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Foster Youth and Components in Pursuing Higher Education

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FOSTER YOUTH AND COMPONENTS IN
PURSUING HIGHER EDUCATION

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
Ashley Garcia
Magdalena Gonzalez

May 2021

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ABSTRACT

The foster youth population is at higher risk than the general population to not pursue or complete higher education. The literature review provided a stronger understanding of the different components that come with foster youth pursuing higher education and the different factors that play into preventing them from pursuing higher education. The purpose of this research study was to identify what services and/or supports have assisted foster youth in continuing to pursue higher education.

This study used a qualitative design and interviewed 10 former or current foster youth over the phone and through an online video call. The researchers provided interview questions asking about their experiences in pursuing higher education. This study revealed that former and current foster youth found family and school staff support as a common factor into helping them pursue higher education. This study also found that some participants felt a lack of support from social workers in pursuing higher education. The study indicated that EOPS and Guardians Scholars had positively supported them during the pursuit of their higher education.

Findings of the study recommend that social workers provide more information about college and other related resources and doing so at an earlier age like when they start participating in the Independent Living Program (ILP). This study also suggests a policy that could improve services for foster youth by mandating workshops that social workers must attend at least a few times a year

to gather information about college and other career paths that foster youth can benefit from.

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We would like to thank the foster youth that participated in this study. We greatly appreciate the time and the experiences that the foster youth provided for this study. We would like to thank the different people who assisted us with helping reach out to foster youth to participate in this research project. We would also like to thank the School of Social Work because of this research project requirement, we were able to provide important information to the body of literature regarding foster youth pursuing higher education.

DEDICATION

“I would like to thank the foster youth who took the time out of their day to help by sharing with us their experiences with different supports and/or services. I would like to thank my partner Maggie Gonzalez for being an awesome research project partner and being a support for me throughout this whole process. I could have not done this without you Maggie. I would also like to thank my husband and son because they are the reason I push myself and the reason I want to continue to grow in life. I would also like to thank my siblings for being supportive by continuing to push me so that I could reach my goal of becoming an MSW graduate.” – Ashley Garcia

“I would like to thank the foster youth who made the effort to help us learn from their experiences for this study. I would like to thank Ashley Garcia for being an amazing partner and supporting me over the last few years during our social work experiences. Thank you for helping me a better social worker every day. Thank you to our cohort and understanding professors while we learn how to adapt during this tough year. I would like to thank my family who has supported me during this time and encouraged my passion to help others through social work.” – Maggie Gonzalez

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Problem Statement

A foster child is defined as a youth in California under the age of 21 who has been put in out-of-home care due to neglect or abuse (Alternative Family Services, 2019). The foster youth population is at risk for not pursuing higher education and/or completing higher education and earning degrees (Day et al., 2011). Oftentimes this population faces different barriers that prevent them from achieving this goal of higher education. Some possible barriers include: lack of support from their friends and family members, unable to pay for higher education and basic needs, needing to work full-time, and parenting responsibilities (Dworsky & Courtney, 2010). This community is more likely to suffer from mental health issues as it was reported that 54% of this community is being diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and major depression (as cited in Geenen, Powers & Philips, 2015).

Practice Context

Compared to the general population, research has found that foster youth have lower rates of graduating from high school and even lower rates of enrolling and graduating from a higher education institution (Day et al., 2011). One study found that despite participation in extended foster care, many youth did not earn a degree or successfully graduated from a higher education institution (Dworsky & Courtney, 2010). In another study, 596 former foster youth participated and

were of the ages between 25-27 years old, found that the median annual income for this population was \$18,000 yearly, which is much lower when compared to the general population (as cited in Geenen, Powers & Philips, 2015). Research also found that incarceration rates of former foster youth were ten times higher compared to the general population (as cited in Geenen, Powers & Philips, 2015). A task force was able to determine that 18 months after foster youth exited dependency, 40% to 50% experienced homelessness, high rates of unemployment, and poverty level yearly income (Bruster & Coccoma, 2013). The factors previously discussed had made it evident that there is a need in the foster youth community. Focusing on foster youth pursuing higher education is an important component to promote job stability, and reduce experience of homelessness or incarceration (Leone & Weinberg, 2010). For these different reasons, counties have implemented the Independent Living Program in order to help address the needs of foster youth. Authors Geiger and Beltran (2017) noted, independent living skills are important such as; homemaking, financial management, obtaining housing, employment, and focusing on education. Geiger and Beltran (2017) suggest that foster youth need exposure to higher education settings and engage in higher education prior to aging out of foster care.

Policy Context

Though foster youth desire to pursue higher education, many of them are unable to fulfill that desire (Dworsky & Courtney, 2010). Foster youth age out of

the foster care system with a lack of financial help and family support (Tobolowsky et al., 2019). Bruster and Coccoma (2013) were able to reveal that the financial burden was a prominent factor in hindering the success of foster youth. In 2017 alone, 19,954 foster youth aged out of the foster care system (Tobolowsky et al., 2019). The foster youth community has a great number of members and this reveals the need to help this community succeed. In order to help these youth, there are different grants and programs that are meant to help this population in pursuing higher education. Some services and financial support that are available include, the Chaffe Educational and Training Voucher, financial aid, on campus-services, and the Guardian Scholars program (Tobolowsky et al., 2019). The John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence (CFCIP) implements funding to the states to help address the challenges that this population faces (Bruster & Coccoma, 2013). The CFCIP provides different resources such as educational and mentoring programs that are to assist foster youth. Research found that mentoring programs implemented through CFCIP were a prominent factor in the importance of success for the foster youth community (Bruster & Coccoma, 2013). Despite the services and support that are being provided, the numbers of graduating foster youth show that it is still not enough (Tobolowsky et al., 2019). Through the vigorous findings of several reviewed studies and reports, it was suggested that state, federal, and local funding need to be increased, while also expanding eligibility for more opportunities for scholarships and grants for the foster youth community (Geiger & Beltran, 2017).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this exploratory study is to examine the experiences of former foster youth students using support or services while pursuing higher education in the local cities of San Bernardino. This study will use qualitative interviews in order to listen to the student's participation and involvement with supports and services.

Child welfare agencies have acknowledged the disparities that impact the success rate in higher education for foster youth (Geiger et al., 2018). Child welfare agencies recognize the need for programs for foster youth and have implemented services. Services such as Extended Foster Care Program or AB 12 and Transitional Aged Youth (TAY) Programs (California Department of Social Services, n.d.). However, students continue to struggle with their new responsibilities, particularly those who have not been connected to community resources when campus services may not be available (Piel, 2018).

Foster care agencies and programs need to promote financial aid programs to offer potential remedies in order to reduce the inequities for this vulnerable population. Nonetheless, there continues to be a need to include additional state and federal policies intended to support former foster youth. These policies expand the educational pathway for foster youth; however, while students attempt to utilize services they have also created additional obstacles (Sarubbi et al., 2016).

Based on the approach of children's services, may create a dependency between the social worker and foster youth. Many youths struggle to attain individual successes due to the structure of out-of-home services and need assistance with advocacy for their educational needs (Piel, 2018). Restrictive policies that are intended to protect foster youth during their time in the foster care system may limit the youth's ability to be independent, which may include promoting post-secondary successes (Tobolowsky et al., 2019). Foster youth disclose their lack of relationships to supportive adults or mentors after leaving the foster care system, which impacts their ability to make lifelong connections outside of care (Piel, 2018).

Significance for Social Work Practice

Social workers are aware of the multiple adversities that foster youth will endure while in care, however, there continues to be a disproportionate success rate for former foster youth in higher education and obtaining bachelor's degrees (Geiger et al. 2018, Barnow, et al. 2013). Current policies that support this population have instead produced more obstacles for students to receive successful support (Sarubbi et al., 2016). Some improvements for foster youth attending higher education may include developing more supportive campus-based programs that can assist with developing emotional resources to help students recognize their own support systems and personal strengths throughout their education (Piel, 2018).

Students often need additional guidance to utilize and review financial resources to pay for their education and housing options. Financial resources and foster youth support services may need to respect there is a need for further education beyond applying for financial aid and basic university information. Acknowledging a student's feelings of being overwhelmed as a normal emotion can promote students to ask for help when needed to improve their educational success (Piel, 2018).

Within the generalist intervention process, the current study will review the implementation of the supports and/or services foster youth experience. Awareness of these services may promote accessible initiatives that are effective for this vulnerable population. Understanding these discrepancies will educate social workers to learn how to positively improve how they deliver services to youth who are transitioning into higher education. Information collected may also provide insight to campus-based services to be aware of the impacts of trauma on their foster youth students. Encouraging networking between these organizations will address the needs of foster youth students in order to promote academic success. The question the current study will address: "How would foster youth describe their experiences using supports and/ or services while pursuing higher education?"

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

For the purpose of this study, chapter two will include information regarding recent literature that addresses foster youth pursuing higher education. This chapter will address the different components of topics that are relevant to the purpose of this study. Chapter two will provide information on the different components that previous studies identified as contributing to the barriers that foster youth face, while also examining different services and supports that have been perceived as helpful for this population. It will focus on addressing gaps, limitations, and conflicting findings analyzed throughout the body of literature. This chapter will also discuss two theories guiding conceptualization pertaining to this study.

Barriers that Hinder Foster Youth

Foster youth experience multiple adversities in the course of their education. Throughout a student's time in foster care, they may experience placement changes. These changes often encompass neighborhood changes, school changes, and friendship changes. When a student moves within the system, they may find it difficult to maintain relationships and friendships (Piel, 2018). Foster youth have seen placement changes impact their enrollment record and behavior within the classroom which makes it difficult for them to concentrate (Piel, 2018).

The child welfare system continues to have the safety of the child the main priority while in care. While this is crucial, this group continues to see the negative impacts of not focusing on educational services. This community is less likely to have opportunities for tutoring, advanced classroom information, and extracurricular activities that benefit their educational development (Piel, 2018). In continuum, they have limited skills that can prepare them for engaging in conversations regarding higher education and independent living skills (Piel, 2018).

Students in care are more likely to be diagnosed with emotional and behavioral disorders, which impacts many aspects of their lives, particularly education (Piel, 2018). Students in foster care are more likely to be diagnosed with PTSD than the general population (as cited in Geenen, Powers & Philips, 2015). Prior to being in care, many students were exposed to traumatic events that influence their mental health (Piel, 2018). These experiences may guide their ability to be engaged in support services throughout higher education as mental health often affects educational success.

Salazar's 2012 study finds foster youth notice it is difficult to have enough financial aid and support to meet beyond their basic needs within higher education (as cited in Piel, 2018). Many foster youth students find financial aid or inability to pay for school to be the common reasons to not continue post-secondary schooling (Medinger et al., 2005). Housing and employment options

are also areas that can impact a student's educational success, this often influences their attention and focus in class (Jones, 2010).

The significant challenges for foster youth higher education also include the lack of social and emotional support and other family responsibilities. Higher education staff should be aware of the distinctive challenges that foster youth students experience. Many students benefit from having a support system during their transition in higher education, this also promotes their ability to advocate for themselves (Piel, 2018). Without this support, students may find typical struggles in higher education to be overwhelming.

Services and Supports

As a result of financial insecurities foster youth face, programs have been implemented in order to assist with financial instability. The Chafee Educational and Training Voucher (ETV), established in 2001, provides foster youth up to an additional \$5,000 per academic year once the application has been processed and approved (Tobolowsky et al., 2019). Despite the amount, there is a debate that the funds are not sufficient to meet the needs of foster youth (Tobolowsky et al., 2019). Colleges and Universities also provide financial assistance through the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) (Tobolowsky et al., 2019). Support services such as financial assistance, case management, and peer mentoring have been implemented on campuses but vary on the location of the institution (Tobolowsky et al., 2019).

There are other different programs that have been developed to try and assist this vulnerable population. There are different programs on different campuses throughout the United States, such as Renaissance Scholars and Guardian Scholars (Geiger, 2018; Tobolowsky, 2019). These programs help assist students with different services that include, guiding students throughout their college career, providing scholarships, priority registration, personal counseling, and academic counseling are just some services they provide with many more included (California State University San Bernardino, n.d.; Geiger, 2018). Though there are different services and support implemented on college campuses in order to help foster youth, there is a judgment that these services and supports are not enough because foster youth still graduate in low numbers compared to underrepresented populations (Tobolowsky, 2019). There is also a need for more financial assistance such as grants and scholarships that would be beneficial in assisting foster youth pursuing higher education (Geiger & Beltran, 2017). Despite there being services and supports. Foster youth share that there is a lack of knowledge with college staff understanding this population and the benefits and services that will support them, because of this confusion arises for both foster youth and college staff (Tobolowsky et al., 2019). Providing more information to foster youth and college staff about the benefits, services, and supports can help decrease disconnect and assist this population achieve their academic goals.

Methodological Limitation and Conflicting Findings

Research limitations may include a small sample size that is unable to generalize to the population. This may be due to snowballing and convenient sampling within the community. There is also a limited amount of programs within the local higher education agencies that have foster care in higher education (Geiger et al., 2018). Qualitative narratives are limited to experiences being true only to the participants interviewed and the information is not applicable to the population as a whole (Tobolowsky et al., 2019). Another limitation to methodology includes geographic locations having different services, which will provide different information regarding experiences (Tobolowsky et al., 2019). Within studies pertaining to foster youth in higher education, methodological limitations included reviewing students who were able to reunify with their families prior to proceeding to higher education (Cuddeback, 2004). These students can still be eligible for specific programs pertaining to foster youth, however, their experiences of reunification may alter their education.

Literature Gaps

Gaps in the literature include the implications of educational disabilities within students in care. One Chicago study reviewed the significant difference between those in and out of care diagnosed with a behavioral disorder or learning disability (Smithgall et al., 2004). It is imperative that further studies review if a student's learning disability diagnosis is considered chronic or based on the transition of out-of-home care (Smithgall et al., 2004). This gap may also

include the success of collaborating interventions with the Department of Children and Family Services and Child Protective efforts. Multiple programs have been implemented in order to prepare students, however, these services may not have partnerships with the local universities or colleges.

Theories Guiding Conceptualization

Foster youth find themselves in unfortunate situations such as experiencing traumatic events, being separated from family members, and entering the foster care system (Salazar et al., 2016). Throughout the difficulties that foster youth undergo, they still have the desire to pursue higher education and provide better opportunities for themselves (Dworsky & Courtney, 2010). Self-determination theory focuses on the belief that human beings have the characteristic to be generally motivated in overcoming barriers that they face, while also cautioning that this motivation for overcoming barriers, could be hindered by outside factors such as the individual's social environment (Salazar et al., 2016). Interventions such as the Fostering Higher Education (FHE) and Social Development Model (SDM) have been designed to address the unique challenges that foster youth encounter (Salazar et al., 2016). The interventions are frameworks that guide in working with foster youth by empowering their self-determination skills (Salazar et al., 2016). Teaching foster youth skills that can help them overcome challenges can be helpful in assisting them achieve their goals such as pursuing higher education.

Another guiding theory involved in the literature includes resilience. Though research has shown that the foster youth population is a group at higher risk of developmental difficulties, resilience can help overcome challenges this population faces (Hines et al., 2005). Being resilient includes being involved or exposed to severe adversity and positively adapting despite those experiences (Hines, 2005; Neal, 2017). Research also found that maltreated children were more likely to have difficulties with healthy attachment, self-development, and have a strained parent-child relationship (Hines et al., 2005). Authors Cicchetti & Rogosch (1997), Kaufman & Zigler (1989), Quinton, Rutter, & Liddle (1984) studies found that those who were resilient factors included and were able to overcome these developmental obstacles became great parents and had different characteristics that involved: healthy relationships with a trusted adult, social skills, a spouse who was supportive, high IQ, and therapy contributed to their developmental success (as cited in Hines et al., 2005). Resilience theory also provides a framework for a strength-based approach to help build skills in self-efficacy. Building on strengths can teach foster youth to use the assets they have as resources to assist them in facing future obstacles (Zimmerman, 2013). Guided by this research, focusing on the resilient aspects of foster youth could help with creating programs that can aid foster youth achieve their goals in earning a degree (Hines et al., 2005). Programs can encourage creating healthy relationships with adults to guide foster youth on their journey to pursue post-secondary education.

Summary

The purpose of this study is to identify supports and/or services that have been factors contributing to the success of foster youth who are pursuing higher education. In addition, the study will also be able to identify what supports and/or services that are not working well. As previously stated, along with the general population of youth, foster youth also have a desire of pursuing higher education. Foster youth understand that higher education can provide added and preferable opportunities for their futures (Dworsky & Courtney, 2010). While identifying barriers can describe reasons that withhold foster youth from succeeding, identifying factors that contribute to foster youth success can develop awareness of what is being used to help overcome barriers. The theories guiding conceptualization to this study can contribute knowledge (frameworks that can help guide) regarding successful interventions that can help foster youth in successfully pursuing higher education.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODS

Introduction

The material that will be presented in this chapter will focus on the methods that were used in order to find what supports and/or services have assisted foster youth in pursuing their higher educational goals. The sections that will be reviewed in this chapter includes: the study design, the sampling, the data collection and instruments, the procedure, the protection of human subjects, the data analysis, and a summary of this chapter.

Study Design

The purpose of this study is to explore the different types of supports and/or services that have been useful to utilize in helping foster youth pursue their higher educational goals. The study utilizes a qualitative design in collecting the data. For the purpose of this study, ideal data will be collected by individual interviews with foster youth who are currently pursuing higher education or have completed higher education. This includes conducting interviews with former or current foster youth utilizing over-the-phone interviews or video calls performed online. This study will consist of open-ended interview questions to allow the flexibility of answers from the participants and to ask clarifying questions. This aids in collecting as much information as possible regarding supports and/or services that have helped foster youth pursue their higher education.

The design's strengths will allow former and current foster youth pursuing higher education share their unique experiences and what has assisted them. This also allows the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of what has helped them throughout their higher educational career. Another strength of this study design allows researchers to explore what and how supports and/or services have helped these foster youth in overcoming barriers that could have prevented them from pursuing higher education

Limitations to this study design could be hindered by the current Coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19). This pandemic has moved support services from on-campus resources to online resources. Due to this pandemic, the information gathered can hinder responses because services may encounter difficulties helping students from an online basis versus helping students face-to-face. Another limitation is being able to identify these participants due to some participants not wanting to be confidential. Another limitation of researching foster youth alumni may include the researchers having limited access to interview former students who have little to no access to higher education support services contact information.

Sampling

For the purpose of this study, researchers will sample 8 to 12 participants or until saturation is reached. In this study, researchers will identify former foster youth through services provided on campus for this specific community.

Convenience and snowball sampling will be used by finding participants involved

in on-campus support services. Participants will be required to be 18 years and older. Participants must have experience with higher education to meet the criteria for this research study. In addition, the researchers will have a diverse representation by not limiting factors such as gender, culture, and ethnicities.

Data Collection and Instruments

This study will allow for the utilization of Zoom video calls or phone calls in order to conduct the interviews. The researchers will develop a total of five demographic questions and an additional seven questions for the interviews. Participants will be asked demographic questions and will consist of the following: age, ethnicity, gender, marital status, education level, years in higher education, current employment status, and the amount of time involved in the child welfare system. The researchers will obtain information on the barriers the participants have faced and which services have aided them in overcoming those barriers. The researchers will explore how support and/or services have impacted their education prior to enrolling in higher education. The participants will also be asked how often they utilize support and/or services.

Procedures

The researchers will recruit former foster youth who have participated in higher education from November 12, 2020 through February 12, 2021. The researchers will recruit using convenience, snowball sampling, and online databases. Participants will be recruited from higher education on-campus foster

youth services, peers, and will ask students to invite former foster youth peers to participate. Participants will be interviewed during daylight hours (7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.), Monday through Friday, from November through February 2021. Participants will be interviewed through Zoom or over-the-phone. Participants will be selected by and notified through email or phone. Participants will be provided an informed consent and will be informed that participation is completely voluntary. Participants will not have any repercussions if they decide to rescind their participation. The researchers will explain to the participants the nature of the study and the purpose of understanding the good, bad, and neutral experiences of former foster youth support and/or services. Each interview will last approximately 20 - 60 minutes. The participants will be given information on how to learn about the completed data collection.

Protection of Human Subjects

The researchers will ensure that the necessary measures are in effect to protect the identities of participants, feedback of the conducted interview, and results provided throughout the study. The researchers will protect all data collected by the participants throughout the complete study. In order to protect participant's confidentiality, the researchers will put consent form materials in secure and password-protected locations. Participants will be reminded of their voluntary participation and their ability to withdraw from the study at any time without repercussions. Participants will be asked to sign the informed consent or will be asked to provide verbal consent. Participants will be

informed of the IRB approval. The researchers will also explain the reasons of the researchers conducting the interview and the need for the data collected from the interview.

Participants will not be referred to by their real names in order to protect their identity and to confirm their confidentiality and anonymity. Due to the sensitive nature of child welfare experiences, participants will be informed they have the choice to not answer every question asked. During the termination of the research data collection, the researchers will destroy all paper or physical documents, and delete digital copies received throughout the study. The researchers will keep this responsibility until the end of 2023.

Data Analysis

This study will utilize thematic analysis in order to analyze the qualitative data that will be collected. The data will be collected through audio recordings, the interviews will be recorded with the consent of the participants. The researchers will have the words transcribed word for word in order to conduct the coding process, which will assist in identifying common themes. Before being able to identify themes, the researchers will cluster the codes into meaning units. The themes cannot be identified until there is meaning attached to the clusters. Each transcription will be coded using different colors in order to identify common themes between the different interviews that will take place. The analyzed data will focus on the interview with former or current foster youth who have or are currently pursuing higher education. In order to analyze the demographics data,

the researchers will use SPSS to review descriptive statistics. This will provide detail information regarding the frequency distribution, measure of central tendency to describe our sample population.

Summary

This chapter includes the methodological instruments that will be used to conduct the data collection of this study. This chapter includes the study design, sampling, data collections & instruments, procedures, data analysis, and the protection of human subjects. This research will utilize a qualitative methodology and use snowball sampling. The participants will have the interviews conducted over Zoom or over the phone. Verbal interviews allow the researcher and participants to ask clarifying questions throughout the interview. The instruments used will aid in understanding the experiences of former foster youth who had participated in higher education.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter will focus on presenting the findings that were obtained from interviews during the months of December 2020 to February 2021. Ten current and former foster youth that attend a community or university college were interviewed. The researchers gathered information about their experiences and what supports and/or services have helped them pursue higher education. This chapter will also review the participants' demographic characteristics. This chapter will also discuss common themes found between the participants.

Presentation of the Findings

Demographics

The study sample included ten current and former foster youth who completed the interview. Of this participants, there are eight females (80%) and 2 males (20%). In terms of ethnicity, 50% of the participants were Hispanic or Latinx, 30% were identified as two or more races (3 participants), 10%, White or Caucasian (1 participant) and 10%, African American (1 participant). The median age of participants was 21 years old. The youngest participant was 18 years old and the oldest was 25 years old. Two participants were 18 years of age, one participant was 19 years of age, two participants were 21 years of age, one participant was 22 years of age, three participants were 24 years of age, and one

participant was 25 years of age. Of the participants, 90% of the participants (9 participants) were former foster youth and 10% of the participants (1 participant) were currently in foster care. Of the participants interviewed, 8 participants (80%) had completed some college, 1 participant (10%) was a college graduate, and 1 participant (10%) was in graduate school.

Themes

Four themes emerged from the data set. These themes have been identified and are discussed in the following sections: family support, school staff support, support from services to help students in higher education, lack of support from social workers and recommendations to social workers.

Family Support

When asked what supports have been helpful to foster youth that contributed to them pursuing higher education, eight out of the ten participants reported that they had found family support beneficial while pursuing higher education. These participants reported that their family relatives played a role in their pursuing higher education and many were often motivated and encouraged by their relatives to pursue higher education.

One participant, an 18 year old female reported that her older sister was supportive with pursuing her higher education and that she was a good sister to her and was the one who motivated her to pursue higher education.

Well, I got pregnant my senior year of high school. So once I found that I was pregnant, I was kinda thinking like, you know, maybe I should hold off

on school or just not go completely, but, you know, with everything going on and it being online, my sister was like, it's more than doable. You have a support system. No, one's mad at you. And she kind of gave me that extra push to continue giving that thought of going to college (I1, personal communication, January 2021).

Another participant reported that her uncle and aunt were very supportive with encouraging her to pursue higher education and wanting a good future for her with opportunities. The participant described her aunt and uncle being a primary reason she was motivated into pursuing higher education.

My aunt and uncle, they're the ones that adopted me. They really pushed me to pursue my education. Because they, they didn't want to see me turn out like my parents and neither did I. So I used that as my motivation to help pursue college. I didn't want to but I didn't want to turn out like them either (I5, personal communication, January 2021).

A different participant discussed how her family relative motivated her to go to college and pursue a career. This participant felt her uncle was very supportive and felt he was helpful in her pursuing higher education

Throughout my college career, there was certain support and services that really helped me. The first one I would say was my uncle, he really pushed me to go to college, he was very supportive and got me a car and encouraged me that getting a career would help me in the long run (I10, personal communication, January 2021).

Similarly, there was another participant who felt family was a primary system that was supportive of them to pursue higher education. The participant reported that his family was helpful by letting him know that he should go to college for himself.

Um, and then also for my, my uncle, um, he also went to college and my sister too, and they both went to college and they both told me like, you know, I should also go for myself too, but yeah, I would say those are the primary support systems (I4, personal communication, January 2021).

Another participant discussed how her aunts were supportive in her pursuing higher education and that her aunts helped her a lot. This participant stated, “Yeah, so my aunts they like took us in, when we were placed in foster care. And they encouraged us to pursue higher education” (I3, personal communication, January 2021). Similarly, another participant described how their sibling helped motivate them to pursue higher education. This participant stated, “And for my sibling, she has helped me to just push and motivate me to try and to never give up” (I6, personal communication, January 2021).

School Staff Support

When asked what supports have been helpful to foster youth that contributed to them pursuing higher education, five out of the ten participants reported that they had a school staff that contributed to helping them in pursuing higher education. These participants reported that school staff played a role in

them pursuing higher education and many were often assisted by the school staff.

One participant discussed how their counselor at their high school would assist them with completing forms and sending their transcripts. The counselor also helped them with applications. The participant mentioned how the counselors provided overall good experiences and even contributed to their growth as a person.

In pursuing it, family, some counselors, but really and not to even be cliché but really there was a counselor through one of the foster youth programs at my high school that helped me in the process of applying to college in my senior year. It was explaining things and helping me complete forms, sending transcripts they had them ready, they helped me fill out some of the applications. With that specific program, I had relatively good experiences. They were very helpful with school and helping me as a person. I think they helped me grow (19, personal communication, 2021).

Another participant explained how their counselor encouraged them and let them know that they deserve to go to college. This counselor noticed the hard work this participant went through and was a supportive piece to this participant while pursuing higher education.

I would say the other one would be um, probably my counselors who, um, noticed how hard I strive to, um, receive all my credits. And they

encouraged me that, you know, I deserve to go to college because I worked so hard (I4, personal communication, January 2021).

A different participant reported how their professor was supportive to them by continuing to reach out and check in to see how the participant was doing. This professor provided this participant with their personal cell and would assist the participant when they needed help. This participant felt at times like giving up going to school because they were struggling with also being a new parent at the same time, and this professor let the student know that there were extra credit options and provided different ways the student could still succeed in their class.

Um, like with towards the end of the semester, I had kind of told my professor at the time, I was like, you know what? This is like, becoming too much, going through finals and, and I'm barely sleeping. And then she mean, she had like referred me to a therapist. She gave me her personal cell phone number. She was like on call. I would call her at like 11:00 PM when the baby was going to sleep. And she would still answer all my calls. She texted me, you know, every holiday she'd reached out to me and just been like, Hey, how are you? How's your family? Always asking for pictures of the little one. And she, like, she helped me more or less, I guess I could say like mentally, just because I felt like without her help, I wouldn't have, like, it was just a point where I feel like I just kind of gave

up and I didn't want to continue to be going to school, which was just way too much (I1, personal communication, January 2021).

And I kinda just told her, I don't think this is for me. I mean, just that one talk I removed having with her, was just like, it was a confidence boost, So mentally, I would say she helped me out a lot throughout the semester, especially towards the end (I1, personal communication, January 2021).

One participant shared how going through their experiences as a child was tough but at school, she had teachers that were helpful and connected her to resources that then helped her keep busy and pursue higher education. These teachers and professors contributed to this participant's success in continuing to pursue education in high school and higher education.

It was one of my high school teachers that let me know, I could get into dual enrollment at the local community college. That's when I was a high school student taking college classes. If not for that challenge I would have probably dropped out. I have ADHD and lack of motivation from school. I was getting very depressed. I was going through a lot emotionally and mentally and I had just been taken away from my mother. So it was a lot of emphasis from the teachers and professors that I've had that have helped stay and go to school (I7, personal communication, January 2021).

Similarly, like the other participants, another participant reported how her counselor was supportive and helped her in pursuing higher education. This participant explained how her counselor was very encouraging and helped her

throughout the process of doing her best in school. This counselor was first the participant's teacher and then became her counselor and continued to help her during the class she had with her and during their counseling sessions.

My counselor always encouraged me when I failed an exam and she talked me through it, and she told me that we don't give up. This semester is challenging, I have a lot of mental health issues, and I'd beat myself up for not getting better grades. My counselor was my teacher first and then she'd encourage me the whole way through and I kept on scoring higher. She helped me so much (18, personal communication, January 2021).

Higher Education Support Services

When participants were asked about which services were helpful in their higher education, majority of participants reported that EOP, EOPS, and Guardian Scholars were helpful. One participant stated, "I was in guardian scholars, the foster youth program at Crafton, I've been in EOPS since I was 18. I've had a few scholarships at Crafton, Chafee helped a lot and the school's student aid program. A job program that had an emphasis on school" (17, personal communication, January 2021). One participant, a 24-year-old Hispanic female in graduate school explained that higher educational services helped her in college,

When I got to community college EOPS, they have Guardians scholars that focus on helping former foster youth throughout higher education.

They were really helpful, although they didn't have guardian scholars until

my last year but they had counselors that they really helped me with anything they needed. They would go over classes that I needed and whatever major I wanted to pursue (I10, personal communication (I10, personal communication, January 2021).

She further explained, “My counselor helped me with transfer to CSUSB and their program EOP, which is similar to EOPS, that helps with former foster youth and current foster youth. For the most part I had good experiences.” The participant continued to explain, “they [EOPS] could help me with they helped me with counseling and book grants and different events with current and former youth, I got to meet other youth who went through foster youth.” (I10, personal interview, January 2021).

Some participants responded that the Chafee Grant was supportive for their higher education. One participant said, “I had a few scholarships at Crafton,” she continued, “Chafee [Grant] helped a lot and the school’s student aid program.” Multiple students spoke about the positive support from financial aid, “Financial aid helped financially, of course, and when I got the money when I needed it the most. Because I wasn’t able to work as much being a full-time student. Medical helped me by having insurance and having health coverage too, medical payments” (I6, personal communication, January 2021). One former foster youth student also spoke on the education for financials, “They [Work Study] helped me with financials, remain diligent in my student career and have motivation to continue to go to school. And work hard and people were able to

recognize that I was trying and working hard when it wasn't easy" (17, personal communication, January 2021).

For financial aid, I was to be getting paid to go to school. I didn't have to focus on having a job to have to pay for all the student expenses. I was getting paid as a student. It was more about being able to be motivated as a student. And luckily with the team that my school has, they want what's best for their students and were secured in our learning path (17, personal communication, January 2021).

Another participant included adult school programs, "I participated in [the] Summer Bridge Program in, it was actually a class, and that's what I did in the summer and help with professionals, emails, essays, and helped us get ready for college. My counselor was the instructor for that class. She was very helpful." (18, personal communication, January 2021). One former foster student stated,

I think it was called CYFS Child, youth, and family services. It was a great program. They offered tutoring and sometimes even counseling. When I was having a bad day or there was a slip in my progress reports.

Sometimes they would call me to talk about it. I could get myself together before going back to class. During college, phone calls still came. And even Care packages even came. I thought they would stop after high school and they were still supportive (19, personal communication, January 2021).

The participants were able to find support both financially and mentally while in higher education.

The school qualified me for the EOP and DSES, because I have mental health issues, and being a former foster youth, I got additional services like my books being paid for. I think it's helpful for all the trauma we've had to endure, we get benefits in the end. Because a lot of my friends turned to drugs, a lot of their parents were using drugs and that's why we were in the system. I'm three years clean and I do what I need to do to stay sober, like I go to meetings and I have a sponsor so yeah. I needed to take advantage of these opportunities. Not everybody gets to get clean, I'm very privileged. It helps with more support (I9, personal communication, January 2021).

Some students stated they did not receive financial aid, "In terms of financial assistance, it was lacking. I never received any assistance like that. In terms of my mental health, they were definitely present. I could call and get in contact that was helpful in high school and in college" (I9, personal communication, January 2021).

Lack of Support from Social Workers

Most foster youth participants in the study stated there was a lack of support from their social workers during higher education. Interviewees explained that they were not educated about the possible benefits of current or former foster youth in higher education. One participant stated, "No, I did not have a

social worker help in higher education in any way shape or form” (I9, personal interview, January 2021). Another former foster youth had similar experiences, they reported, “I don’t believe I really got help about or any information about the college... I asked her and she gave me information and I feel like that’s a lot of things you have to ask.” This former foster youth stated, “... she referred me to education liaison for the County office and that education liaison, um, she gave me a lot of information on how to explore a career path” (I4, personal interview, January 2021).

One student shared they did not feel supported by their social worker and was not supportive of their higher education journey. When asked if the social worker spoke about higher education or vocational or trade school, they reported they did not. The student reported,

Sort of, but not really. With all my social workers I never really got close with any of them and I had multiple ones. So I didn't have time to get close to any of them. But I know they were still trying to help and do their best.

One stuck in my mind, but I just think because we had that one the longest (I5, personal interview, January 2021).

One student stated that they did benefit from social work services. That participant described, “It’s a program they (social workers) have, it’s a group called Thrive, they teach us life skills that we may need to know (I7, personal interview, January 2021). They added, “I was already in college but they put an

emphasis on students and to kinda shaped the ideal career for me, which is social work” (17, personal interview, January 2021).

Recommendations to Future Social Workers

Many of the foster youth students expressed they wanted to share what they think social workers can work on. Former foster youth are able to critique and see areas of improvement for social workers. These participants explained there are a variety of things that social workers can refine while working with youth. One participant explained they spent a lot of time angry and mad at the system. Their experience included running away, dropping out of high school in the 10th grade, having and losing her baby at 15 years old.

Well I just wish social workers would like, protect the kids more. There's really bad foster homes and I've been to bad foster homes, I just wish they would try and protect the kids and be more involved more and not the foster parents. I know it's hard to get a hold of social workers or they call days later. They need to be more supportive and involved with the kids, you know kids get molested or abused in foster homes, and they need to see them more often than just once or twice a year. Kids need love, they don't get it from their parents. And some kids won't say anything, they're told by whoever is doing these that they'll get hurt or even killed. It's always good to get outside resources to get more for the child (18, personal communication, January 2021).

Another participant also stated,

Educating on the different opportunities they can have like trade school, letting them know the different options they have, I'm not sure how trading school works but if they talk about higher education they can tell them. They can tell them about the free books or academic counseling and how I'm doing and what I can do next and the social workers working with the kids in high school. The social worker can elaborate about that (I10, personal communication, January 2021).

Half of the participants expressed the importance of having decent communication and listening skills of the social workers as something to improve on. Some of the experiences of the former foster youth did not have consistent communication with their social worker.

I know social workers aren't supposed to get attached or anything but being more involved. Like act like you care even if you don't. Like just show them or make them think you care cause nobody or any of the social workers made me feel like they cared. They were just there to do their job. But I don't think, I think that [being] a social worker is an emotional job so put some emotion in it, you know (I5, personal interview, January 2021).

Similarly, another participant stated,

I see, I would say, um, I see a lot of like my peers, like foster youth say that they, they pretty much can't get a hold of, of their social worker and their social worker isn't listening to their needs. And I would say it's kind of true because, um, that, that did happen in a few instances. It would be

kind of troubling to get a hold of your social worker, you know, a lot. And um, I say probably just to be attentive to all your case, um, cases, and then also try to look out more for their needs. I would say often to my social workers that I wouldn't want to be like placed in a, in a problematic home where there's a lot of like troublesome people and sometimes they wouldn't listen and pretty much it would be a very hard adjustment for me and it would just make things very hard for me and hard for me to focus at school. So I feel like just listening to your case, your case. Yeah. Um, yeah, just listening and yes listening is the most important thing, and yeah (14, personal communication, January 2021).

Summary

This chapter presented the findings of the data collected from the former foster youth participants. The responses were obtained from individual qualitative interviews. The study explored the experiences of former foster youth and the support and services they participated in during higher education. The themes that were identified were family support, school staff support, lack of support from social workers, and the participant's recommendations to social workers. Some participants shared how they had different supports like family and school staff that encouraged them and motivated them to pursue higher education. Some participants also felt that certain services like EOPS, EOP, Guardian Scholars, Chafee, and financial aid were also resources that helped contribute to foster youth pursue their higher education. These participants also shared

recommendations that they felt would be useful for future social workers to know in regards to how they can help foster youth.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the discussion of the findings of the study of the former foster youth's perspective of their support and services in higher education. This section will further offer recommendations for social work practice, policies, and further research based on the former foster youth's experiences. This chapter provides a discussion on how the limitations of the research may have influenced the findings.

Discussion

The purpose of the study was to explore what support or services were helpful for former foster youth in their higher education. The study revealed that most former foster youth believed that social workers provided minimal support in their pursuing higher education. The lack of support from social workers was a significant finding for this study. This was inconsistent with previous literature by Geiger (2018) and Barnow et al. (2013) that explained that social workers knew that transitional aged foster youth had disparities that impacted their rate of success.

The study also found that most participants felt that EOPS and Guardians Scholars had positively supported them during their higher education. These programs also connected them to financial support and other on-campus

resources. This coincides with a student by Tobolowsky (2019) which found that the Guardians Scholars program and other on-campus services were meant to help students receive grants and provided financial support. In addition, the Guardian Scholars program provided additional support throughout the participants' college career. Geiger's (2018) research showed that these programs were effective in academic counseling, personal counseling, and scholarship opportunities.

The study indicated that out of the services available to them, financial support was most effective for students to pursue higher education. The financial resources have aided participants in beginning and completing their college education. This reflects Salazar's (2012) study on how financial aid and inability to pay increases the reason to not continue or complete schooling. Other participants in the study were able to explain that the Chafee Grant was helpful in paying for school supplies, living expenses, or other financial needs. This aid was reviewed in Tobolowsky's (2019) study where foster youth were able to receive the Chafee financial aid.

The study also found that family supports were one major factor in how participants overcame barriers while pursuing their higher education. This finding is consistent with Dworsky and Courtney's study (2010) finding that lack of support from friends and family is a barrier that prevents former foster youth from achieving their goal of completing higher education. Many participants in this study found that family support was beneficial while pursuing higher education as

a source of motivation and encouragement. This finding is consistent with Piel's study (2019) finding that support systems can help students recognize their personal strengths throughout their education.

Limitations of the Study

One of the limitations that was identified for this research study is the amount of participants represented. This research study only includes a sample size of 10 participants that were a mix of former and current foster youth who attended or are attending college. Thus, it is unclear that this data represents the whole foster youth population. This study focused on examining the experiences that former or current foster youth have with supports and/or services that have helped them pursue higher education. This research study was limited to solely focusing on former or current foster youth that are currently in higher education or have graduated. This population was limited to these participants also having to have been participating in services that are available to foster youth.

Another limitation to this study is that it did not include the perspectives of foster youth in higher education who were not participants of foster youth services. All participants were recruited from programs like Guardian scholars which is a program specifically made to serve foster youth. In addition, it should be noted that some participants in the study did not have social workers involved during their adolescent years and therefore did not have social worker involvement while pursuing higher education. Furthermore, limitation to this study was a lack of gender diversity. Female participants are overrepresented in the

study sample since out of 10 participants, 8 were female and 2 were male. This may limit the veracity and generalizability of the study findings.

Strengths

Strengths to this study included participants being asked open-ended questions. This allowed participants to be able to share as much or as little as they wanted to, while also avoiding leading answers and perceptions that the researchers might have had. Another strength is that this research study is qualitative which allowed participants to give detailed answers about their experiences with pursuing higher education. Furthermore, another strength identified was that there was a range of ages from the participants. Some participants were just beginning college while others were close to graduating or had already graduated. This allowed for a more diverse range of different experiences of former foster youth pursuing higher education.

Recommendations for Social Work Practice, Policy, and Research

This study gathered information from former and current foster youth experiences on what support and/or services have helped them pursue higher education. The findings of this study can recommend greater ideas that can improve social work practice with foster youth, encourage policy change, and this information can be applied to future research to improve assistance provided to the foster youth population that is seeking to pursue higher education.

Social Work Practice

This study focused on former and current foster youth and their experiences with supports and/or services that helped them while pursuing higher education. The study revealed that a few participants found their social worker to be very helpful because the social worker referred them to the Transitional Independent Living Program (TILP), which helped them pursue higher education. They said the workers were helpful with providing them the referrals that needed in order to get services. Another participant reported that it would be helpful to have social workers promote programs like TILP because it is a beneficial service for foster youth and social workers are not promoting it enough. Some participants recommended that social workers take more time out with foster youth to answer questions and to provide them information about resources that are available to them and what those services have to offer.

This research study found a pattern of several participants feeling that their social worker did not provide enough information and was not very supportive when it came to pursuing higher education. Social workers would help many more foster youths by providing more information about college and doing so at an earlier age like when they start participating in the Independent Living Program (ILP). This way, foster youth can start planning out and finding more information on pursuing higher education. Having social worker guidance can help foster youth by reducing homelessness, high rates of unemployment, and

decrease poverty level income (Bruster & Coccoma, 2013). This guidance can help alleviate confusion and the difficulties of navigating higher education.

Policy

Some participants in this study suggested that the TILP program should be a mandated information that social workers review and provide this service to foster youth. A policy requiring social workers to provide all their youth clients detailed information about the TILP service can be very beneficial to foster youth. A few participants in the study shared that the TILP service was very helpful because it provided them help by getting an apartment and getting monthly stipends. The participants shared that this program made it easier for them while they were pursuing higher education.

A policy that could improve services for foster youth can be done by mandating workshops that social workers must attend at least a few times a year to gather information about college and other career paths that foster youth can benefit from. By providing information to social workers, they can then provide and connect their foster youth clients to these services. Another policy that could be implemented in child welfare to assist foster youth is have surveys be done every year about what suggests and needs foster youth have. This way, the information can be gathered to see what most of the population is asking or lacking and what their needs are from their perspectives. Then the child welfare agency can find ways to help meet the needs of foster youth. Connecting foster youth to career paths and higher education before aging out of foster care can

help provide that exposure they need early on to guide them in pursuing higher education (Geiger & Beltran, 2017).

Research

Research shows that foster youth do aspire to pursue higher education (Dworsky & Courtney, 2010). In this study, foster youth expressed some of the services and supports that were helpful in them pursuing higher education. It would be beneficial to continue to do research regarding foster youth in higher education to see what services and supports are helpful and which are not. This can help find different ways to improve these supports and services so that they are meeting the needs of foster youth. Doing research by interviewing foster youth to find out what their perspectives are on what they need would be critical to helping this population increase them obtaining college degrees. This can also help with reducing homelessness and increasing income (Bruster & Coccoma, 2013).

Focusing research on social worker practice and the knowledge they have about services that are available to foster youth would also be critical to improving foster youth pursuing and completing higher education. This can be done by interviewing social workers to find out how much information they know about foster youth services and make recommendations on ways to improve information being provided. Social workers work closely with the foster youth population. Social workers having more knowledge about resources that are implemented to help foster youth can be a course of action to connect foster

youth to services. Findings of social workers recommendations on ways to help the foster youth population can contribute to literature with the aim that policies can be improved by understanding the disconnect that there is with foster youth not having high rates of graduating from higher education (Day et al., 2011).

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to conduct qualitative research in order to gather information regarding the experiences former and current foster youth have had with pursuing higher education. This study acknowledged several different limitations that were found such as, unequal gender diversity, not a whole representation of the foster youth population, and experiences were from foster youth who participated in foster youth services. Our findings suggest that it is essential for improving social work practice by providing different methods to have social workers be better informed on the resources there is for foster youth and having social workers connect foster youth to these services before exiting the foster care system. It would be critical to change policy to fit the needs of foster youth in order to help them pursue higher education and continue to implement research that can help contribute to increasing the number of foster youth pursuing and completing higher education.

APPENDIX A
FOSTER YOUTH INTERVIEW GUIDE

Demographic Questions

1. What is your current age? _____
 - Prefer not to say
2. What is your gender?
 - Male
 - Female
 - Non-binary/ Third gender
 - Prefer to self-describe: _____
 - Prefer not to say
3. Ethnicity
 - African American/ Black
 - Caucasian/ White
 - Hispanic/Latinx
 - Asian/ Pacific Islander/Filipino
 - Native American
 - Other _____
 - Prefer not to say
4. Are you a Current or Former Foster youth? _____
5. Education level:
 - GED
 - High School Diploma
 - Some college

- College degree
 - Another type of higher education (Trade or Vocational School)
 - Other: _____
-

Interview Questions

1. What supports have helped you in pursuing higher education?
 - a. How have these supports help you? Have you had any good experiences? Have you had any bad experiences? Have you had any neutral experiences?
2. What services have helped you in pursuing higher education?
 - b. How have these services helped you? Have you had any good experiences? Have you had any bad experiences? Have you had any neutral experiences?
3. How have these supports and/or services help you with overcoming barriers that hindered you while pursuing higher education?
4. How many years have you had these supports?
5. How many years did you participate in these services?
6. How did you hear about these services/supports?
7. What are some suggestions you have for the support and/or services you have received?

Developed by Ashley Garcia and Magdalena Gonzalez

APPENDIX B
INFORMED CONSENT

INFORMED CONSENT

The study in which you are asked to participate in is designed to explore experiences of former foster youth with support and/or services in higher education. The study is being conducted by Ashley Garcia and Magdalena Gonzalez, graduate students, under the supervision of Dr. Janet Chang, Professor in the School of Social Work at California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB). The study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board at CSUSB.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the study is to examine the experiences of former foster youth in higher education.

DESCRIPTION: Participants will be asked of a few questions on the foster youth support and/or services used during their higher education, what has and has not been helpful, and some demographics.

PARTICIPATION: Your participation in the study is totally voluntary. You can refuse to participate in the study or discontinue your participation at any time without consequences.

CONFIDENTIALITY: Your responses will remain confidential and data will be reported in group form only.

DURATION: Interviews will take 20-60 minutes to complete the survey.

RISKS: Although not anticipated, there may be some discomfort in answering some of the questions. You are not required to answer and can skip the question or end your participation.

BENEFITS: Each participant will be given a \$10.00 gift card for their participation. There will not be any other direct benefits to the participation. However, finding from the study will contribute to our knowledge in this area of research.

CONTACT: If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to contact Dr. Chang at (909) 537-5184.

RESULTS: Results of the study can be obtained from the Pfau Library ScholarWorks database (<http://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/>) at California State University, San Bernardino after July 2021.

I agree to have this interview be audio recorded: ____ YES ____ No

I understand that I must be 18 years of age or older to participate in your study, have read and understand the consent document and agree to participate in your study.

Place an X Mark here

Date

APPENDIX C
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL LETTER



November 30, 2020

CSUSB INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Administrative/Exempt Review Determination

Status: Determined Exempt

IRB-FY2021-96

Janet Chang Ashley Garcia, Magdalena Gonzalez
CSBS - Social Work
California State University, San Bernardino
5500 University Parkway
San Bernardino, California 92407

Dear Janet Chang Ashley Garcia, Magdalena Gonzalez:

Your application to use human subjects, titled "Foster Youth and Components in Pursuing Higher Education " has been reviewed and determined exempt by the Chair of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of CSU, San Bernardino. An exempt determination means your study had met the federal requirements for exempt status under 45 CFR 46.104. The CSUSB IRB has not evaluated your proposal for scientific merit, except to weigh the risk and benefits of the study to ensure the protection of human participants. Important Note: This approval notice does not replace any departmental or additional campus approvals which may be required including access to CSUSB campus facilities and affiliate campuses due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Visit the Office of Academic Research website for more information at <https://www.csusb.edu/academic-research>.

You are required to notify the IRB of the following as mandated by the Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP) federal regulations 45 CFR 46 and CSUSB IRB policy. The forms (modification, renewal, unanticipated/adverse event, study closure) are located in the Cayuse IRB System with instructions provided on the IRB Applications, Forms, and Submission webpage. Failure to notify the IRB of the following requirements may result in disciplinary action. The Cayuse IRB system will notify you when your protocol is due for renewal. Ensure you file your protocol renewal and continuing review form through the Cayuse IRB system to keep your protocol current and active unless you have completed your study.

If you have any questions regarding the IRB decision, please contact Michael Gillespie, the Research Compliance Officer. Mr. Michael Gillespie can be reached by phone at (909) 537-7588, by fax at (909) 537-7028, or by email at mgillesp@csusb.edu. Please include your application approval number IRB-FY2021-96 in all correspondence. Any complaints you receive from participants and/or others related to your research may be directed to Mr. Gillespie.

Best of luck with your research.

Sincerely,

Nicole Dabbs

Nicole Dabbs, Ph.D., IRB Chair
CSUSB Institutional Review Board

ND/MG

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ASSIGNED RESPONSIBILITIES PAGE

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