"NO MATTER WHAT REHABILITATION OR TREATMENT YOU GET… THERE IS ALWAYS POSSIBILITY.": AN EXAMINATION OF THE RISKS AND DANGEROUSNESS POSED BY CHILD SEX OFFENDERS FROM THE PUBLIC'S PERSPECTIVE

Lauren STEVENS

Abstract

Child sexual victimisation is considered as one of the most detrimental and seemingly 'unforgiveable' crimes against humans, which often results in these offenders becoming socially distant and commonly dehumanised, stigmatised, shamed and socially excluded in society. These horrendous crimes provoke negative attitudes from the community that reinforce the segregation between rehabilitating offenders and the community. Yet, it is the community that is a key component to any successful reintegration or rehabilitation in the community setting. To fully understand the complexities of public perception and the implications it has for criminological research and community-based reintegration efforts; it is necessary to understand the community's perception of risks posed by these offenders. Also, to identify the characteristics that are associated with heightened perception of risk, suggest ways of bridging the gap between offender and the community to encourage successful re-integration, while identifying different lines of inquiry to reduce child sexual victimisation in the first instance. Reflecting upon a mixed methods approach to identify the public's perception of risk using both an online questionnaire and semi-structured interviews, this paper draws upon the public's preference to prevention tactics rather than intervention strategies within the community-setting. This paper calls for an alternative focus to crimes against children, its offenders and criminal justice responses to these atrocities. Prevention is better than intervention. We should invest in prevention methods similar to those in Germany and the Netherlands such as, self-referrals for individuals who acknowledge a problematic behaviour before it becomes a criminal offence.

Keywords:

Rehabilitation, Community Reintegration, Child Sexual Offenders, Public Perspective, Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods.

INTRODUCTION

Child sexual abuse (CSA), and by association paedophilia have been described as 'disturbing phenomena' (Olsen, Daggs, Ellevold & Rogers, 2007, p.232); although these concepts continue to remain largely misunderstood, particularly within the social context of modern society (Harrison, Manning & McCartan, 2010). The controversial phenomena of both paedophilia and CSA has evolved into a highly emotive socio-political issue since the 1970s; therefore, attracting an overwhelming amount of media attention, political debate and academic research originating from a variety of disciplines (Schofield, 2004).

Child sex offenders (CSOs) are subject to the effects of social distancing and commonly dehumanised, stigmatised, shamed and socially excluded (Rade, Desmarias & Mitchell, 2016); arguably a justifiable reaction considering the seriousness of these crimes on children and the significant impact they have on the families, the criminal justice system, the wider community, but also the offenders themselves (Cooper, Hetherington, Baistow, Pitts & Spriggs, 1995).

Community treatment and re-integration of CSOs provoke negative attitudes, public fear and complex challenges for the treatment process. CSOs are perceived as dangerous individuals, "…whose propensity to repeatedly commit crimes of a non-capital but otherwise serious nature puts the wellbeing of the rest of the community at risk" (Pratt, 2000, p.35). However, certain characteristics of a CSO could influence the public's opinion of risk and dangerousness. The rationale for this research is to understand this highly heterogeneous group, in order to improve child protection, reduce recidivism and encourage community integration to function together harmoniously.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF PUBLIC OPINION

Public opinion is argued to be a social construction with numerous institutions constituting the elements to its construction such as, the mass media, journalism, politicians and public relations – each with their own interests and agenda in shaping the concept of public opinion in their favour (Krippendorff, 2005). The following section is focused upon examining the social response to CSO cases, the media's influence and the theoretical explanation concerning the consequences of this negative social response. Also, it examines political influence has on perception and the specific characteristics or circumstances of a CSO that is said to influence its construction.

The Social Response and the Media

The 1990's through to the 21st Century saw the deaths of children such as, James Bulger (February 1993), Sarah Payne (July 2000), and Holly Wells & Jessica Chapman (August 2002). The negative and angry reactions from the public was ignited during the 'Named and Shamed' campaign launched by the News of the World newspaper, which exposed the identities of convicted CSOs (Silverman & Wilson, 2002, p.147), as the quote below demonstrates the essence of newspaper headlines at that time: "…these people, lowest of the low, are active and ongoing threat to your children. What are you going to do about it?"

The media reports caused repercussions across the UK over the following few months. For example, the Paul's Grove demonstration in Portsmouth inspired violence and caused an increased 'exaggeration' to the risks of 'stranger danger'. Despite the intentions of the public to

confront the perpetrators of these despicable crimes against children, it achieved the opposite because it encouraged CSOs to become 'invisible' and innocent people were attacked due to mistaken identity (Thompson & Williams, 2014). Burchfield & Mingus sums up effectively, "… for registered sex offenders looking for an opportunity to reintegrate into society, the message is clear: not in my backyard" (2014, p.110).

Sarah's law (UK) was aimed at 'outing' known CSOs by allowing the police to share information of where convicted CSOs lived (Thomas, 2005), which potentially damaged their re-integrative efforts (Prescott & Rockoff, 2008). Evidently, there could be psychological repercussions for the offender if the public continues to reject any effort made to reintegrate back into the community. CSOs are argued to feel a sense of stress, isolation, loss of relationships, and feelings of fear, shame, embarrassment, and hopelessness (Levenson & Cotter, 2005; Mercado, Alvarez & Levenson, 2008). The use of shame is resonated throughout the criminal justice system and society, although not all types of offenders respond to this 'institutionalised' shaming process as expected (Benson, Alarid, Burton, & Cullen, 2011; Braithwaite, 1989; Sherman, 1993). The Figure 1 below represents the differences between re-integrative and disintegrative shaming:
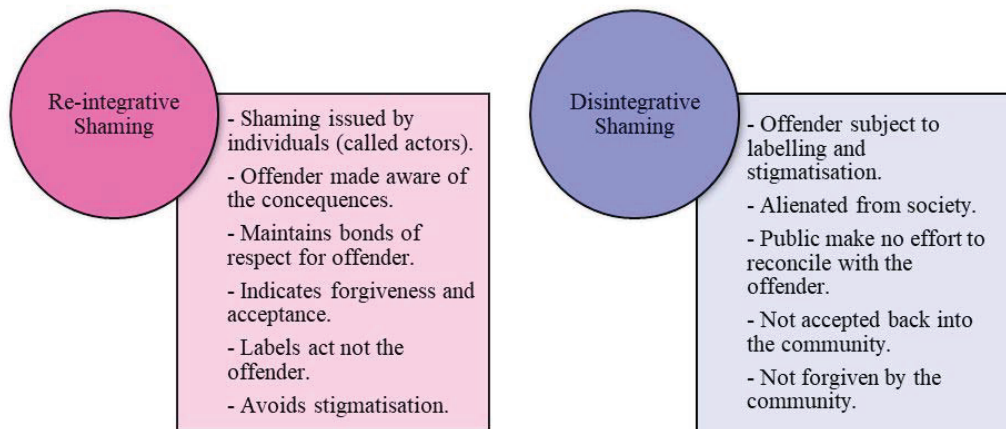

Re-integrative Shaming
- Shaming issued by individuals (called actors).
- Offender made aware of the concequences.
- Maintains bonds of respect for offender.
- Indicates forgiveness and acceptance.
- Labels act not the offender.
- Avoids stigmatisation.

Disintegrative Shaming
- Offender subject to labelling and stigmatisation.
- Alienated from society.
- Public make no effort to reconcile with the offender.
- Not accepted back into the community.
- Not forgiven by the community.

Figure 1:Adapted from Braithwaite, 1989

Stigmatic shaming is designed to express disapproval from others, onto the offender who is the target of criticism and made to feel guilty of their crimes (Dellaportas, 2014). However, it is functional for CSOs to utilise, and overcome the negative nature of stigmatisation. Strong family relationships are a functional equivalent in transforming external stigmatisation into a reintegrative and loving form of internal disapproval (Braithwaite and Drahos, 2002). However, Goffman (1963) and Struckoff (1971) argue stigmatisation of the offenders may become generalisable towards the family. The stigmatisation of the families may encourage an emotional divide between the family member and the offender, to reduce the feeling of degradation. Goffman (1963) refers to this phenomenon as 'courtesy stigma', whereby the stigmatisation of the family occurs with their association with an offender, this is particularly the case with CSOs.

Political Influence

It became apparent to the public and the Home Office during the 1990's of the system's failures, as the following quote demonstrates: "The system is haphazard and it is very easy for offenders to become invisible...there is no clear systems for tracking the individual and monitoring his movements." (Hughes, Parker & Gallagher, 1996, p.34).

The fear of a failing criminal justice system in its attempt to protect the public especially children from CSOs and their ability to monitor these 'dangerous' individuals provoked a 'moral panic' (Thomas, 2008). The theory of 'Moral Panic' is a social reaction to a phenomenon, which is usually unnecessarily exacerbated and shown to be disproportionate to the scale of the problem (Cohen, 2002; Young, 1971), causing an occasional dramatic political shift while satisfying the notion 'populist punitiveness'.

Populist punitiveness is "... the notion of politicians tapping into, and using for their own purposes, what they believe to be the publics' generally punitive stance" (Bottoms, 1995, p.40 as cited in Garland, 2001; Raynor & Vanstone, 2002). Populist punitiveness arises from an emotional response to crimes, which are considered rare but horrifying incidences and often attracts extensive media coverage (Roberts, Indermaur, Hough & Stalans, 2003). The primary purpose of populist punitiveness is for politicians and political parties to exploit public anxieties or fears, to appear 'tough on crime' to inevitably gain votes. However, populist punitiveness also has an honourable nature as it promotes a sense of moral agreement and social solidarity, regarding what is right and wrong through deterrence and incapacitation means of crime reduction (Matthews, 2005).

The sex offender register is arguably an example of populist punitiveness for monitoring them in the community once being released from prison. The Home Office Consultation Paper, 'Sentencing and supervision of sex offenders', was intended to improve the opportunity to provide treatment for sex offenders and to enhance public protection (Home Office, 1996, para. 1). The public, support groups, social services, the police and various other groups were supportive of a nationalised sex offender register, especially concerning child protection (Hughes, Parker & Gallagher, 1996; Thomas, 2004). However, the Home Office has previously disapproved the usage of a national register to record sex offenders (Thomas, 2008). Despite this, the Home Office supported the creation of a sex offender register under 'The Sex Offender Bill' 1996 because of the need to appear "tough on crime", as the 1997 general election was approaching (Thomas, 2011, p.62). As Parris (1997) published, "...there is no reason for this Bill. No reason at all. It is simply a piece of electioneering".

A significant feature of risk management concerning 'dangerous' offenders lies within the legislative position. There was an increased concern with risk management by probation, police and the wider criminal justice system (Kemshall, 2002). The 'Sexual Offences Act 2003' redefined sex offending to incorporate the notion of 'consensual sex' and the recognition of indirect sexual offending such as, online grooming (Ireland, Ireland & Birch, 2009). The 'Criminal Justice Act 2003' introduced the indeterminate sentence and the extended license, which were reserved for violent or sexual offenders to provide greater public protection and longer rehabilitation (Cobley, 2003; Ireland, Ireland & Birch, 2009; Hanvey, Philpot & Wilson, 2011).

Between 2010- 2015, the Coalition government had tightened the law on sex offenders by strengthening and extending security checks to the police, which created harsher restrictions

for removing an ex-offender from the register (Home Office & Brokenshire, 2012). However, remaining longer on the register can be damaging to offenders as it hinders the opportunities to re-integrate back into their communities, affect the treatment process, while increasing the risk of unemployment and alienation (Hanvey, Philpot & Wilson, 2011; Hudson, 2005). The Conservative Government from 2015- present has amended the Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015 by including a new type of determinate sentence. The amendment is titled the 'Special Custodial Sentence for Certain Offenders of Particular concern', which applies to CSOs. This may have damaging consequences to the punishment, treatment and risk management services imposed upon CSOs (Hanvey, Philpot & Wilson, 2011).

The current punishment imposed on CSOs is a prison sentence and/or a community rehabilitation order. Rehabilitation is the primary strategy towards all types of offenders, whereby the 'punishment' element should evolve around the reformative needs of the offender such as, anger management, substance abuse, or sexual offending treatment (Banks, 2004), while the function is the incapacitation of individuals to protect the public from future offending (Morris, 1994). However, the common misconception is that prison life is a 'holiday camp' which influences the public to support a tougher system, particularly for those whom are deemed to commit what can be considered a very serious 'crime against humans' – notably children. An opinion poll argues that 70% want a harsher prison system, while 60% believed that rehabilitative efforts are in vain because it is a method of 'making excuses' for an offender's crime (Doyle, 2011). In contrast, Gendreau (1999) argue there is a misleading picture of crime and the public is a strong advocate for rehabilitation of offenders in prison.

The 'Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000' and the 'Criminal Justice Act 2003' had influenced a statutory duty for the prison services, probation service and the police, to assess and manage the risks posed by violent or sexual offenders in the community setting (Craissati, 2004; Hudson, Taylor & Henley, 2015). The criminal justice system is partly controlled by the 'public protection agenda', which focuses on multi-agency co-operation, to formulate co-ordinated risk management plans (Power, 2003).

Personal Factors

Alongside the media and political influences, there are also other personal factors that could aid the construction of public opinion. An individual's age could be an influential factor because it can determine the level of punitiveness one has. It is argued older people hold more punitive views than younger people towards crime and punishment (Cullen, Clark, Cullen & Mathers, 1986; Hale, 1996). Also, adaptability of opinion is usually only common among higher educated individuals. As Hough & Park (2002) argues the more educated an individual is, the more likely they are to be less punitive towards crime and offenders. They are also inclined to adapt their views when considering new information, in comparison to less educated individuals. In terms of holding less punitive views and even offering support to CSOs through their rehabilitation, gender can be a contributing factor as to the degree of support. It is argued that females are more likely to be sexually victimised in comparison to males (Richards, 2011). However, Ferguson & Ireland (2006) argues that it is women who hold more supportive attitudes towards sex offenders than men, despite the victimisation statistics.

It is clear in previous literature that the public's perception of crime and criminality is complex and has implications on criminological research and community-based reintegration efforts. It

is necessary to understand the community's perception of risks posed by these offenders, identify the characteristics that are associated with heightened perception of risk, suggest ways of encouraging successful reintegration techniques between the offender and the community. Therefore, the aims of this research were to:

ɪ.   Identify the public's perception of risk and dangerousness posed by a child sex offender;

ɪɪ.   To identify what aspects of the public's perception regarding risk and dangerousness posed by child sex offenders is dependent upon the offender's personal characteristics and circumstances;

ɪɪɪ.   To identify potential approaches on how to 'bridge the gap' between the offender and the community during the re-integrative stages.

METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

The research design was centred around ensuring the research questions took precedence over the selected paradigm and associated research methods – thus allowing knowledge to emerge by adapting the research foundations around the environment that is subject to enquiry (Venkatesh, Brown & Bala, 2013). Research methods should always provide the best opportunity to answer the research questions of any given project, for both empirical and practical efficacy (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Trahan & Stewart, 2013). The author's philosophical and epistemological standpoint derives from pragmatism whereby the aim to achieve 'meaning and truth' is sought, through the combination of abductive reasoning that moves between inductive and deductive methods (Venkatesh, Brown & Bala, 2013, p.37). Therefore, it seemed most appropriate to implement a mixed methods methodology, specifically an explanatory sequential mixed methods research design. The rationale for choosing this specific approach was to effectively provide a general understanding of the research problem (quantitative phase); whilst explaining those statistical findings through the exploration of participants' views in greater depth (Rossman & Wilson, 1985). The research consisted of two distinct phases: a quantitative followed by a qualitative phase (Creswell et al., 2003). The practical application of both phases of this research including, method, sampling, participants, platform and the authors rationales for the choices made are depicted in Table 1 below:

	Phase One (Quantitative)	Phase Two (Qualitative)
Method	Phase one was designed to address research aims 1 and 3. The purpose for having an online questionnaire was to generalise the public's perception, attitudes and beliefs about the levels of risk and dangerousness child sex offenders pose. The online questionnaire contained vignettes as a method to measure the participant's idea of risk and dangerousness, dependent upon different hypothetical situations of an offender (Schoenberg & Ravdal, 2000) – followed by a series of likert scale and demographic questions. The three vignettes comprised of a specific type of CSO, within different contexts of risk management and community integration[1]. A description of the offender and victim's characteristics were included prior to the introduction of the scenarios, based upon literature-informed characteristics.	Phase two was designed to address research aims 2 and 3, by exploring the rationale for the participants' perceptions, beliefs and attitudes using semi-structured interviews. The interviews were aimed to achieve a determination of why certain characteristics of a child sex offender influences public perception on levels of risk and dangerousness. Each interview lasted approximately 30 minutes in length at a mutually agreed locations between the researcher and the interview participant. The interviews were recorded using a Dictaphone (voice recorder) throughout their durations, with all participants' consent.
Participants/ Sampling	The questionnaire was created on the Bristol Online Survey program and was made available for a period of 30 days and successfully gained 143 responses for analysis. The primary method of sampling was initially opportunity/ convenience sampling because it allowed easy access to participants online (David & Sutton, 2004). However, the use of social media had evolved the sampling to snowball sampling (Bhutta, 2012).	The semi-structured interview sample included twelve participants. The author attempted to minimise the biased sample of the questionnaire by selecting the volunteers which were anticipated to belong to different groups, in accordance to the demographic of the participants. Bernard (2012) argued that the number of interviews needed in qualitative research is as many as it takes to reach data saturation, which is difficult to quantify. The rationale for choosing this sample size is from suggestions that twelve interviews reaches approximately 92% saturation (Guest, Bunce & Johnson, 2006; Morgan, Fischhoff, Bostrom and Atman, 2002).
Platform	Facebook	'Face-to-face'

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[1]   Three vignettes were created for the online questionnaire and depicted 'Mark' (hypothetical CSO) in three different scenarios for the participants to consider, see Appendix A.

Rationale	Upon examination of the survey administrations methods, it was determined that online surveys were the best option for this research project. Online surveys are more cost effective and a very accessible method of data collection (Couper & Miller, 2008).	Semi-structured interviews were chosen because it allows the participant to contextualise their views and opinions, simultaneously enabling the researcher to retain some control over the line of questioning (Creswell, 2003). 'Face-to-face interviews were implemented so the interviewer could assess the reactions to topics discussed in this highly-emotive subject area.
	Each vignette portrayed an offender as being male and approximately 30 years of age, which is considered to be two 'typical' characteristics of a first time CSO (Woodall, Dixey & South, 2013). The chosen offender was designed using Knight, Carter & Prentky's Massachusetts Treatment Centre Child Molester Typology 3 (MTC:CM3) classification system. This research implemented a low fixation and high socially competent offender (Knight, Carter & Prentky, 1989). The rationale for choosing a low fixation but high socially competent CSO is because it is not the stereotypical offender. According to (Bux, Duncan & Collings, 2016), CSOs are portrayed as evil, monstrous and not deemed to be 'normal', which exemplifies the public's fear. This research will portray a CSO in a 'normal' life, to test participant's perception of risk and dangerousness.	
	The online questionnaire was distributed on a social media platform to reduce the probability of a biased sample. As the population of social media users are increasing, the population also increases in diversity (De Vaus, 2014). Facebook was the chosen social media platform because it is the most popular social networking site, with a varied population of users (Helve, 2014).	

Table 1: Research Methods Application

QUALITY OF THE RESEARCH

The research had gained ethical approval prior to collecting the data and the author ensured all research practices were in accordance with the British Society of Criminology's Code of Ethics.[2] This study ensured only complete participant responses were analysed and all missing values were removed in order to increase internal validity. To ensure external validity of this research, the author compared the results of this study with other research that implemented similar methods.

DATA ANALYSIS

The questionnaire results (phase one) were analysed using IBM SPSS version 23. This intrinsic statistical software allows the cross-tabulation between the quantitative and qualitative data to successfully compare, contrast – thus enabling the successful triangulation in this research. All interviews (phase two) were transcribed verbatim and analysed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis provides a purely qualitative and detailed account of data (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and is conducted by extracting core themes within a text (Bryman, 2012). In addition, thematic analysis permits the researcher to combine analysis of codes and themes within their contexts (Loffe and Yardley, 2004). This method of analysis is both sufficient and credible for use in this research as it focuses on identifying and describing both implicit and explicit ideas within the data, recognisable by the themes identified as part of the coding process (Guest, 2012).

FINDINGS

Quantitative Results

Once the questionnaire data set had been imported and cleaned of all missing data and errors, a hypothesis for each question from the questionnaire has been formulated, and then rationalised the assumption based on previous literature. The statistical test(s) chosen to discuss the five hypotheses are summarised in a table, found in Appendix B. The table highlights the type of research question needed to test the hypotheses, the dependent variables tested, independent variables tested, the variable's level of measurement, whether parametric or non-parametric tested were utilised and finally the appropriate statistical test chosen.

1 There will be a consensus that Mark is more likely to commit further sexual offences in scenario C, in comparison with the other scenarios regardless of the demographic characteristics of participants.

2 The older the age range the more likely participants are to disagree with the level of supervision and expectations imposed upon Mark within each scenario.

3 The participants who identify as being a parent or guardian are likely to be more concerned if a child sex offender became their neighbour, in comparison to non-parents and non-guardians.

4 Female participants are less likely to continue to support a child sex offender in comparison to male participants, if the perpetrator was a member of their family.

5 Participants with an undergraduate degree or above are less likely to find having a child sex offender as a colleague problematic, in comparison to lower educational achievers.

Figure 2: Hypothesis formulated

This paper will only present three main findings found in the questionnaire data concerning hypotheses 1, 3, and 4, due to the space constraints of this article. Beginning with hypothesis 1, the general attitude of the participants is that 'Mark'[3] is most likely to commit further sexual offences in scenario C (containing the least amount of supervision), in comparison to scenarios A and B[4] (both containing higher levels of supervision). The independent-samples t-tests and one-way between-groups ANOVA tests show that the mean scores decline in reverse-alphabetical order of scenarios. It was concluded that all five demographic characteristics collected from participants unanimously agreed that scenario C carried the most risk of Mark reoffending, in comparison to scenarios A and B.

Secondly, independent-samples t-tests were conducted to compare the means of questions A3, B3 and C3 of both male and female participants. There is a significant difference in the scores for male (M=2.05, SD=1.05) and female (M=1.67, SD=0.877) conditions; t(141)=2.219, p=0.028 within scenario C. This result shows the significant difference between males (unlikely) and females (Not at all likely) responses to whether they would continue to support Mark as a family member. According to the results from scenario A and B, there is no significant difference between groups but all participants are 'unlikely' to support Mark, regardless of the amount of supervision he has. As relevant to the previous hypotheses, the mean scores of male and female responses gradually decline through each scenario in reverse alphabetical order. This would mean that the less supervision Mark has, the less likely both male and female participants would continue to support Mark as a member of their family.

Thirdly, independent-samples t-tests were conducted to compare the means of questions A1, B1 and C1 of both parents and non-parents. There was a significant difference in the scores for parent (M=3.22, SD=0.81) and non-parent (M=2.69, SD=0.728)

conditions; t(141)=4.089, p = 0.020 for scenario A. Whilst scenario B, there was another significant difference in the scores for parent (M=3.39, SD=0.72) and non-parent (M=3.02, SD=0.791) conditions; t(141)=2.83, p = 0.005. In scenario A, non-parents would be minimally concerned if Mark became their neighbour, in comparison to 'moderately concerned' parents despite scenario A having the highest level of supervision. In scenario B, parents still have a higher concern, while non-parents only just reach a 'moderately concerned' score. The t-test concerned with scenario C confirms no significant difference between the groups. However, this result supports the idea that both parents and no-parents perceive a similar level of 'dangerousness' if Mark became their neighbour with no supervision from the authorities.

Qualitative Results

The qualitative data was transcribed verbatim and thematically analysed. This section will present the two major themes, four subsidiary themes and their associated codes, as extracted from the twelve transcripts. The purpose of collecting interview data was to highlight factors that would eventually be identified as significant influences on their perception of risk and dangerousness, while providing a rationale for the participant's views in the questionnaire findings. The first major theme is displayed in Figure 3 below:
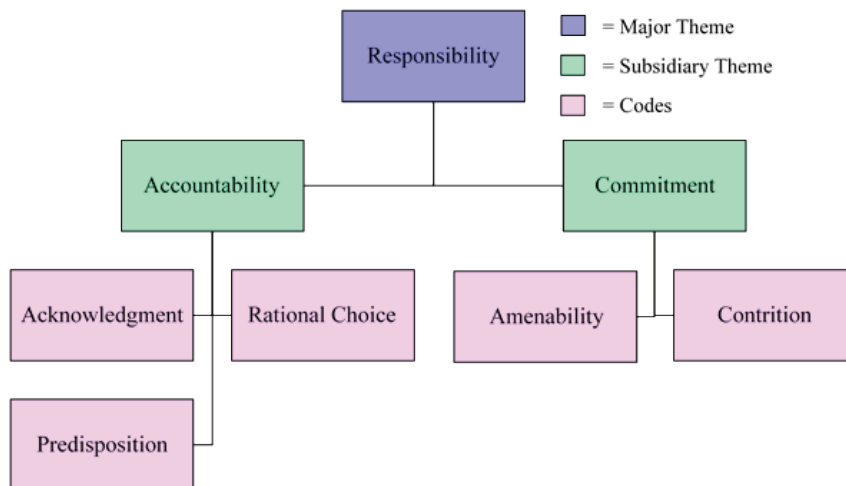

Figure 3: Major Theme - Responsibility

'Responsibility' was identified as the first major theme that refers to CSOs directly, in terms of the participant's expectations of an offender once an offence has taken place. Participants indicated a further two subordinate themes emerging, namely 'Accountability' and 'Commitment'. These themes represent the participants' expectations of a CSO. Once their expectations have been met, participants felt more comfortable providing support for the offender with their re-

habilitation and re-integrative efforts. 'Accountability' refers to the offender being accountable for their actions after an offence has taking place. The second subsidiary theme is 'Commitment', which refers to the CSO's level of dedication or willingness to change their offending behaviour. There were five recurrent notions (codes) of 'accountability' (Blue) and 'commitment' (Green) identified within the data, which is displayed in Figure 4 below:
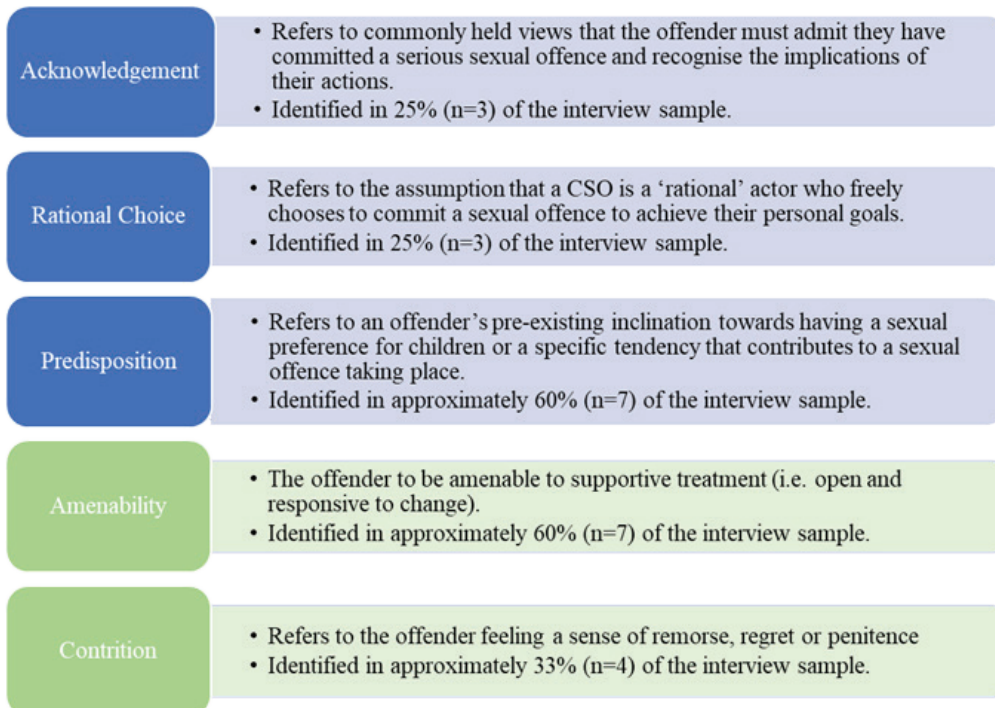
Acknowledgement	• Refers to commonly held views that the offender must admit they have committed a serious sexual offence and recognise the implications of their actions. • Identified in 25% (n=3) of the interview sample.
Rational Choice	• Refers to the assumption that a CSO is a 'rational' actor who freely chooses to commit a sexual offence to achieve their personal goals. • Identified in 25% (n=3) of the interview sample.
Predisposition	• Refers to an offender's pre-existing inclination towards having a sexual preference for children or a specific tendency that contributes to a sexual offence taking place. • Identified in approximately 60% (n=7) of the interview sample.
Amenability	• The offender to be amenable to supportive treatment (i.e. open and responsive to change). • Identified in approximately 60% (n=7) of the interview sample.
Contrition	• Refers to the offender feeling a sense of remorse, regret or penitence • Identified in approximately 33% (n=4) of the interview sample.

Figure 4: Codes associated with 'Responsibility'

All three codes of 'Accountability' displayed above are the three main determining factors which most influenced their perception concerning the culpability of an offender, in addition to how they perceive an offender should be held accountable after an offence has occurred. Some participants perceive the multitude of reasons for sexually abusing children actually derive from a predisposing condition, which entices a degree of sympathy and the subjects were therefore more inclined to offer support to the CSO. In comparison, the participants that were less inclined to offer positive support to the CSO also articulated that the offender's conscious ('rational') decision-making was the chief contributing factor to a sexual offence taking place. However, several participants found that 'acknowledgement' was a significant turning point in order for the CSO to admit accountability and ultimately take responsibility for their actions. Thus, as well as being functional to the recovery of victims, it was expected that this would enable a reduction the CSOs likelihood of recidivism.

Both codes under 'Commitment' are the two conditions that determine whether the participants would be willing to help the CSO through his rehabilitation and support long-term rein-

tegration. Many participants would provide support if they could see the offender display signs of remorse and made a conscious effort to amend their offending behaviour. Although, all participants stated that they would most likely withdraw support if the offender refused to change or continued committing sexual offences. 'Responsibility' was a compelling theme because it provided a level of positivity for a CSO to receive familial support with the aim of facilitating the rehabilitation process and the later possibility of reintegration. The characteristics of a CSO that influenced the interviewee's perception of the offender as a deserving recipient of support were based upon the visual display of remorse, a willingness to change, acknowledgement of their guilt and finally, to take responsibility for the causes of their offending behaviour, regardless of blameworthiness.

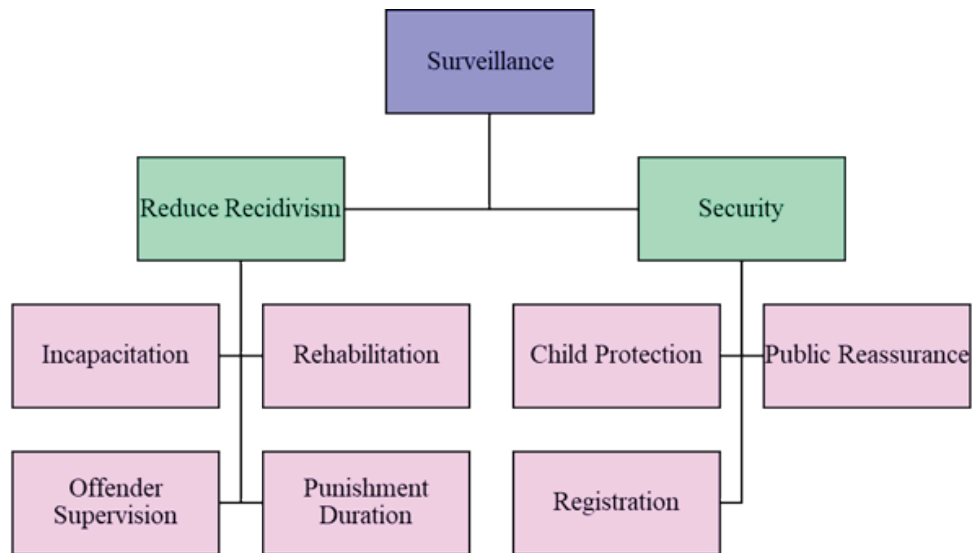The second major theme is displayed in Figure 5 below:

Figure 5: Codes associated with 'Surveillance'

Surveillance was identified as the second major theme that refers to the Offender Management Services (OMS), in terms of the participant's expectations of the OMS once an offence has occurred. Participants identified two subsidiary themes which emerged, namely 'Reduce Recidivism' and 'Security'. The junior themes are expectations upon authority to reduce the risk posed by CSOs by ensuring public safety from future offending. 'Reduce recidivism' is the first subordinate theme which refers to the efforts to lessen the likelihood of an offender relapsing into previous offending behaviour. These 'efforts' are distinguishable from four codes that are displayed in Figure 6. The second subordinate theme 'Security' refers to how secure the participants feel and what they think should be done to ensure their safety. The participant's expectations are split into three codes, also displayed in Figure 6. There were six recurrent notions (codes) of 'Surveillance' (Pink) and 'Security' (Yellow) identified within the data, which is displayed below:

Incapacitation	• Refers to the 'need' for prison for the purposes of 'removing the problem' for the participants. However, other methods such as 'tagging' and 'curfews' were suggested as being potentially more suitable than imprisonment. • Identified in 75% (n=9) of the interview sample.
Rehabilitation	• Refers to in the context of "everyone is redeemable" and suggests there is the possibility for the CSO to gain acceptance and be 'forgiven' by the community. • All participants (100%, n=12) had indicated the significance of 'rehabilitation'. However, the recipient and the location of 'rehabilitation' services differentiates among participants.
Punishment Duration	• Refers to the recommendations that participants had given in relation to what they determine an acceptable duration of essentially retributive attitudes that the CSO needs to be 'punished' for. • Identified by (33.3% ,n=4) of the interview sample.
Offender Supervision	• Refers to the participant's expectation on the OMS and their responsibility of keeping CSOs under surveillance once an offence has taken place. • All participants (100%, n=2) had indicated this code with their interview.
Child Protection	• Refers to the participant's concerns regarding either their own children or children in their neighbourhood • Identified by (60%, n=7) of the interview sample.
Public Reassurance	• Refers to how the participants feel about how OMS's and the wider government initiatives improve their sense of security and awareness of the procedure when managing CSOs in the community. • Identified by (66%, n=8) of the interview sample.
Registration	• Refers to the perceived level of security participant's experienced knowing that CSOs had to sign the Sex Offender Register, once being found guilty of a sex offence. • Although, Two participants (10%, n=2) were particularly sceptical of the SOR's ability to ensure CSOs are kept under surveillance and guarantee the public's sense of security.

Figure 6: Codes associated with 'Surveillance'

The findings examined from the interviews were enlightening because they provided a rationale for the participant's answers in the questionnaire. The participants perspective was determined by their own expectations of CSOs and the OMS, once an offence has taken place. The rationale for their negative attitudes towards CSOs was based on the actions of the OMS. 'Offender Supervision' was highlighted as the most significant effort which contributes to the OMS' assurance of a reduction in recidivism.

Although, the public's sense of security was present if they felt their children were safe in their neighbourhood. Safety for some participants meant the offender should be incapacitated by imprisonment, 'tagging', or enrolment onto an intensive treatment programme. Secondly, the requirements to be met by a CSO would ultimately establish the level of support that the participants would consider most sufficiently aid the 'rehabilitation' process. The characteristics

that the CSOs would be required to display are conducive to the interviewee's perception as to the offender's risk of reoffending. These characteristics are the acknowledgement of guilt for the offence, while showing contrition for their actions and proactively attempting to rehabilitate themselves. The combination of a CSO taking 'responsibility' for their actions, in addition to the OMS ensuring the necessary surveillance techniques are available, have been further indicated as the most significant influences upon the participant's perspective of risk and dangerousness posed by CSOs.

DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Quantitative

The questionnaire found that the most commonly reported attitude of the participants stated that CSOs are to more likely to commit further sexual offences when not given adequate supervision guidelines or management and are also likely to make participants feel 'uncomfortable' in their own community. As discussed in literature, CSOs are considered to be a highly heterogenous group and the management of their thoughts and behaviours as individuals are crucial to the success in reducing the risk of recidivism (Bonta & Andrews, 2010; Fortune, Ward & Willis, 2012; Steen, 2005).

However, it is argued that the public perceive CSOs as a highly homogeneous group regarding their propensity to re-offend, despite the level of management or supervision (Levenson, Brannon, Fortney & Baker, 2007). Their survey of 193 residents in Florida overwhelmingly supported public disclosure of information on local sex offenders, to improve their comfortability knowing where the 'dangerous' individuals were residing, representing a favourably higher level of supervision. The findings of the current research suggest similar. This research shows a change of public opinion to be directly influenced by the different levels of supervision provided in each scenario. In other words, the less supervision provided in a scenario the higher the likelihood of recidivism was anticipated.

As this research suggests that females tend to be less supportive of a CSO and more sceptical of their abilities to rehabilitate and re-integrate back into the community. However, a quantitative study by Ferguson & Ireland (2006) had concluded the opposite that women hold more supportive attitudes towards sex offenders than men, as their original hypothesis suggested. Gender differences in attitudes towards sex offenders could be explained by women's natural tendency to be more empathetic than men (Radley, 2001). However, it is this lack of empathy and emotional literacy that is a common characteristic of masculinity in both sexually abusive men and non-sexually abusive men (MacLeod & Saraga, 1988). Ferguson & Ireland's (2006) study was also conducted using vignettes and scale-like questions to assess the attitudes towards sex offenders. However, each vignette contained a different type of sexual offence while assessing gender differences between participants. Therefore, it fails to account for the participant's rationale for their attitudes due to the nature of the chosen methodology. More importantly, Ferguson & Ireland's study cannot provide an answer as to what attributes determine the public's perception regarding the risks posed by CSOs within the community context.

The questionnaire found that parents are more concerned than non-parents if they were aware of a CSO as a neighbour, understandably so. As discussed in the literature, parents are the predominant group that ensure the safety and wellbeing of their children, but are also the

main recipient for the negative media reports concerning the dangers CSOs pose to children in their communities (Silverman & Wilson, 2002). The notorious 'Named and Shamed' campaign launched by the News of the World was primarily aimed at alerting parents to these risks against their children (Silverman & Wilson, 2002). However, the demonstrations resulting from the campaign such as, the Pauls' Grove demonstration in Portsmouth, were participated by both parents and non-parents within the estate (Thompson & Williams, 2014).

This would further suggest that parents are more cautious to the risks CSOs pose within their community, in comparison to non-parents which may not be an overexaggerated stance. For parents, there is another layer of concern and anxiety towards the prospect of having a CSO as a neighbour because the offender could attempt to groom the family, in terms of gaining their trust and the potential access to their child. According to Finkelhor's precondition model (1984), the four prior conditions to child sexual abuse involves the grooming of parents, as well as the child - also known as one of the external inhibitors to overcome in order to enable the opportunity to abuse. Therefore, the proximity of CSOs is identified as a risk factor because it conditions the circumstances for sexual abuse to occur.

Qualitative

The participants expect a CSO to show a high level of 'commitment' to change their offending behaviour. As well as acknowledging the wrong-doing, it is vital that the CSO has reformative intentions. For some participants to continue to support a CSO, they must first display their 'commitment' by attending treatment programmes and have the intention not to reoffend. The participants would expect a CSO to be displaying attitudes such as regret, remorse and possibly feeling shameful of their actions. As discussed in literature, the shaming of offenders is resonated throughout the criminal justice System and society, although not all types of offenders respond to this 'institutionalised' shaming process as expected (Benson, Alarid, Burton, & Cullen, 2011; Braithwaite, 1989; Sherman, 2003). Dellaportas (2014) argued that stigmatic shaming is designed to express disapproval from others, onto the offender who is the target of criticism and made to feel guilty for their crimes, through the process of labelling. Negative labelling can exclude offenders from normal everyday routine and increases the risk of further offences (Ray and Downs, 1986; Paternoster and Iovanni, 1989).

Some participants expressed a desire to support a CSO through rehabilitation as a member of their family, providing the offender meets their conditions of acknowledging their wrong-doing, understanding the implications of their actions and actively attended treatment to change their behaviour. It is argued that strong family relationships are a functional equivalent in transforming external stigmatisation into a reintegrative and loving form of internal disapproval (Braithwaite and Drahos, 2002); essentially becoming a fragment of the overall reintegrative process (Braithwaite and Mugford, 1994). Therefore, reintegration of a CSO would be possible if they have a strong family network that is willing to utilise internal disapproval, maintain a respectful bond with the offender, and be supportive of a CSOs treatment progress. However, some participants were strongly against the idea of ever supporting a CSO through their rehabilitation as the offender should not be the focus of rehabilitative initiatives.

One participant suggested that there needs to be an emphasis on the "victim's recovery", rather than emphasising on the offender's needs and the nature of their sexual offending behaviour. However, this participant argued that the CSO should contribute to the victim's recov-

ery by acknowledging their wrong-doing as the first step towards rehabilitation. According to Gromet & Okimoto (2014), the three key components necessary for successful reintegration of an offender are:

  I.   Offender amends-making

  II. Victim forgiveness

  III. Peer acceptance

In relation to this research, a CSO will have to try to 'make amends' for the wrong-doing they had caused to their victim(s). This restorative approach would entail acknowledging their wrong-doing, apologising for the offence(s) and taking steps to improve relations (Strang & Sherman, 2003; Walker, 2006). However, the prospect of a CSO 'making amends' with their child victim has both practical and legal implications, in terms of the inevitable and understandable restriction of access in aid of child protection (Gromet & Darley, 2009). However, Focquaert & Raine (2012) argued that attending treatment for the purposes of restoring an offender's autonomy to prevent further sexual offences occurring could be an act of amends-making.

All participants also have expectations of OMS' to provide adequate management of such offenders. All participants strongly agreed that longer sentencing and intensive surveillance are necessary for reducing the likelihood of recidivism and provide better security and safety for children. However, the initiative with the greatest success of reducing recidivism is disputed among the participants. Participants recognised the complexities of CSOs and their offender behaviour are "very entrenched" and require a lifetime treatment programme. Similarly, Marshall & Barbaree (1990) argued the origins of sexual deviancy are partially entrenched within biological and early developmental vulnerabilities of an offender. According to Perkins, Hammond, Coles & Bishopp (1998), a successful sex offender programme should address the developmental dispositions contributing to offending behaviour, develop the offender's insight and install positive motivations to sustain a life without criminality; which is a process that takes a lifetime to achieve and maintain. Therefore, suggesting the complex criminogenic needs are vast and difficult to manage in a short sentence.

Some participants were very sceptical of the current arrangements for monitoring CSOs because he was concerned about the opportunity to "go disappearing" due to the lack of constant surveillance. One alternative suggestion concerning surveillance strategies was 'tagging' because it would reduce the opportunity for recidivism and provide more security in vulnerable areas such as, schools and playgrounds. According to previous literature, Farabee (2005) argues surveillance technology induces the incentive to change their behaviour over time and not breach their licensing conditions, through fear of being incarcerated once more consequently. However, electronic tagging is argued to further disadvantage an offender's employment opportunities due to time and location restrictions (Black & Smith, 2003). The inability to gain employment will also make the CSOs risk management plan difficult to create and potentially make the reintegration process harder for the offender (Ward & Maruna, 2007).

There was an emerging debate among the participants regarding whether CSOs are 'rational' actors whom freely chooses to commit child sex offences, or whether they have pre-existing inclinations towards their sexual preference for children and contributing to a sexual offence occurring. Most of the participants expressed support for a predisposition being a contributing factor or the cause of sexual offending – by suggesting contributing factors such as, poor men-

tal health, loneliness, isolation or feeling inadequate in life. Contradictory to the majority, one participant argued that CSOs may have a sexual preference towards children (a predisposition) but they still "choose to be that way" and choose to act upon their urges. This participant suggests paedophilia is a choice therefore, it is that individual who is accountable for their actions and should take full responsibility for their urges before a sexual offence occurs. However, Hossack, Palyle, Spencer & Carey (2004) argue that CSOs are not accountable for the existence of their sexual preferences and only responsible for acting upon their urges. Interestingly, the participant argued that an individual who is willing to come forward for treatment prior to "ruining a child's life", they would probably get more community and family support. Supportive family ties have been linked to reducing re-offending and enable the offender time to focus on the importance of their family relationships (Scott & Codd, 2010).

Mixed Method Synthesis

The purpose of a mixed methods synthesis is to integrate the discussions from both quantitative and qualitative sections to identify the key implications to convey the importance of the relationship between the quantitative and qualitative findings. Finally, the implications identified will then be used to provide suggestions of how to combat the issues arising from the findings of this research.

The public's perception of risk and dangerousness posed by a CSO is dependent upon various aspects including: the CSO characteristics, circumstances, their conceptions of OMS' efficiency and the external factors that influences their views. It was determined that the characteristics deemed 'risky' are the CSOs refusal to plead guilty for the crimes committed, lack motivation or drive to change their offending behaviour and lack contrition for their actions. The rationale for these risk factors is rooted in the increased possibility of recidivism and posing a further security risk to children if the offender does not meet their expectations. Therefore, to reduce the public's perception of risk, the CSO must take full responsibility for the offence committed and display a level of commitment by making a conscious effort to change their offending behaviour, to achieve successful community reintegration. However, it is more desirable if the individual was to come forward for treatment prior to offending, therefore the likelihood of community and particularly familial support is higher.

Regardless of a CSO's reformative intentions there remains a doubt as to whether the CSO can ever truly sustain life without criminality, especially if they are not attending a treatment programme. To reduce the scepticism, the public require constant reassurance that the OMS meets the public's expectations by ensuring the appropriate level of supervision is applied to reduce the likelihood of recidivism. In terms of external factors, the proximity of CSOs in the community is identified as a risk factor for parents because it conditions the circumstances for sexual abuse to occur. However, the public's knowledge and understanding with regards to the nature of sexual deviancy, the prevalence of child sexual abuse and the effectiveness of the rehabilitative initiatives is overall limited. Although, their awareness of the risks posed by a CSO is extensive and occasionally exaggerated; however, the level of education appears to be a contributing external factor that appears to alter their perception of risks. As argued above, lower educated individuals are more likely to fear being victimised, over-estimate the prevalence of crime and are likely to view sentencing as too lenient for serious offences (Hough & Moxon, 1985).

In light of this research, there are several recommendations that have been drawn to combat the issues identified in the findings, as seen below:

I.   More education is needed regarding the nature of offending behaviour and the potential successes of community-based rehabilitation, then this may allow for a more effective response and reduce the risk perception from the public regardless of their level of educational achievement;

II.   The maintenance and recovery of damaged familial relationships could be part of the rehabilitative process. Therefore, more intensive counselling designed to rebuild familial relationships within the community is recommended as part of the rehabilitative process;

III.   It is recommended that more should be done to investigate the possibility that an individual can take responsibility of their unconventional sexual desires, prior to committing sexual offences.

Research Limitations

The questionnaire sample showed the majority were female and between the ages of 16-24. If this research were to be undertaken again, it is recommended that a different online platform should be utilised to distribute the questionnaire. This may provide a more evenly distributed sample that is more representative of the general population. The second limitation to this research project is concerning the construction of the scenarios. Therefore, if this research was to be undertaken again, it is recommended that more consideration and attention could have been given to the construction of the scenarios to potentially include other factors.

Final Thoughts

This research has been able to answer the core research questions through appropriate use of research methods, while illuminating further questions. A new line of inquiry concerning prevention strategies rather than intervention has emerged. An interview participant identifies,

> *"It is a choice at the end of the day. If one of them go somewhere and held their hands up to say, "I have a problem", then services will help you, surely, they would. Any help at the pre-stages is better than intervention. Prevention is better than intervention. Rather than leave it to the last minute when it is too late."*

This proposed research will have an impact on what society should consider when promoting a new strategy to reduce child sexual abuse, through focusing on self-referral of individuals prior to sexually abusing children. A new preventative approach has arose promoting the usage of a child sex offender's autonomy to recognise problematic sexual behaviour and self-refer for treatment (Cantor & McPhail, 2016). Therefore, it is appropriate at this time to examine preventative approaches and their capabilities to ensure the success of the clients' continued non-offending behaviour, to ultimately protect children from abuse at its root cause.

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