies, such as the Coalition Against Sexual Exploitation (C.A.S.E) and the San Bernardino County Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force.

Ongoing Relationship with Study Participants

The researcher will have an ongoing relationship with the study participants as the researcher is employed through the agency.

Dissemination Plan

The findings of the study were submitted to the University to fulfill requirements for a graduate studies research project. The final project will be displayed at a poster day where the methods, procedures, and outcomes will be communicated.

Summary

This section went over details about how the study was terminated. It also talked about how the findings were communicated to participants. The researcher discussed the ongoing relationship with participants. Lastly, the dissemination plan was discussed.

APPENDIX A
DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

Interview Questions

1. How long have you been employed at this agency?
2. How old are you?
3. What are your job duties and day to day experiences as an employee at the agency?
4. Tell me about your understanding of CSEC (Commercial Sexually Exploitation of Children)?
5. What do you think about this topic?
6. What are the risk factors of exploitation?
7. What are the effects of exploitation? Physical? Mental?
8. Does CSEC affect female clients? Male clients? Or Both?
9. Why do you think that is?
10. How many CSEC trainings have you attended in your professional career?
11. On a scale of 1 to 10, given the training you have, how prepared do you feel to provide services to this population of youth?
12. What interventions are effective for this population of youth?
13. Does the agency provide services tailored specifically to CSEC youth?
14. What are the boundaries to successfully meeting the needs of CSEC youth?
15. How could the agency assist you in better preparing to meet the needs of CSEC youth?

APPENDIX B
INFORMED CONSENT AND DEBRIEFING



College of Social and Behavioral Sciences
School of Social Work

INFORMED CONSENT

The study in which you are asked to participate is designed to examine professional's perceptions of their preparedness and readiness to provide services to youth that are identified survivors or are at risk for Commercial Sexual Exploitation, also known as CSEC. This study is being conducted by Raeven Mayes, an MSW student under the supervision of Dr. Gretchen Heidemann-Whitt, adjunct professor in the School of Social Work, California State University, San Bernardino. The study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board Social Work Sub-Committee, California State University, San Bernardino.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this study is to gather the perceptions of professionals employed at a residential care facility in regard to their readiness to provide services to CSEC youth.

DESCRIPTION: The participants will engage in an interview containing 10-15 questions on their knowledge of CSEC in general, the risk factors associated with CSEC, common interventions, and the participants' perception of personal readiness to provide services to this group of youth.

PARTICIPATION: Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You can refuse to participate in this study at any time without any consequences.

CONFIDENTIALITY OR ANONYMITY: Your responses will remain anonymous and data will be reported without any identifying information.

DURATION: It will take approximately 30-40 to complete the interview.

RISKS: There will be a minimal risk to the participants. However, due to the sensitive nature of the topic, some participants may feel discomfort answering the questions. A list of mental health services available in the community will be provided in the debriefing statement.

BENEFITS: There will not be any direct benefits to the participants. The participant's feedback and experiences will allow the agency to provide more efficient/helpful trainings based on employee's expressed needs.

CONTACT: If you have any questions about this study contact Dr. Gretchen Heidemann-Whitt at Gretchen.Heidemann@csusb.edu or 909-537-5501.

RESULTS: Results of the study can be obtained from the Pfau Library ScholarWorks (<http://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu>) at California State University, San Bernardino after December 2020.

909.537.5501 | 909.537.7029

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College of Social and Behavioral Sciences
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This is to certify that I am 18 years or older and I agree to participate in this study.

X

Date



College of Social and Behavioral Sciences
School of Social Work

Research Title: Professionals’ Perceptions of Readiness to Provide Services to Commercially and Sexually Exploited Youth

Debriefing Statement

This study you have just completed was designed to gather employee’s perceptions about how prepared they feel to provide services to youth that are identified as surviving or being at risk for commercial sexual exploitation. The interviews will be used to improve the annual CSEC training that is administered to employees. The feedback given to the researcher will be added to future CSEC trainings in order to make professionals at the agency feel more prepared and more supported to provide services and understand the risk factors, interventions, and other factors associated with CSEC. The research aims to better equip professionals to meet the need of CSEC youth.

Thank you for your participation and for not discussing the contents of the interview questions with other employees. If you have any questions about the study or study outcomes, please feel free to contact Raeven Mayes at 006120695@coyote.csusb.edu or Dr. Gretchen Heidemann-Whitt at Gretchen.Heidemann@csusb.edu or 909-537-5501.

Mental Health Agencies

Pacific Clinics (626) 357-3258 Monrovia, CA

Arcadia Mental Health Center (626) 471-6500 Monrovia, CA

909.537.5501 : 909.537.7029

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APPENDIX C
RECRUITMENT FLYER AND IRB APPROVAL

RESEARCH

This Masters study is looking for professionals who currently work in residential care facilities that service youth that are at-risk for or are identified survivors of Commercial Sexual Exploitation, also known as CSEC.

WE WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS RESEARCH

STUDY DETAILS

The aim of this study is to gather professionals' understanding of CSEC including but not limited to risk factors, effects on the youth, and interventions to aid in providing services to the youth. The study also aims to gather professionals' perception of their readiness to provide services to CSEC youth. The study will contribute to understanding what employees need in order to better service this population of youth. This study is being conducted by a Masters student at California State University, San Bernardino.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN?

If you are interested, a one-on-one interview will be conducted at a time and place convenient to you.

Interviews will be informal and semi-structured. They will last from 20-40 minutes. The researcher will take notes (with participant permission).

All identifying information will be kept confidential. Participation is voluntary and can be withdrawn at any time.

WHO TO CONTACT

If you are interested please contact, Raeven Mayes (Researcher), to express your interest, or to ask any questions:

Raeven Mayes

Email: mayesr@coyote.csusb.edu or Phone: 626-393-8677

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SAN BERNARDINO
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
Institutional Review Board Sub-Committee

Researcher(s): Raeven Mayes

Proposal Title: Professionals' Perceptions of Readiness to Provide Services CSEC

SW1956

Your proposal has been reviewed by the School of Social Work Sub-Committee of the Institutional Review Board. The decisions and advice of those faculty are given below.

Proposal is:

- Approved
- To be resubmitted with revisions listed below
- To be forwarded to the campus IRB for review

Revisions that must be made before proposal can be approved:

- Investigator signature missing
- Missing informed consent Debriefing statement
- Revisions needed in informed consent Debriefing
- Data collection instruments revision
- Agency approval letter missing
- CITI missing
- Revisions in design needed (specified below)



Committee Chair Signature

4/29/2019

Date

Distribution: White-Coordinator; Yellow-Supervisor; Pink-Student

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