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Sexual Abuse of Children in Youth Serving Organizations: A Scoping Review
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2019

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An abstract of
A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the
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2022

Abstract

Sexual Abuse of Children in Youth Serving Organizations: A Scoping Review

By Audrey Sommer

This article examines the existing literature surrounding the organizational structures of youth serving organizations (YSOs) that have had cases of child sexual abuse (CSA). The author searched three major databases and the search yielded 11 articles for inclusion. Included articles were qualitatively synthesized and three major themes were found across studies. Themes included how organizational culture, organizational policy/procedures, and organization-based prevention contribute to ongoing CSA in YSOs. The author discusses analysis of themes and then provides recommendations for the public health field. Recommendations include additional research on the topic of CSA in YSOs, evidence-based CSA prevention guidelines for YSOs, and mandatory CSA policy implementation.

Keywords: Sexual Abuse, Child Sexual Abuse, Youth, Youth Serving Organization, Prevention

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Glossary of Terms

Child: An individual 18 years or younger.

Child Sexual Abuse: CSA refers to the involvement of a child (person less than 18 years old) in sexual activity that violates the laws or social taboos of society and that they: (a) do not fully comprehend, (b) do not consent to or is unable to give informed consent to, or (c) is not developmentally prepared for and cannot give consent to (US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2021).

Educator Sexual Misconduct: Child sexual abuse by K-12 educators (Wurtele, Mathews, & Kenny, 2018).

Prevention: Efforts to increase protective factors, while reducing or eliminating risk factors in an effort to keep child sexual abuse from happening (Kaufman *et al.,* 2016).

Situational Prevention: Preventive efforts focused on reducing child sexual abuse risks related to environmental factors (such as isolated classrooms), risky situations (such as one-to-one private sports coaching), and policies (such as where policies are non-existent or outdated).

Youth: An individual 18 years or younger.

Youth Serving Organization: Youth serving organizations (YSOs) are organizations, clubs, or facilities designed in part or whole to meet children's needs and wants related to social and development enhancement, education, physical and mental health, sports, recreation and leisure, the arts, religion, juvenile justice, and child welfare (Letourneau, E. J., Assini-Meytin, L.C., Kaufman, K. L., Mathews, B., & Palmer, D., 2020).

Acronyms

BSA: Boy Scouts of America

CDC: US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

CSA: Child Sexual Abuse

CSE: Child Sexual Exploitation

ESM: Educator Sexual Misconduct

LMIC: Low- and Middle-Income Country

SPA: Situational Prevention Approach

SPT: Situational Crime Prevention Theory

YSO: Youth Serving Organization

BACKGROUND

Childhood sexual abuse (CSA) is a significant public health issue that affects young people worldwide. As defined by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), CSA refers to the involvement of a child (person less than 18 years old) in sexual activity that violates the laws or social taboos of society and that they: (a) do not fully comprehend, (b) do not consent to or is unable to give informed consent to, or (c) is not developmentally prepared for and cannot give consent to (US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2021). One in four girls and one in thirteen boys experience child sexual abuse before they are over the age of 18 and 91% of such abuse is perpetrated by someone the child or child's family knows (US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2021).

Females are two to three times more likely to be sexually abused during childhood than males and about one in ten women have experienced child sexual abuse (Barth, Bermetz, Heim, Trelle, & Tonia, 2013). CSA can cause immediate and long-term effects to the health of a child who has been sexually abused. CSA not only increases the risk of mental health, behavioral health, and physical health disorders among survivors/victims but is also associated with fiscal costs to individuals, families, and society (Letourneau, E. J., Assini-Meytin, L.C., Kaufman, K. L., Mathews, B., & Palmer, D., 2020). Children who have been previously victimized, often have low self-esteem, live in single-parent homes, and lack strong relationships with parents and others (Wurtele, 2012).

Youth serving organizations (YSOs) are organizations, clubs, or facilities designed in part or whole to meet children's needs and wants related to social and development enhancement, education, physical and mental health, sports, recreation and leisure, the arts, religion, juvenile justice, and child welfare (Letourneau, E. J., Assini-Meytin, L.C., Kaufman, K.

L., Mathews, B., & Palmer, D., 2020). Some common examples of YSOs are schools, treatment facilities, residential centers, youth groups, faith centers, and recreational or sporting clubs (Wurtele, 2012). Millions of young people around the world participate in YSOs. For example, Boy Scouts of America (BSA) is composed of approximately 2.2 million youth members between the ages of 5 and 21 with approximately 800,000 volunteers throughout the United States (Boy Scouts of America, 2022). It is estimated that each year, 4 million youth, aged 6-18, are served by Boys and Girls Clubs (Boys and Girls Club, 2020). In 2017, 58% of youth, ages 6 to 17 years, participated in team sports or took sports lessons in the previous 12 months (US Department of Health and Human Services, 2019).

YSOs provide countless benefits for youth: children who participate in YSOs interact with other youth, organizational staff, and volunteers. YSOs play an important role in promoting youth well-being, connectedness, and resilience (US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2021). When measures are in place to protect children, YSOs are linked to several positive outcomes including increased self-efficacy, academic behavior and achievement, improved relationships with parents and peers, and reduced problem and risk-taking behaviors among children. (Letourneau, E. J., Assini-Meytin, L.C., Kaufman, K. L., Mathews, B., & Palmer, D., 2020).

While there are countless benefits to YSOs, CSA can occur if there are not measures in place to protect the children that these organizations are serving. YSOs foster close and caring relationships between youth and staff members (employees and volunteers), but this same closeness can provide opportunities for CSA to occur within organizations. (Wurtele, 2012). YSOs can be vulnerable to the perpetration of sexual abuse because they offer situational contexts that may be favorable to predatory behavior, and because so many children come into

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contact with nurturing adults in positions of trust within these organizations (Calkins, Fargo, Jeglic, & Terry, 2015). CSA within YSOs can be referred to as professional abuse, institutional CSA, or staff sexual misconduct of youth, all of which refer to the sexual abuse of children under the age of 18 by an authority figure in a YSO (Wurtele, 2012). A US survey from the years 2008, 2011, and 2014 estimated that overall, around 36,000 children were sexually abused in organizations during the time frame they examined with thousands more being uncovered in 2018 due to YSO coverups of CSA (Letourneau, E. J., Assini-Meytin, L.C., Kaufman, K. L., Mathews, B., & Palmer, D., 2020). Another survey estimates that one in ten American students will experience sexual misconduct by a school employee by the time they graduate from high school (Grant & Heinecke, 2019).
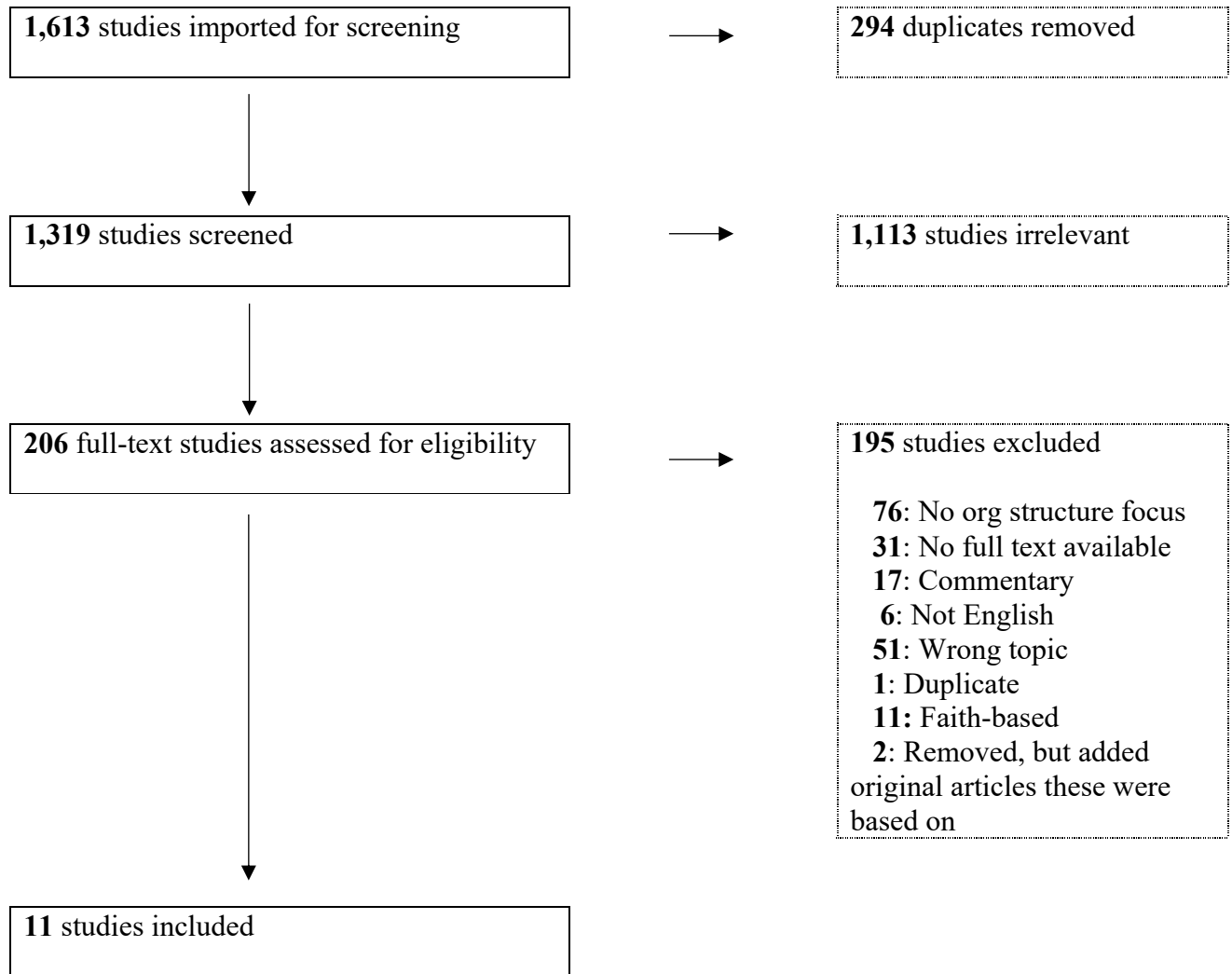
While CSA is preventable, there are limited evidence-based strategies for protecting children from CSA — particularly in YSOs. Little research has been done to examine the organizational culture, policies, and leadership in YSOs that allows continued CSA to occur. Additionally, there is few effective, evidence-based guidance for protecting children and youth from CSA and it is important that YSOs have up-to-date research-based policies and procedures to prevent child sexual abuse in their organizations (US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2021).

The purpose of this scoping review was to summarize the existing research on the YSOs relative to CSA including organizational policy, culture, and leadership; the organizational structures of YSOs that have had child sexual abuse scandals; and guide public health interventions which can interrupt CSA in YSOs.

METHODOLOGY

The scoping review was global in nature and focused on the organizational structures of youth serving organizations (YSOs) where endemic childhood sexual abuse (CSA) has occurred on a widespread. Scoping reviews provides a useful method for mapping areas of research in a quickly and allows for presentation of results in an accessible format for effective use by policy makers, practitioners and consumers (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005). This scoping review was designed using the Arksey and O'Malley (2005) methodological framework which includes the following steps: (1) identifying the research question; (2) identifying relevant studies; (3) study selection; (4) charting the data; (5) collating, summarizing, and reporting results; and (6) consultation. Additionally, the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) framework was employed to conduct the review and included the following components: (1) identification of articles; (2) screening of articles; (3) determining the eligibility of screened articles; and (4) extracting relevant information from articles included in review (Liberati et al., 2009).

FIGURE 1. PRISMA Diagram for CSA in YSOs

1,613 studies imported for screening	⟶	**294** duplicates removed

1,319 studies screened	⟶	**1,113** studies irrelevant

206 full-text studies assessed for eligibility	⟶	**195** studies excluded **76**: No org structure focus **31**: No full text available **17**: Commentary **6**: Not English **51**: Wrong topic **1**: Duplicate **11:** Faith-based **2**: Removed, but added original articles these were based on

11 studies included

In December 2021, a search was conducted using three databases: PubMed, PsychInfo, and Web of Science. A combination of concepts and keywords were searched in each database. Search concepts included any of the following terms: child abuse, sexual abuse, rape, fondle, molest, sexual child abuse, or child sexual abuse combined with the "AND" Boolean operator alongside youth-serving organization, youth serving organization, youth agency, OR youth association, youth club, youth group, youth organization, youth organisation, religious leader, coach, athletic trainer, sports doctor, teacher, volunteer, sports, gymnastics, coach, daycare, youth leader, foster parent, medical professional, Catholic Church, Boy Scouts of America, School, Athletic Team, Summer Camp, Juvenile Detention Center. Searches were limited to published articles, articles in press, or review in English. The search was delimited to peer-reviewed literature; gray literature, dissertations, and commentaries were excluded. The database searches resulted in the identification of 1,613 articles. After the removal of 294 duplicate records, 1,319 were included in the initial title and abstract screening process.

Table 1. Search Terms for CSA in YSOs Scoping Review

Database	Search terms
Pubmed	("Child Abuse, Sexual"[Mesh] OR rape[tw] OR fondl*[tw] OR molest*[tw] OR "sexual child abuse" [Text Word] or "child sexual abuse"[tw]) AND ("youth-serving organization"[Text Word] OR "youth serving organization"[Text Word] OR "youth agency"[Text Word] OR "youth association"[Text Word] OR "youth club"[Text Word] OR "youth group"[Text Word] OR "youth organization"[Text Word] OR "youth organisation"[Text Word] OR "religious leader"[Text Word] OR coach[Text Word] OR "athletic trainer"[Text Word] OR "sports doctor"[Text Word] OR teacher[Text Word] OR volunteer [Text Word] or sports [Text Word] OR gymnastics [Text Word] or coach [Text Word] or daycare [Text Word] OR "youth leader"[Text Word] OR "foster parent*"[Text Word] OR "medical professional"[Text Word] OR "Catholic Church"[Text Word] OR "Boy Scouts of America"[Text Word] OR School[Text Word] OR "Athletic Team"[Text Word] OR "Summer Camp"[Text Word] OR "Juvenile Detention Center"[Text Word] AND ("2010"[Date - Publication] : "2021"[Date - Publication]))
Web of Science	TS=("Child Sexual Abuse" OR rape OR fondl* OR molest* OR "sexual child abuse" OR "child sexual abuse") AND TS= ("youth-serving organization" OR "youth serving organization" OR "youth agency" OR "youth association" OR "youth club" OR "youth group" OR "youth organization" OR "youth organisation" OR "religious leader" OR coach OR "athletic trainer" OR "sports doctor" OR teacher OR volunteer OR sports OR youth gymnastics OR coach OR daycare OR "youth leader" OR "foster parent*" OR "medical professional" OR "Catholic Church" OR "Boy Scouts of America" OR School OR "Athletic Team" OR "Summer Camp" OR "Juvenile Detention Center")
PsychInfo	(DE "sexual abuse" OR TX ("sexual abuse" OR rape OR fondl*)) AND (TX ("youth-serving organization" OR "youth serving organization" OR "youth agency" OR "youth association" OR "youth club" OR "youth group" OR "youth organization" OR "religious leader" OR coach OR "athletic trainer" OR "sports doctor" OR "teacher OR volunteer OR sports OR "youth gymnastics" OR daycare OR "youth leader" OR "foster parent" OR "medical professional" OR "catholic church" OR "boy scouts of america" OR school or "athletic team" or "summer camp" or "juvenile detention center"))

Two researchers independently assessed all titles and abstracts for inclusion. The first and second authors were the primary reviewers while the third and fourth researchers provided additional support. The work was supervised by the senior author. Inclusion discordance and review criteria refinement were resolved by the first author following team discussions. Articles that were written in English, published between 2010 and 2022, and focused on YSO structure and CSA were included at this stage. Publications focused exclusively on CSA, CSA prevention programs for youth, and prevalence of CSA victims or survivors in YSOs were excluded at this stage. After this process, 206 articles were forwarded for full-text review.

The full text review followed the same process to determine eligibility for extraction. The head researcher consulted with their supervisor about the full text review to determine updated inclusion and exclusion criteria at this stage. The head researcher and supervisor discussed and came to a consensus about excluded articles which were: focused solely on YSO staff/volunteer prevention programs, included youth over the age of 18 (i.e., college students), included faith-based organizations. The decision to exclude faith-based organizations was grounded in the fact that faith-based organizations are their own entity and ultimately have a fundamentally different organizational structure than other YSOs. Additionally, two articles included in the full text screening were reports based off of a literature review for the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The original literature review was found in the references of the two reports and was included while the two reports were excluded. The first author was the only one who reviewed the full text articles. After this process, 11 articles were included.

RESULTS

  Using qualitative content synthesis, common themes across studies were identified –

organizational policy, prevention, and culture. The eleven articles that were examined were

published between 2011-2020. All eleven articles focused on CSA in high-income country

contexts including the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia. Refer to table 2 in

the appendix for more information about included articles.

TABLE 2. Eleven Articles on YSO Organizational Structures Contributing to CSA

Authors	Year of Publication	Context Location	Type of YSO	Methodological Approaches	Theory/Conceptual Framework
Boyle	2014	United States	Boy Scouts of America; K-12 Schools; Sport Organizations	Unspecified Content Analysis; Informed by authors experience	N/A
Erooga, Kaufman, Zatkin	2020	Australia, England, United States	All orgs which serve youth and have had a powerful perpetrator	Quantitative Content Analysis	Modus Operandi Theory
Grant, Heinecke	2019	United States	K-12 Schools	Multiple Case Study Design	N/A
Grant, Wilkerson, Henschel	2019	United States	K-12 Schools	Qualitative Policy Analysis	N/A
Lanning, Dietz	2014	United States	All orgs that serve youth	Unspecified Content Analysis; Informed by authors experience	N/A
Lundberg, Dangel	2019	United States	K-12 Schools	Problem Solving Methodology	
Palmer, Feldman	2017	United States, United Kingdom, Australia	All orgs that serve youth	Integrated Theoretical Analysis	Organizational Sociology and Management Theory (organization theory), Finkelhor's Four Preconditions Model
Parent, Demers	2011	Canada	Youth Sports Clubs	Multiple Instrumental Case Study Design	N/A
Wurtele	2012	United States	K-12 Schools; Residential Treatment and Correction Facilities; Clubs; Sports Leagues	Nontraditional Study Design: Utilizes an ecological perspective to create a conceptual prevention framework, which addresses	Ecological Model

				macrosystem and organizational factors	
Wurtele, Mathews, Kenny	2019	United States	K-12 Schools	Nontraditional Study Design: Not regularly employed in public health research	Situational Crime Prevention (SCP) Theory
Kaufman *et al.*	2016	United States, United Kingdom, Australia	Early Childhood education, care and schools; Healthcare; Out-of-Home Care; Sports	Systematic Literature Review	Finkelhor's Four Preconditions of Child Sexual Abuse Model, WHO Public Health Theory to Address Sexual Violence, Modus Operandi Theory, Situational Crime Prevention (SCP) Theory

Terminology

CSA within YSOs has different terminology and definitions, depending on who the perpetrator was and where the abuse took place. While CSA is the overarching term and mentioned in all the included articles, some of the articles are more specific in the type of CSA they referred too. Two articles referred to organizational CSA within K-12 school contexts as school employee sexual abuse and misconduct (Grant & Heinecke, 2019; Grant, Wilkerson & Henschel, 2019). Other organizational CSA terms regarding educators are educator sexual misconduct (ESM) and staff misconduct of youth. One article referred to CSA within institutions as institutional child sexual abuse (Kaufman *et al.,* 2016). Other terminology used to describe overall CSA in YSO's include professional abuse and extrafamilial child sexual abuse. Two articles referred to CSA perpetrators as acquaintance molesters (Boyle, 2014; Lanning & Dietz, 2014) and one article referred to CSA perpetrators as powerful perpetrators (Erooga, Kaufman & Zatkin, 2020). Although the terminology varies among papers, all terms refer to the sexual abuse of minors by an authority figure in an organization that serves youth (Wurtele, 2012).

Methodological Approaches

The articles used in the scoping review were particularly challenging to qualitatively synthesize because they were interdisciplinary in nature and their analytical approaches varied widely.

Three articles used an aspect of qualitative research which included either primary or secondary data source collection (N=3). Two of the three qualitative articles used multiple instrument case study designs by conducting semi structured interviews and collecting specified YSO written materials and documents. Parent and Demers (2011) performed a qualitative content analysis on both semi-structured interviews and written materials/documents while Grant

& Heinecke (2019) used analytic induction on triangulated semi structured interview data with documents. The final qualitative article by Grant, Wilkerson, and Henschel (2019), which did not include a multiple instrument case study design, conducted interviews with key stakeholders to analyze current CSA policies.

One article (N=1) used a systematic literature review approach, which yielded more than 400 relevant documents (Kaufman *et al.,* 2016). One article used a problem-solving methodology (N=1) to determine why CSA in schools occurs (Lundberg & Dangel, 2019). Erooga, Kaufman, and Zatkin (2020) used a quantitative content analysis methodology to classify powerful perpetrators "modus operandi" (N=1). Palmer & Feldman (2017) used an integrated theoretical analysis methodology to understand the paths through which organizational culture can influence CSA in YSOs (N=1). Two articles used non-traditional study designs not regularly employed in public health (N=2). Wurtele (2012) used an ecological perspective to create a conceptual prevention framework, which addresses macrosystem and organizational factors. Wurtele, Mathews and Kenny (2018) examined educator sexual misconduct (ESM) and propose standards of practice based on the Situational Crime Prevention (SCP) framework. Finally, two articles used an unspecified content analysis based on the author's extensive experiences in the field (N=2).

Five articles examined all types of organizations that serve youth (N=5), four articles only examined K-12 schools (N=4), one article only examined sport YSOs (N=1), and one article examined a mix of K-12 schools, sport, and BSA YSOs (N=1).

Theory/Conceptual Framework

Five articles were based upon or referred to a theory or conceptual framework (N=6). Kaufman *et al.,* (2016) referred to four different theories, three of which are used among three of

the articles with a theory/conceptual framework focus. Two articles used the Situational Crime Prevention (SCP) theory to create and propose standards of practice to prevent CSA in YSOs (Kaufman *et al.,* 2016; Wurtele, Mathews, & Kenny, 2018). Two articles use the modus operandi theory (Kaufman *et al.* 2016; Erooga, Kaufman, & Zatkin, 2020). Both articles examined offenders' patterns of modus operandi and created recommendations for the construction of prevention responses based on the understanding of perpetrator's modus operandi. Wurtele applied Bronfenbrenner's ecological model to institutional CSA and suggested different ways CSA can be prevented in YSOs at the individual, relationship, community, and macrosystem level (Wurtele, 2012). Two articles used Finkelhor's Four Preconditions model for understanding the conditions which CSA can occur (Kaufman *et al.,* 2016; Palmer & Feldman, 2017). Palmer and Felman (2017) applied Finkelhor's Four Preconditions model along the organizational sociology and management theory into a unified framework for analysis (while Kaufman *et al.,* 2016 examined the need for an understanding of Finkelhor's model to create CSA in YSO prevention strategies.

Emergent Themes

Common themes were present across the literature regarding how the organizational structures of YSOs contribute to CSA. Some themes were constant across all articles while other themes appeared only in some articles.

Organizational Culture

Almost all articles explicitly or implicitly examined how organizational culture can either prevent CSA or can support ongoing or the covering up of CSA. Wurtele explained how an organization's culture is reflected through its character, which is observed through staff-to-youth relations, language, dress, hiring processes, and the organization's decision-making process

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(Wurtele, 2012). Palmer and Feldman examined and described how YSOs with patriarchal, macho, sexualized, and rape culture norms can facilitate the perpetration of CSA, impede the detection of abuse, and undermine the response to abuse in YSOs (Palmer & Feldman, 2017).

It is not uncommon for YSOs with CSA cases, such as K-12 schools or sports organizations to have a culture or code of silence. A culture of silence is maintained when administrators silently move teachers who are accused of sexual abuse from school district to school district, organizational leaders convince parents to stay quiet about alleged abuse, and youth athletes are encouraged to sacrifice their own identifies for "the good of the team" (Wuertle, 2012; Kaufman *et al.,* 2016; Boyle, 2014). The Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse literature review found that YSO cultures that do not proactively promote best child welfare practices have a significant number of recent inquiries into institutional child sexual abuse in the UK (Kaufman *et al.,* 2016).

Multiple articles examined how organizations do not always act against abusers due to different kinds of fear. Some articles cited fear of legal action, liability for monetary damages, and loss of reputation as motivators for keeping silent (Lanning and Dietz, 2014; Boyle, 2014; Grant, Wilkerson, & Henchel, 2019). Kaufman *et al.,* cited fear of negative publicity as a motivator for underreporting, keeping silent, and not acting (Kaufman *et al.,* 2016).

Some articles show a need to shift from harmful organizational cultures, which promote CSA, to a culture of zero tolerance. A culture of zero tolerance can be achieved through agency-wide initiatives and a clear organizational declaration that all sexual interactions between staff members and youth are forbidden, wrong, and illegal (Wurtele, 2012; Wurtele, Mathews & Kenny, 2018; Erooga, Kaufman & Zatkin, 2020).

Organizational Policy

Most articles included in the scoping review examined how organizational policies, or the lack of, contribute to YSO CSA. Only three articles explicitly examined policy effectiveness and implementation among YSOs (Grant & Heinecke, 2019; Grant, Wilkerson, & Henschel, 2019; Parent & Demer, 2011) while other articles only mentioned the need for clear and comprehensive policies. Common policies mentioned included mandatory employee screenings, trainings, and reporting procedures (Erooga, Kaufan & Zatkin, 2020; Lanning & Dietz, 2014).

Organizational policies/procedures are important because they define the bandwidth of acceptable behavior, practices, and mechanisms for identifying and reporting inappropriate behavior that places children at risk in an organization (Lundberg & Dangel, 2018, Kaufman *et al.,* 2016). Parent and Demers (2011) found that Canadian sport federations rarely had codes of conduct, had no written rules or protocols relating to showers, changing rooms, travel, and sharing of hotel rooms. (Parent & Demer, 2011). Lack of, or poor policy, increases the ability of offenders to commit CSA in organizations (Kaufman *et al.,* 2016).

There seems to be a gap between policy implementation at different organizational levels, as policies may be interpreted differently by local actors at each of the multiple levels of the policy system (Grant & Heinecke, 2019). For example, although states are required to pass legislation prohibiting the aiding and abetting of sexual abuse in K-12 schools, there is no guarantee that states will be held accountable for implementation of the provision (Grant, Wilkerson, & Henschel, 2019). Parent and Demers (2011) found that most youth sport club procedures were produced by the provincial or Canadian sports federations and were not adopted by or did not apply to local member organizations (Parent & Demers, 2011). In another study, Grant and Heinecke conducted interviews with school employees in the State of Virginia and found that school employees lacked awareness of sexual misconduct policies, both state and

district Boards of Education lacked the means to evaluate policy effectiveness or enforce

accountability, and system challenges limited the effectiveness of policies (Grant & Heinecke,

2019). This gap between different organizational levels allows for CSA policy loopholes, lack of

or underreporting of CSA allegations and increased risk of organizational CSA.

While some YSOs have policies in place, there are loopholes which have allowed

ongoing CSA as well as cover ups. For example, in the Sandusky case at Penn State, the failure

of YSO management and staff to fully understand and implement their own organizations'

safeguarding policies and practices was apparent, given that many of these policies and practices

were formally required by their organization (Erooga, Kaufman, & Zatkin, 2020). Without clear

and firm procedures for handling CSA allegations, YSO staff devise their own responses to these

allegations (Boyle, 2014).

Organizational Prevention Strategies

Most articles included in the scoping review examined some aspect of YSO CSA

prevention. Four studies proposed conceptual prevention frameworks (Kaufman *et al.,* 2016;

Wurtele, Mathews, & Kenny, 2018; Lundberg & Dangel, 2019; Wurtele, 2012). Two studies

explained the need for YSOs to have CSA prevention strategies in place (Erooga, Kaufman, &

Zatkin, 2020; Lanning and Dietz, 2014). One study examined why CSA prevention strategies in

youth sports are not being utilized and can lead to ongoing CSA (Parent & Demers, 2011).

For most of the 20th century most volunteers/staff working in American YSOs got little or

no training about CSA and the trainings that did exist were inconsistent and left little impressions

on YSO personal (Boyle, 2014). Parent and Demers (2011) found that due to little, if any,

prevention strategies in youth sport federations in Canada, there was low pre-employment

screenings for staff and volunteers, staff and volunteers were not well trained or aware on the

topic of CSA, and there were unclear boundaries and lack of rules relating to behavior

management. The lack of certain prevention strategies such as training and supervision of staff,

child safety procedures, and management/supervision of YSO personal can increase the risk of

staff members sexually abusing children (Kaufman *et al.,* 2016; Lanning & Dietz, 2014).

Education is the cornerstone of prevention CSA and sexual boundary violations by YSO staff

members yet few YSOs provide comprehensive trainings (Wurtele, 2012). Most articles mention

the need for parents, children, and YSO staff to have access to CSA trainings and YSO protocols

regarding CSA.

Articles touching on prevention strategies fell along a prevention spectrum. Some articles

suggested "unifying rules/standards" that they feel like organizations should follow. Two articles

used a situational crime prevention perspective to create a roadmap to mitigate the risk of CSA

among youth (Kaufman *et al.,* 2016; Wurtele, Mathews, & Kenny, 2018). Kaufman *et al.* (2016)

developed the Situational Prevention Approach (SPA) which was used to identify and to develop

solutions to risk-related concerns in organizational settings. Wurtele, Mathews, and Kenny

(2018) used the SCP theory to propose seven standards of practice to help K-12 schools mitigate

the risk of CSA among students. Lundberg & Dangel (2019) examined four action items

developed by Praesidium, an abuse risk management service, which help YSOs successfully

implement CSA prevention program. Other articles create recommendations based on their

findings. Lanning and Dietz (2014) listed four recommendations: (1) screening; (2) supervising

volunteers and staff; (3) response to allegations; and (4) establishing prevention programs) to

prevent "nice guy" offenders from entering YSOs and sexually abusing children.

DISCUSSION

Eleven articles were synthesized on the organizational structures of YSOs that contribute to CSA. All articles were published in English and were focused on CSA in high-income country contexts including the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia. This finding highlights a need to conduct studies in low- and middle-income countries as YSOs exist across the globe and many low- and middle-income countries (LMIC) rely on YSOs to empower youth; moreover because of poverty and under development in the global South youth may be even more vulnerable to abuse in these settings. There is currently an inadequate representation of global CSA research in low- and middle-income countries although CSA is prevalent in high income countries and low- and middle-income countries (Veenema, Thornton, & Corley, 2015; United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, 2020). While there are currently few CSA studies in LMIC, the evidence shows that CSA prevalent in these countries is very much prevalent.

The methodological approaches and analyses ranged across studies. Studies employed a variety of methodological approaches including multiple case study designs, quantitative content analysis, policy analysis, unspecified content analysis, and nontraditional study designs. Nontraditional study designs incorporated study designs that are not regularly employed in the public health field. This made it difficult to compare data across articles and to synthesize findings and themes. Additionally, studies were interdisciplinary in nature. Articles ranged from public health, sociology, and policy disciplines. Although not all studies had traditional public health study design structures, they still have intrinsic value in the field of CSA as they use unique perspectives to understand how organizational structure contributes to CSA and use these

perspectives to create recommendations for CSA in YSO prevention (Wurtele, 2012; Wurtele, Mathews, & Kenny, 2018).

The terms referring to CSA in YSOs varied across papers. CSA was the overarching term and was mentioned in all papers, however, depending on the type of YSO and type of perpetrator, specific terms varied. The variability in terminology highlights the need for more unified language when it comes to CSA perpetration in YSOs. For example, institutional abuse and professional abuse are essentially the same thing however, the different terminology across studies adds unnecessary nuance. Increased conceptual clarity on CSA terminology is needed to ensure stronger and more consistent advocacy, policy, and laws globally (Greijer & Doek, 2016).

Most articles examined and analyzed multiple organizations that serve youth. This included K-12 schools, sports clubs, BSA, etc. Most articles which examined just one type of YSO examined K-12 schools. Only one article solely examined youth sport organizations. These findings suggest that there is a need for additional research on specific YSO organizational structures. While there are many similarities between the organizational structure of included YSOs, the mission, culture, and overall goals of specific YSOs may be different.

Three major themes across studies emerged. Organizational culture, policy, and prevention strategies can lead to the prevention of or tacit support for ongoing CSA in YSOs. Themes were consistent across studies and built off each other. If YSOs have cultures of zero tolerance, clear policies and procedures, and prevention strategies in place, it is less likely for CSA to occur in that organization. On the other hand, if YSOs have cultures of silence, unclear policies/procedures, and little, if any, prevention strategies in place, the likelihood of CSA to occur in the organization is much higher.

It is apparent that organizational cultures influence CSA in institutional contexts. Organizational cultures which instill CSA include cultures of silence, fear, unequal gender norms and more. These cultures can be produced by YSO leadership, norms, and character. For organizational change to occur, there is a need for YSOs to shift from cultures that are conductive of CSA to cultures of zero tolerance towards sexual abuse. There is a need for additional research to be conducted which examines how organizations can take steps towards this shift.

Studies show that clear and implementable policies and procedures should be in place to effectively prevent CSA in YSOs. Additionally, these policies and procedures must be measurable and evaluated to ensure that they are effective across organizational levels. Policies created at the highest organizational level (federal, provincial) are essentially ineffective if there is no means of measuring, holding lower-level organizations accountable for policy implementation. On another note, there is a need for organizations to evaluate their current policies/procedures to ensure there are no loopholes that may allow for the covering up or ongoing CSA. Additional research and policy analysis should be conducted to determine guidelines and best practices that YSOs can take to evaluate their current policies and procedures.

There is increasingly more research on the topic of CSA prevention strategies among YSOs. Three articles created roadmaps, based on theory, for YSOs to follow (Kaufman *et al.,* 2016; Wurtele, Mathews, & Kenny, 2018; Lundberg & Dangel, 2019). These articles laid out guidelines, standards of practice, which ensure proper measures are taken by YSOs to ensure that volunteers and staff are properly screened, trained, and educated on CSA policies/procedures.

Additional research should take place to measure the implementation of these standards of practice in YSOs to ensure that they are effective against preventing CSA.

This review highlights the importance of and absences in research focusing on CSA in YSOs across diverse methodologies, disciplines, and countries. Additional information about organizational risk factors, policy, prevention, and procedural effectiveness is necessary for effective policy and programmatic interventions to help prevent the ongoing of CSA in YSOs.

PUBLIC HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

There is minimal research regarding the organizational structures of YSOs and CSA. The articles included in this scoping review provide good first steps, however, many more steps must be taken to ensure the safety of children in YSOs. Based on the author's findings, there are a few implications for public health practice. These implications include additional CSA YSO research, evidence-based CSA prevention guidelines for YSOs, and mandatory CSA policy implementation.

The scoping review findings show a clear gap in CSA YSO research. Although there has been an increase in such research, there is a need for additional clear methodological approaches to fully understand how the organizational structures of YSOs contribute to the prevention of and appropriate response to CSA. These methodological approaches can include analysis of current CSA policies, qualitative methods to understand why CSA prevention strategies are not being utilized, and the evaluation of newly implemented organizational CSA guidelines. While some of the studies in the scoping review used theory to create organizational CSA guidelines/standards of practice, these guidelines had not been evaluated to determine if they prevented CSA in YSOs; similarly, the identification of organizational red flags and best practices would add value. As previously noted, all studies included in the scoping review were in the context of high-income countries. There is a clear need for research in low- and middle- income countries, as youth participate in YSOs across the globe. There is little to no representation of LMIC global CSA and YSO research and international statistics. Guidelines cannot be created if there is no research on the topic in these countries. Additionally, it is important that research and prevention strategies are applicable to all geographic locations of YSOs as this is not a problem that is experienced in only high-income countries.

It is clear that CSA in YSOs is an ongoing public health issue. Predatory behavior exists in YSOs, and such predatory behavior can be detrimental to the health of youths, however, YSOs can also be beneficial to youths' health, as they provide enrichment, empowerment, education, etc. There are few guidelines and recommendations on how YSOs can proceed to combat the organizational structures that have allowed CSA to happen. While many of the articles in the scoping review gave recommendations towards preventing CSA, they did not necessarily explain how an organization might implement such guidelines. Further, there is little information on how organizations can amend current policies/procedures if loopholes are found. CSA is preventable and there needs to be a clear shift from the reaction actions to CSA to prevention efforts. Increased CSA prevention efforts can be introduced to YSOs through additional research and examination of organizational practice.

Mandatory CSA policy and procedures should be implemented into YSOs. This study's findings show that although there are mandatory policies that lower-level organizations are required to enact, there is little, if any, means of evaluating whether organizations implement these policies/procedures into their organization despite the evidence that clear organizational policies and procedures can prevent CSA in YSO. There also seems to be an association between unclear organizational policies and the covering up of CSA. To prevent this from happening, there needs to be a system in place to ensure organizations are meeting policy requirements. Additional research is needed to determine best practices going forward.

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