

This essay will demonstrate an understanding of how certain members of society are at risk of exclusion by exploring what happens when children are in exploitative situations. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse and is a hidden crime and the essay will describe key terms and demographic characteristics of these children and demonstrate understanding of the barriers to equality and inclusion in society. Furthermore it will explore the multi-dimensional effects of social positioning within culture and sub-culture and explore the concept of 'risk' and 'resilience' within the context of children who are in exploitative situations and give consideration to how barriers to full engagement in society affect the likelihood of their integration into the community.

Child sexual exploitation has become a major issue within the UK, with 1 in 20 children being exposed to sexual abuse. Unfortunately, statistics show that the abuse is happening by someone they trust such as a family member (NSPCC, 2019). It is estimated that as many as 1 in 3 children will choose not to report this abuse, however this figure is more than likely underestimated due to underreporting. Barnardo's (2013) indicate that child sexual exploitation involves manipulation of children and young people in participating in sexual activities. This is seen as a form of sexual abuse which often involves exchange of money or materialistic items such as mobile phones a place to stay, drugs, alcohol and affection (Barnardos,2017). Many children and young people are extremely vulnerable and powerless, leading to them being easily groomed by their perpetrators. CSE victims are at risk and instances of exploitation can include violent sex acts, anal rape, oral sex, and being forced into drinking alcohol and to take drugs to sleep with other men (NHS, 2018). Although it does not always mean physical exploitation it can happen through the internet when young children are encouraged to send pictures of themselves with no clothes on or by doing sex acts. The children who can be affected mostly from CSE are as a result of inappropriate relationships.

This is a quote taken from a young girl who was exploited at 13, and interviewed about the experience at the age of 23.

"I was 13 and he treated me like a queen. He told me that he loved me; he made me depend on him. He made me believe that if he wanted to, he could

turn the sky black and he could make the sunshine or make it rain. He could do anything for me, and he made me believe it. I made the mistake of telling him that I'd been abused, you know, and that things were bad at home and stuff and he like reached into that and drew it out of me and like pulled on strings" (CSE victim, NSPCC, 2019)

According to NHS (no date) children who are at risk are vulnerable, have been abused previously, are in poverty, uneducated and neglected, which describes some of the characteristics of the victim who voiced what happened to her.

The NSPCC specified that the persons who exploit children or young people are manipulative people. They employ power over them through emotional blackmail or physical violence. Berelowitz *et al* (2012) indicated that it was hard to determine who exploits children and is difficult to regulate who commits CSE. This is because most data that has been recorded is unreliable or unfinished. The young people or children only know their abuser by appearance or their nickname. It is correspondingly tough for them to determine who they are as there are so many predators abusing them. Additionally, the setting of the crime can be changed from location to location, so the victims cannot remember the place. As well they are usually drugged and drinking alcohol, and very rarely do not remember who the predator or where they were. The identified predators are less than the actual number because not all crimes and predators have been reported (Berelowitz *et al*, 2012).

These are the things to spot and signs of a child that is being sexual exploited. Predators will often buy gifts and give them money, so if the child has for instance a new phone that is expensive when family and friends know they cannot afford the phone. Hiding the phone when receiving messages and secretly ringing someone. Some children will have a transformation in their attitude in school and at home, or even skipping school or not returning home. Going to sexual health clinic and having a transmitted infection. Noticing that they are friendly with older people and their appearance may have changed (Walker, Pillinger and Brown, 2018).

Children and young people who are exploited are at risk of many things such as, transmitted infections, trafficking and forced to drink alcohol and take drugs. The long-term impacts and effects of CSE are enormous, it can cause a huge impact on the young person or child's life.

For instance, some of the implications, include mental and physical mental health issues, friends and social relationships, staying in education, how they see others, problems with family relationships, struggling with their own relationships with their children (Hanson, 1990). The psychological problems from CSE can be depression, nightmares, anxiety, self-harm, eating disorders, drug or alcohol addiction, low self-esteem and flash backs. As well as the physiological effects of CSE other problems that victims are at risk of include sexually transmitted infections, being generally unwell, hair loss, pregnancy, problems with fertility when older and physical injuries. The social impact of CSE can leave the victim feeling socially isolated from friends and family which results in loneliness (Safe & Sound, 2019). They will feel that no one understands them and what they have been through. It can have a massive implication in a child or young person's life. They can exclude themselves from wanting to participate in everyday activities such as hobbies and interests. They will find it problematic to make friends, as they will avoid public areas that could be dangerous. All these risks can have a consequence on their economic situation (Hanson, 1990). To explain victims of CSE may fail to sustain being in mainstream school and will subsequently have problems financially, as they may be incapable of working, housing problems and so forth. CSE can affect the child or young person for the rest of their life by destroying their future (Safe & Sound, 2019).

The impact and devastation that crimes of CSE can have was undoubtedly highlighted by the reporting of a large number of victims in the north of England. This was a shocking case and placed criticism on the police and social services because victims were not believed and a group of men from a different cultural background committed the crimes (Halliday, 2018). In November 2010, it was reported that 1400 Children were victims of Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham between 1997 – 2013 involving Asian men. Five out of eight local men from the Asian community were convicted and jailed for underage sexual offences against girls. However, it became known that child sexual exploitation was happening more than anticipated by Asian men (Jay, 2013). A subsequent analysis by the National Crime Agency found that there were 1510 instances of CSE in Rotherham, eighty percent of which were committed by men from a Pakistan heritage (Halliday, 2018). A report was commissioned following the trial and lessons learnt were identified. In the report one of the victims called for people to be trained more in CSE and that they should have intervened early. The report

also identified that key information from school, social care, police and the youth service was not submitted to the statutory meetings (Jay, 2013).

It is worth noting that 'although policy and practice frameworks differ and indeed definitions have changed over time, with implications for practice, England and Wales operate with slightly different definitions, although they do share some commonalities' (Walker, Pillinger and Brown, 2018). It remains to be determined if these differences in practice will have an impact on the effectiveness of multi-agency working to address these crimes if they are taking place across the two countries. CSE is considered a hidden crime and arguably, it is very important that all the agencies use a common approach (Walker, Pillinger and Brown, 2018).

Another difficulty is that in law, there is no specific crime of child sexual exploitation. Offenders are often convicted for associated offences such as sexual activity with a child. Therefore, it is not possible to obtain figures from police statistics of sexual exploitation offences (Berelowitz *et al*, 2012). However it is known that over 2,400 children were victims of sexual exploitation in gangs and groups from August 2010 to October 2011 (Berelowitz *et al*, 2012).

Because of the difficulties, relating to the fact that there is no specific crime of CSE there has been an exploration of the common factors, which lead to children being victims of CSE. Fraser (1997) identified that there are a number of identified risks and protective factors, which have been broken down into three system levels, Broad Environmental Conditions, Family, School and Neighbouring conditions and Individual Psychological and Biological characteristics. Fraser (1997) indicated that there are a number of factors that facilitate assessing the risks in a given situation. Interventions based on the resilience perspective aim to minimise risks by strengthening protective factors. With regard to CSE resilience factors can contribute to the victims 'feeling stronger, more capable of recovering from abuse, and of preventing it from reoccurring' (Bovarnick, *et al*, 2007).

According to Bovarnick, *et al* (2007) Colman and Hagel identified that reducing risks was a core element of direct work with young people affected by CSE and, in practice, often went together with building resilience (Colman and Hagel in Bovarnick, *et al*, 2007). Practitioners have highlighted the importance of involving young people by understanding their needs and

listening to them. In Manchester, the Greater Manchester Phoenix CSE Service have developed a measurement tool to ensure that this happens and that the young people are consulted. The importance of involving young people in reducing risk is vital. Schools are now planning to educate about positive relationships and the importance of this is demonstrated by the fact that it plans to be part of the National Curriculum (Department of Education, 2017). This is a welcome move as young people, according to Bovarnick, *et al* (2017), may 'struggle to identify behaviours and relationships as abusive and may not see themselves at 'risk' or exploited (Bovarnick, *et al*, 2017).

This was further highlighted by the grooming and subsequent murder of a young girl in 2015 which showed that it was not just disadvantaged children who are sexually exploited. CSE can happen to any child even though they have a loving family, every child can be at risk. On the 30th of October A fifteen-year-old school girl called Kayleigh Heywood from North West Leicestershire, received a message on the social media website *Facebook*. Although she did not know who this person was she replied back. Within the 13 days Kayleigh was groomed by a 27 year old man Luke Harlow. Within the 13 days they exchanged 2,643 messages, and on 13th of November Kayleigh gave in to Luke's requests and stayed the night with him in his flat. Kayleigh told her mother that she would be staying at her friend's house. The next day Kayleigh sent her mum a message asking to stay another night but she never returned. Her body was later found in woods.

Subsequently since the incident of Kayleigh's death with the help of Kayleigh's family and Lancashire police they created a short video of her story of what happened to try and be a prevention resource to warn about online grooming (Safeguarding Children, 2017). The aim was to educate people in Lancashire and other children about online grooming and its consequences. The video was broadcasted to children in year seven and upwards around the schools. The video is called 'Kayleigh's Love Story', in the video it includes important information to help guide parents and 'Kayleigh's Tool Kit' has been developed to help people who are suffering from CSE and the signs of grooming (Safeguarding Children, 2017).

In relation to risk, studies have looked at resilience and Resiliency Theory which is a strengths focused approach to provide an understanding as to why some young people grow up healthy despite risk exposure. It concentrates on the positive contextual, social, and specific aspects from development of risk factors. These constructive keys are often denoted as promotive/

Protective factors which respond to risk factors. Fergus and Zimmerman (2005) specified that there are two forms of promotive factors and they are 'assets' and 'resources.' Inside each person they have positive factors that reside, for instance self-efficacy and self-esteem are defines as assets. The positive factors also indicated that it resides on the outside of the individual for example youth, mentors, and parental support who will give resources such as youth programs to offer people opportunities to learning and training skills. Having resilience provides a vital character in averting or reducing risk to revictimization and giving the person a greater chance of being able to recover. In promoting resilience these are the things that it is proposed that people need; reliable adult who will support them through life, having help with basic things and access to events that are fun, finding a way to deal with problem solving, having places to go to that they feel safe, provision to comprehend and manage feelings, discover what they are good at and praise them, and helping others, provision at home school and community and determinations for the future. Coleman and Hazel (2007) state that the unsurpassed and effective way is to have people there and having a relationship is the best resilience.

The legislation for safeguarding children in Wales is the Social Services and Well-being Act (2014) that began in 2016. The aims of this legislations was to promote operative work and success in protecting children's welfare by looking after the guidance, policy and procedure. The board will include, local authority, chief officer of police, local health board, NHS trust and services that will fall under the safeguarding board (NSPCC, 2018). Correspondingly the government has come up with a CSE initiative which was at published in 2015 with the aim of both supporting victims and spending a lot of money to reduce the risk of CSE. In their 2017 'Tackling CSE' report the government reveal that the situation is improving. The police have had a 24% increase in reported of CSE since 2013. The Amount of defendants prosecuted has improved by 19% since 2013 (Gov, 2017).

It is horrifying to know that the reported cases of CSE show that 1 in 20 children are sexually exploited. However it is even worse to find out that 1 in 3 chose not to report what is happening as it is someone close to them who is exploiting them. The internet has an impact on children and provides an easy access for people to contact children. Does social media such as Facebook need to be safer for young children? The answer must surely be yes when it is known what level of abuse children experience and the impact that this exploitation has

on children's future. Do children need to be educated more, even though schools and parents keep educating children? Or is the system letting these young girls and boys down by not listening, because children would be saved a lot sooner if people would listen to them. 'Kayleigh's Love Story' short video is really very sad but very important and because of its importance does it need to be shown in every school and even shown to younger children? Even though things are said to be improving it is surely still important that everything is done to help protect children.

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