SCHOOL COUNSELOR EXPERIENCES OR PERSPECTIVES IN AN AGE OF

INCREASING PORNOGRAPHY USE AND SEXUAL BEHAVIORS OF STUDENTS

By Natalie Atwell

Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

School of Behavioral Sciences

Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA 2018

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APPROVED BY:

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ABSTRACT

This study explored school counselor interactions or perspectives concerning the impact of pornography use and sexual behaviors among students in K-12 education. Participants, comprised of 51 school counselors in a suburban district in North Carolina, were given a qualitative survey in this case study for the purpose of exploring interactions such as challenging incidents and training needs. Results suggested that school counselors are involved with students impacted by pornography use and sexual behaviors through indirect and direct services, however, school counselors do not report feeling adequately trained to effectively help students in these areas. This study provides implications for further inquiry, further policy, and further training, programming, and implementation of services for school counselors in terms of interacting with students impacted by pornography use and sexual behaviors.

Keywords*: pornography, sexting, school counselors, prevention, intervention, children, child, teenagers, adolescents*

Dedication

This proposal is dedicated to my family who have tirelessly supported me throughout this journey!

Acknowledgments

I acknowledge the help of Dr. Volk and Dr. Garzon and, but mostly the help of the Holy Spirit. I

also acknowledge leaders from the school district for allowing me to survey their staff.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

List of Abbreviations

American School Counselor Association (ASCA)

Internet Pornography (IP)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

The rise of technology is a part of modern society that brings many challenges such as impacting the increase of pornography use among children and adolescents (Lubey, 2015; Coopersmith, 2006). Parents and educators need to be cognizant that pornography use, reported by 77.9% of adolescents, can be damaging and should find ways to learn how to help children and adolescents use technology safely (Pizzol, Bertoldo, & Foresta, 2016; Bower, 2013). Education and intervention efforts with children and adolescents related to pornography use and sexual behaviors can be led by school counselors, but they may need to be adequately trained to enhance the education of children in matters of sexual behaviors (Short, et al., 2016).

This chapter includes background information on pornography use and the impact on children and adolescents experienced within many contexts including schools from elementary through high school levels due to the rise of technology. Parents and individuals who work with children and adolescents such as school counselors, should be prepared to deal with the impact of pornography exposure and sexual behaviors (Baker, 2016). The problem is that although school counselors may be aware, they may not be properly trained or prepared to help students impacted by pornography and sexual behaviors. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore school counselor involvement, interactions, and experiences with students impacted by pornography use and sexual behaviors in a school district. School counselors, who work in school settings at all levels, are arguably essential staff to consider training to work with students impacted by pornography use and sexual behaviors. Hence, the goal for the study of exploring and finding thematic and descriptive information through a case study was to use qualitative survey in order to gain results leading to implications for school counselors and recommendations for future

studies.

Background

The Internet has been described as an integral part of the lives of many children and adolescents that comes with challenges (Anderson, Steen, & Stavropoulos, 2017). The natural curiosity of children and adolescents concerning sexual matters has likely always existed, but one challenge with the Internet and other communication technologies being used to satisfy curiosity or supplement inadequate information, is that harmful and inaccurate information regarding sex can be given (Coopersmith, 2006; Montgomery-Graham, Kohut, Fisher, Campbell, & Lorne, 2015). Parents and educators should address harmful and inaccurate information associated with Internet pornography (IP) and communication technologies due to the adverse effects of IP such as improper sex education (Montgomery-Graham, Kohut, Fisher, Campbell, & Lorne, 2015; Smith, 2013).

Children and adolescents, like adults, have likely had a desire to learn about sexual things from the beginning of time as evidenced in early writings (Lubey, 2015). Along with the early documentation about a desire for sex came a documentation of sex in the form of pornography (Lubey, 2015). While, it may be hard to determine exactly when pornography began, it is likely that it began as writing and drawing began in forms of communication and art describing sex acts. Today, pornography has become a specific narrative practice of sexual experience that is on the rise due to communication technology such as the Internet (Lubey, 2015; Coopersmith, 2006). Given the increasingly internet-connected educational and social experiences of children and adolescents, the increase in exposure of sexually explicit material, and the participation in sharing sexual content with one another at all levels of education, a more thorough understanding of the impact of these sexual activities on all young people is essential (Coopersmith, 2006).

While some have reported using pornography as a form of sexual education, there are many reported adverse effects of early exposure and habitual use of pornography in adolescents and children (Montgomery-Graham, Kohut, Fisher, Campbell, & Lorne, 2015). One of the adverse effects is the adoption of unrealistic sexual values and beliefs steming from pornography use among children and adolescents such as a tolerance for unwanted sexual behaviors and sexual violence (Montgomery-Graham, Kohut, Fisher, Campbell, & Lorne, 2015). Other adverse effects of pornography use include poor school performance and achievement, symptoms of depression, substance abuse, and impulsivity (Beyens, Vandenbosch, & Eggermont, 2015; Temple, et al., 2014; Silva, Teixeira, Vasconcelos-Raposo, & Bessa, 2016). Due to the potential adverse effects related to pornography use, the need to educate and intervene with children and adolescents regarding pornography use is undeniable (Montgomery-Graham, Kohut, Fisher, Campbell, & Lorne, 2015).

While it is ideal for parents to properly educate their children on sexual topics and the risks of pornography use, often they simply do not put forth the effort (Livingstone, & Smith, 2014). Therefore, educators should consider targeting prevention and intervention efforts in response to the rise of pornography exposure among students (Livingstone, & Smith, 2014). With proper training, school counselors may be ideal personnel within schools to lead prevention and intervention efforts that can be effective in reducing negative effects of pornography (Isaacs, & Fisher, 2008; Short, et al., 2016).).

In sum, today children and adolescents have ubiquitous access to the Internet and other communication technologies, with which they use to explore topics such as sex and sexuality possibly as a result of inadequate education offered by parents and educators (Montgomery-Graham, Kohut, Fisher, Campbell, & Lorne, 2015). Consequently, pornography as an educator

has many negative consequences and adverse effects (Montgomery-Graham, Kohut, Fisher, Campbell, & Lorne, 2015). Therefore, parents and educators should protect and prepare their children for the risks and effects associated with pornography use and sexual behaviors (Cho, 2016; Kunnuji, 2013). Educators such as school counselors can initiate and lead the prevention and intervention efforts with students impacted by pornography use and sexual behaviors (Isaacs, & Fisher, 2008). However, training of school counselors to adequately prepare for the challenges of pornography use and sexual behaviors in children and adolescents may be necessary in order to implement effective prevention and intervention efforts (Short, et al., 2016).

Situation to Self

As a local mental health provider in the district where the research occurred, I attend monthly meetings with school system personnel including school counselors and other community partners. Over the past couple of years, as topics of concern were discussed, I noticed increasing concerns of pornography use and sexual behaviors among students being mentioned motivating me to conduct this qualitative case study to understand and learn more about the involvement and experiences of school counselors with students regarding pornography use and exposure. This case study approach has the rhetorical assumption of reporting through the eyes of the participants, and as a former school counselor and current licensed professional counselor who receives multiple referrals from school counselors, I have a foundational understanding and appreciation about the involvement and experiences of school counselors working with students impacted by pornography use and sexual behaviors. My desire for this case study, guided by an interpretive paradigm for the analysis of data, was to provide further implications for research and implications for school counselors seeking to help students impacted by pornography use and sexual behaviors, thus setting the framework for my axiological assumptions.

Problem Statement

Children and adolescents have been found to do more web searches than adults, often seeking to satisfy their curiosity which may place them at risk for accidental and intentional viewing of inappropriate content including Internet Pornography (IP) (Duarte Torres, Weber, & Hiemstra, 2014; Flood, 2009). Seeking to find answers online about sex puts children and adolescents at risk for being poorly educated by pornography (Flood, 2009). Nonetheless, children and adolescents are seeking answers to sex related questions online likely due to inadequate information provided by parents and educators (Flood, 2009).

School counselors can help students receive proper guidance for making healthy decisions instead of merely allowing popular media and pornography to be the educators of sexuality by offering effective prevention and intervenion strategies (Allen & Lavender-Stott, 2015). However, more research and training about how to help prevent or intervene with students impacted by pornography use and sexual behaviors is desired among school counselors (Bryan & Griffin, 2010; Villares & Dimmitt, 2017). Therefore, the problem is that while school counselors can help students who have experienced issues related to pornography use and sexual behaviors, they desire and need more training and education on how to do so effectively (Bryan & Griffin, 2010; Villares & Dimmitt, 2017).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to explore school counselor involvement, interactions and experiences with students impacted by pornography use and sexual behaviors in a school district. The goal was to explore and find thematic and descriptive information in a case study using a qualitative survey leading to implications for school counselors and recommendations for future studies. This study utilized a case study approach that provided methodology to study the

complex phenomenon of pornography use and sexual behaviors among students within the context of school counselor experiences (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

Significance of the Study

This study contributes to the discipline and body of research that suggests the involvement of school counselors with children and adolescents with whom they work who have had concerns about pornography use and sexual behaviors (Bryan & Griffin, 2010; Villares & Dimmitt, 2017). School counselors can address issues related to sexual health with students that may be related to mental health issues associated with topics such as body and sexual development through individual and group counseling (Russell, 2012). School counselors can also organize efforts at their schools through prevention and intervention programs related to pornography among children and adolescents by bringing together parents and community members as they seek to help students concerning difficult topics such as pornography (Braun-Courville & Rojas, 2009; Bryan, Griffin, 2010). While school counselors can positively impact students regarding the impact of pornography use and sexual behavior, they have indicated the need for more training (Bryan, Griffin, 2010; Villares & Dimmitt, 2017). Therefore, the study also provides information regarding the specific needs for training among school counselors in the particular district assessed as they seek to effectively help students impacted by pornography use and sexual behaviors. The results seek to inform future training and education of school counselors for the district and encourages similar research to be conducted in other school districts concerning the topic. Finally, the study may provide beneficial information for researchers, school counselors, school administrators, and parents on the importance of prevention and intervention efforts made by school counselors and the need for training of school counselors concerning pornography use and sexual behaviors among children and adolescents.

Research Questions

The research questions presented were posed to conceptualize the problem and purpose of the study. The four questions presented were used to explore how school counselors can help students through prevention and intervention efforts to deal with pornography use and sexual behaviors. Finally, one question sought to find information regarding the future needs of school counselors regarding training and implementation of effective programming.

RQ 1: How are school counselors involved when students have been referred to them for problems related to pornography use?

RQ 2: In what ways are school counselors adapting services and interventions for growing trends related to sexual behaviors in students such as pornography?

RQ 3: In what ways are school counselors working with school staff and parents on issues related to pornography use among students?

RQ 4: What training experiences have school counselors had pertaining specifically to responding to pornography use among students?

Definitions

1. Adolescent- Children aged 12-18 who are in the care of others (parents/guardians) *(*Atari, Jamali, Bahrami-Ehsan, & Mohammadi, 2017).

2. Child- An individual under the age of 18 living in the care of others (Judge, 2012).

3. Children- Individuals under the age of 18 who live in the care of others (parents/guardians); school-age children are those in preschool, elementary, middle or high/secondary school (Allen & Lavender-Stott, 2015; Maguire, Niens, McCann, & Connolly, 2016).

4. Pornography- Explicit material that includes sexual images, sexual representation, and sexual content; a mode of inquiry about sex acts (Lubey, 2015).

5. School Counselor- A school counselor is an individual trained in counseling and who is trained in providing schools k-12 and colleges with indirect and direct counseling services. School counselors are typically trained on the ASCA national model. The ASCA model suggests school counselors provide direct services such as individual solution-focused brief counseling, core curriculum, student planning and responsive services. Indirect services may include school counselor personnel evaluations, program management processes, program evaluation processes and program advocacy processes, consultation with school staff, parents, and community members (Mason, 2010; Martin, & Carey, 2014).

6. Sexting- A portmanteau or work created by converting two words, sex and texting, into one; typically includes recording and distributing sexually suggestive texts, nude or sexually explicit images via phone messaging and social networks (Lee, et al., 2015).

7. Teenager- Children who are 13 years to 19 years of age who are mainly cared for by others (Yasui, et al., 2018).

Summary

The Internet is an integral part of their lives of children and adolescents and often serves as the primary source for information on many topics including sex (Anderson, et al., 2017). The increasing use of the Internet has risks including the impact of pornography, which can be addressed by school counselors (Russell, 2012). The research reviewed includes information on the problem of a lack of training and education of school counselors to effectively help students who have experienced issues related to pornography use or sexual behaviors (Bryan, Griffin, 2010; Villares & Dimmitt, 2017). Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore school counselor involvement, interactions, and experiences with students impacted by pornography use and sexual behaviors in a school district with the goal of exploring thematic and descriptive information in a case study using a qualitative survey leading to implications for school counselors and recommendations for future studies.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

Today, children and adolescents are learning about sexual behaviors through the Internet and other communication technologies often in the form of pornography (Coopersmith, 2006). Considering the adverse effects associated with pornography, as it is not an ideal educator for children and adolescents on sexual behaviors, therefore, parents and educators should seek effective ways to educate and prevent children and adolescents from primarily learning about sex on the Internet (Flood, 2009). Specific training may be required by educators, such as school counselors who are interacting with students impacted by pornography and sexual behaviors often learned online, in order to implement effective prevention and intervention strategies (Russell, 2012).

The review of literature initially explores pornography exposure and use among children and adolescents including information regarding age of exposure, at-risk groups, and sexting. The effects of pornography use were examined next followed by a section on parental knowledge of pornography use, and parental involvement in the sex education and intervention of pornography use among children. The review then transitions to information on how schools can incorporate prevention and intervention strategies for pornography use and sexual behaviors. School counselors are the final focus in this review as leaders in the area of prevention and intervention efforts for pornography use and sexual behaviors among children and adolescents. The review will conclude with information regarding the need for training among school counselors to effectively deal with issues related to pornography use and sexual behaviors among students.

Conceptual/Theoretical Framework

School counselors are recommended to adhere to the guidelines of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) model, which follows the Logic Model framework for development and implementation of their programs and services including indirect and direct services (American School Counselor Association, 2005; Martin, & Carey, 2014). School counselors are often involved when dealing with student issues such as pornography or sexual behaviors through direct services including counseling, group counseling, and crisis response (American School Counselor Association, 2005; Russell, 2012). The ASCA model also includes indirect services such as school counselor personnel evaluations, program management processes, program evaluation processes and program advocacy processes, all of which involve consultation with school staff, parents, and community members in order to implement prevention and intervention programs for students impacted by pornography and sexual behaviors (American School Counselor Association, 2005; Russell, 2012). Finally, the Logic Model provides a framework that identifies inputs such as resources needed for programs, activities or program components related to desired outcomes, and outputs or evaluations of program components within the ASCA model (Martin, & Carey, 2014). The term *Logic Model*, first defined by Wholey (1979) in his book, *Evaluation: Promise and Performance*, has now become a concept helpful in conceptualizing the aspect of needed resources for program implementation useful for programs such as pornography prevention and intervention including accommodating for the unforeseeable and evaluating activities for effectiveness (Waghmare, & Srivastava, 2016). Lastly, the model is based in the theory of change exploring how change occurs through resources, activities, outputs, and outcomes and has been proven to be a valuable tool for academics including being used in case study approaches for educational programs

(Erwin, McNeely, Grubaugh, Valentine, Miller, & Buchanan, 2016; Parsons, & Jessup, 2012; Hamasu, & Kelly, 2017). Therefore, considering the Logic model is intertwined with the ASCA model, this model is appropriate for implementation of services and conceptualization of this case study (Martin, & Carey, 2014).

Related Literature

Given the increase in pornography use and sexual behaviors among children and adolescents due to the rise of the Internet and communication technology, factors such age of first encounter, sexting, and groups considered at-risk are worth exploring (Coopersmith, 2006; Lubey, 2015). In addition, the adverse effects of pornography exposure such as tolerance of sexually violent behaviors, increase in high-risk behaviors, decreased school performance, effects of sexting, and pornography as a sex educator should be examined (Flood, 2009; McEachern, McEachern-Ciattoni, & Martin, 2012; Owens, Behun, Manning, & Reid, 2012; Russell, 2012; Wallmyr & Welin, 2006; Wolak & Finkelhor, 2008). Adverse effects associated with pornography use among children and adolescents suggest a need for the knowledge and involvement of parents regarding their children (Flood, 2009; McEachern, McEachern-Ciattoni, & Martin, 2012; Owens, Behun, Manning, & Reid, 2012; Russell, 2012; Wallmyr & Welin, 2006; Wolak & Finkelhor, 2008). However, the current lack of knowledge and parental involvement in sex education efforts and the potential impact on school performance among children and adolescents leaves a need for educators to intervene by providing proper education and intervention on sex-related topics (Russell, 2012; Flood, 2009). Therefore, educators such as school counselors, who have been shown to interact with students regarding pornography use and sexual behaviors, should consider implementing direct and indirect programs and services for students impacted by pornography use and sexual behaviors (Martin, & Carey, 2014;

McEachern, McEachern-Ciattoni, & Martin, 2012). Despite the interaction of school counselors with students impacted by pornography use and exposure, the lack of training reported by school counselors in this area indicates a problem and need for this case study (Bryan, Griffin, 2010; Villares & Dimmitt, 2017).

Pornography Use among Children and Adolescents

Pornography has been a part of modern society for a very long time as seen in the United States who has the most pornography webpages among nations and includes a pornography industry with larger revenues than Microsoft, Google, Amazon, eBay, Yahoo, Apple and Netflix combined (Lubey, 2015; Ropelato, 2014). Accessibility, due to the rise of technology has not only increased pornography use among children and adolescents but has allowed the very personal practice of pornography called sexting to impact these populations (Coopersmith, 2006; Crofts, McGovern, & Milivojevic, 2015). While some groups are considered at a greater-risk for exposure and use of pornography, today the risk for all children and adolescents being exposed to pornography is arguably inevitable due to the increase in accessibility associated with the Internet (Coopersmith, 2006).

Pornography today. Pornography exposure has been described as a normal experience for children and adolescents evidenced by reports by girls of exposure to pornography during adolescence and boys who reported exposure at earlier ages (Allen & Lavender-Stott, 2015; Wolak, Mitchell, & Finkelhor, 2007). Although some children and adolescents may have simply been exposed to pornography on accident, most indicate using Internet Pornography (IP) at some time during their lifetime with many adolescents indicating daily use (Wetterneck, Burgess, Short, Smith, & Cervantes, 2012). While many children and adolescents report use of

pornography, which includes sexting, only some see the use as problematic behavior (Lee, Crofts, McGovern, & Milivojevic, 2015; Wetterneck, et al., 2012).

Sexting. Sexting, a portmanteau created by converting the words sex and texting into one, presents an aspect of pornography that can be very personal including images or texts of individuals personally or others they know personally (Lee, Crofts, McGovern, & Milivojevic, 2015; Ngo, Jaishankar, Jose, & Agustina, 2017). It typically includes recording and distributing sexually suggestive texts, nude or sexually explicit images via phone messaging and social networks (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.) (Lee, Crofts, McGovern, & Milivojevic, 2015). While sexting is considered to be very personal, it is also reported as the most common computer-mediated behavior among young people (as young as ten years of age) for many reasons (Drouin, Vogel, Surbey, & Stills, 2013; Patrick, Heywood, Pitts, & Mitchell, 2015).

Adolescents are influenced by the thrill of sexting within and outside of romantic relationships and state flirtation, being asked, sexual experimentation, seeking popularity, and peer pressure among the many reasons for sexting (Yeung, Horyniak, Vella, Hellard, & Lim, 2014). (Joris, Ponnet, Walrave, & D'Haenens, 2017). Similar to many thrill-seeking behaviors, adolescents do not consider the risks involved in sexing (Lim, Vella, Horyniah, & Hellard, 2016). Although some report being aware of the risks, they continue to participate in sexting (Klettke, Hallford, & Mellor, 2014; Walker, Sanci, & Temple-Smith, 2013; Walrave, et al., 2015; Lee, & Crofts, 2015). Therefore, this personal, common, and often thrilling behavior known as sexting is an aspect of pornography that adolescents and children may not be prepared to handle concerning the risks (Lim, Vella, Horyniah, & Hellard, 2016; Ngo, Jaishankar, Jose, & Agustina, 2017; Drouin, Vogel, Surbey, & Stills, 2013).

Groups at greater risk for pornography use. Certain groups of adolescents are specifically considered at risk such as adolescent white males, sexually reactive children, juvenile sex offenders, and girls with highly educated fathers (Alexy, Burgess, & Prentky, 2009; Hennessy, Bleakley, Fishbein, & Jordan, 2008; Brand, Laier, Pawlikowski, Schaechtle, Scholer, & Alstotte-Gleich, 2011; Harper, & Hodgins 2016; Luder et al., 2011). Adolescent white males are reported as the most at-risk group for pornography use and exposure and have shown a higher correlation between sexual media exposure and changes in sexual behavior (Hennessy, Bleakley, Fishbein, & Jordan, 2008; Brand, Laier, Pawlikowski, Schaechtle, Scholer, & Alstotte-Gleich, 2011; Harper, & Hodgins 2016). Possible reasons for this correlation include greater access to the Internet, cell phones, and video games including games with sexual content, a behavior which increases the odds of having sex and engaging in violent sexual behaviors (Haninger, & Thompson, 2004; Williams, Martins, Consalvo, & Ivory, 2009; Behm-morawitz & Mastro, 2009). Interestingly, another group at-risk included adolescent girls whose fathers were more educated (Luder et al., 2011). Lastly, sexually reactive children and adolescents or juvenile sexual offenders are also more vulnerable to pornography use and its damaging effects (Alexy, Burgess, & Prentky, 2009). Although, certain groups are considered at-risk (white males, sexually reactive children, juvenile sex offenders, and girls with highly educated father), with the high percentages of adolescents reporting being exposed to pornography, parents and educators should strongly consider the effects of pornography use among all children and adolescents while responding with prevention and intervention efforts (Alexy, Burgess, & Prentky, 2009; Hennessy, Bleakley, Fishbein, & Jordan, 2008; Brand, Laier, Pawlikowski, Schaechtle, Scholer, & Alstotte-Gleich, 2011; Harper, & Hodgins 2016; Luder et al., 2011).

Effects of Pornography Use

The effects of pornography use such as tolerance for sexual violence and high-risk behaviors, decrease in school performance, sexting, and improper sex education are being discovered over time as the increase use of technology becomes a factor (Owens, Behun, Manning, & Reid, 2012; Wolak & Finkelhor, 2008; Wallmyr & Welin, 2006; McEachern, McEachern-Ciattoni, & Martin, 2012). Tolerance for sexual violence and high-risks behaviors includes tolerance for unwanted sex, recreational sex, and a tolerance of a higher number of sexual partners (Owens, Behun, Manning, & Reid, 2012; Wolak & Finkelhor, 2008; Wallmyr & Welin, 2006; McEachern). Pornography has also been associated with poor school performance and legal issues as a result of certain sexting practices (McEachern, McEachern-Ciattoni, & Martin, 2012; Wolak & Finkelhor, 2008). Lastly, the increase use of technology has led to pornography serving as a poor sex educator among children and adolescents (Allen & Lavender-Stott, 2015).

Tolerance for sexual violence and high-risk behaviors. Pornography use and exposure may lead children and adolescents to establish and develop unrealistic sexual values and beliefs often leading to recreational sex, having a higher number of partners, or unwanted sex indicating a tolerance for high-risk behaviors and sexual violence (Bonino, Ciairano, Rabaglietti, & Cattelino, 2006; Braithwaite, Coulson, Keddington, & Fincham, 2015; Montgomery-Graham, Kohut, Fisher, Campbell, & Lorne, 2015; Owens, Behun, Manning, & Reid, 2012; Romito, & Beltramini, 2015; Štulhofer, Buško, & Schmidt, 2012). Pornography use has a possible correlation with an increase in negative sexually-related behaviors such as agression towards women (Baer, et al., 2015). Sexually reactive children and adolescents or juvenile sex offenders who use pornography may even be more at risk for sexually aggressive behaviors (Alexy, et al., 2009). In addition, pornography negatively impacts bystander intervention for sexual violence

and contributes to individuals seeing sexual violence as acceptable (Foubert, & Bridges, 2017).

Unfortunately, the increase in sexual violence hasn't encouraged adolescents to decrease risky

behaviors (Northrup, Lapierre, Kirk, & Rae, 2015). In fact, the Internet has played a role in

facilitating addictions to pornograhy and thus potentially increasing risky behaviors such as

sexual violence (Northrup, Lapierre, Kirk, & Rae, 2015).

Decrease in school performance. Since pornography is considered common among

adolescents, it is also important to note the impact on school performance (Wolak & Finkelhor,

2008). Poor school achievement has been found to have a relationship with pornography use

(Beyens, Vandenbosch, & Eggermont, 2015). In turn, school officials should consider designing

effective interventions that reduce the risks for poor school achievement and risky behaviors

related to pornography such as sexting (Beyens, Vandenbosch, & Eggermont, 2015).

Effects of sexting. The common behavior known as sexting among many children and

adolescents has many parents, lawmakers, and educators concerned about the cases of sexting

involving minors, struggles related to mental health, and the risky behaviors associated with

sexing such as unprotected sex, having sex with multiple partners, and engaging in substance use

(Davis, Powell, Gordon, & Kershaw, 2016; Hasinoff, 2012; Lee, Crofts, McGovern, &

Milivojevic, 2015; Silva, Teixeira, Vasconcelos-Raposo, & Bessa, 2016; Temple, Le, Van Den

Berg, Ling, Paul, & Temple, 2014). Although, some believe that adolescents should be not

labeled as sex offenders, this issue is of concern to lawmakers as many children and adolescents

are using technology to create and distribute sexual images that are at times viewed as child

pornography (Cooper, Quayle, Jonsson, & Svedin, 2016; Hasinoff, 2012; Lee, Crofts,

McGovern, & Milivojevic, 2015; McEachern, McEachern-Ciattoni, & Martin, 2012; Owens,

Behun, Manning, & Reid, 2012). The practice of sexting can also lead to mental health issues

including depression, substance abuse, and impulsivity. In addition, those who are involved with sexting often struggle with feelings of guilt, feelings of shame, and embarrassment (Temple, Le, Van Den Berg, Ling, Paul, & Temple, 2014; Silva, Teixeira, Vasconcelos-Raposo, & Bessa, 2016). Sexting also comes with many other concerns and possible repercussions for those involved such as the likelihood of having unprotected sex and having multiple partners (Benotsch, Snipes, Martin, & Bull, 2013; Davis, Powell, Gordon, & Kershaw, 2016). Considering adolescents do not grasp the consequences of sexting or fully understand the implications of taking naked pictures of themselves and sending the pictures to others, there is arguably a need for prevention and intervention efforts to be directed toward adolescents involving sexting as a form of pornography (Strassberg, Cann, & Velarde, 2016).

Pornography is a poor sex educator. Given the accessibility of the Internet and the seemingly private ability to search it provides, the Internet often presents a viable option for adolescents inquiring about sexual topics, however, these inquires often lead to pornography which is considered a poor educator of sexuality (Flood, 2009). Children and adolescents need to be taught appropriate values and behaviors related to pornography due to this specialized narrative practice of sexual experience and other discourses related to sexuality being used as a means to explore topics on sexual matters (Ahern, & Mechling, 2013; Lubey, 2015; Döring, 2009). Parents and educators need to be informed that adolescents use Internet pornography as a part of their psychosocial development and respond by providing proper sex education (Ševčíková, & Daneback, 2014).

The specialized narrative in pornography invites users to explore without a goal of any particular endpoint which may lead to a continual exploration of pornography for many users putting them at risk for addiction and teaching of unrealistic values (Lubey, 2015; Ševčíková, &

Daneback, 2014). Still some argue the experience of pornography for young men provides educational benefits related to sexuality (McCormack, & Wignall, 2017). However, others suggest that the hardcore nature of pornography provides a sexual script for youth that is problematic (Pratt, & Fernandes, 2015). By allowing popular media and pornography to be the educators of sexuality, children are not guided in proper sexual education and may not be prepared to make healthy sexual decisions (Allen & Lavender-Stott, 2015).

One common reason among adolescents who report viewing sexually explicit messages online, is to inquire about sexual information for educational purposes and to replace or supplement information acquired elsewhere (Hesse, & Pedersen, 2017). While adolescents cite peers as the most frequent source of information about sexuality, they are being directed by one another to the Internet and pornography, thus may not be receiving factual information regarding sexuality (Wallmyr & Welin, 2006). Futher, adolescents have expressed receiving incomplete information from parents and educators regarding sex and in turn seek education regarding sex via the Internet often in the form of pornography (Litras, Latreille, & Temple-Smith, 2015; Smith, 2013). Parents and educators need to be aware that children and adolescents are naturally curious about sex and may seek pornography for sex education, and in response become involved in giving their children a proper and appropriate education on sex unless they prefer to have pornography provide the script for body image and sexual topics (Löfgren-Mårtenson, & Månsson, 2010; Strassberg, Cann, & Velarde, 2016).

Parents' Knowledge and Involvement

Parents need to be knowledgeable about the exposure and use of pornography among children and adolescents (Wetterneck, et al., 2012). In addition to knowledge, parents should be involved by implementing protective factors such as maintaining healthy relationships, setting

boundaries, and embracing religion (Luder, et al., 2011). Further, parents should educate or find ways to be involved in the sexual education of their children (Turnbull, Van Wersch, & Van Schaik, 2008).

Parental knowledge. Many parents believe they do not need to begin discussing pornography related topics with their children until they are teenagers, if at all, and report having little knowledge about online risks or their children's online behaviors (Byrne, Katz, Lee, Linz, & McIlrath, 2014). Parents are mostly unaware that children and adolescents often seek information online to fill in the gaps of sexual education left by their parents, placing them at a greater risk for learning unhealthy sexual behaviors (Eversole, et al., 2017; Peter, & Valkenburg, 2012; Hesse, & Pedersen, 2017). With reports of children being exposed to pornography as early as in elementary school, sexuality is a part a child's development that parents should not ignore but rather seek to increase awareness and knowledge (Byrne, Katz, Lee, Linz, & McIlrath, 2014; Symons, Ponnet, Emmery, Walrave, & Heirman, 2017).

Parents especially need to be aware of the practice of sexting used among adolescents and some children as a part of everyday social-sexual interactions (Ngo, et al., 2017). Technology used by children and adolescents and mostly paid for by parents is often involved in sexting which involves sending nudes, flirtation, and sexual jokes, yet many parents provide little to no limits or monitoring for these behaviors (Ngo, et al., 2017; Yeung, et al., 2014; Walrave, Ponnet, Ouytsel, Van, Gool, Van, Heriman, & Verbeek, 2015). Parents should not only have awareness that sexting is a part of everyday life for many children and adolescents, but should also be involved by setting limits, monitoring technology, and educating them about the problematic behaviors without shame or blame (Burkett, 2015; Ngo, et al., 2017; Yeung, et al., 2014; Walrave, Ponnet, Ouytsel, Van, Gool, Van, Heriman, & Verbeek, 2015).

Parents must realize that every child is potentially at risk for pornography exposure and should consider factors within individuals and families that influence exposure (Ma, & Shek, 2013). Mindful parents seeking to be involved should consider that many adolescent pornography users describe themselves as less independent than their peers, as less socially integrated, express less commitment to family, have fewer pro-social attitudes, and have less attachment to school compared to their peers who do not engage in pornography (Mesch, 2009; Weber, Quiring, & Daschmann, 2012). An additional factor to consider is that coldness in the family environment is related to pornography use and sexual behaviors among children and adolescents; therefore, maintaining a positive and warm family environment is very important related to communication and behaviors among children and adolescents (Ghavidel Heidari, Kazemi, & Nikmanesh, 2012). Finally, education programs shown to decrease exposure and use of pornography among adolescents may include parents learning about healthy family functioning (Ma, & Shek, 2013).

Parental involvement through protective factors. Parents can protect their children from pornography exposure and use by considering protective factors (Cho, 2016; Kunnuji, 2013; Hardy, Steelman, Coyne, & Ridge, 2013; Luder, et al., 2011; Rasmussen, & Bierman, 2016). Communication is a vital aspect in all protective factors which include maintaining healthy relationships, setting boundaries, and embracing religion (Luder, et al., 2011). Thus, parents are encouraged to effectively communicate with their children and adolescents to protect them from pornography use and exposure (Luder, et al., 2011).

Healthy relationships. Adolescents need healthy relationships where they feel safe to communicate and not judged in the area of pornography and curiosity (Luder, et al., 2011). Healthy relationships provide young people a place to ask questions and communicate about

sexual health (Luder, et al., 2011). Although communication may be difficult between a parent and child or adolescent regarding sensitve topics such as pornography, parents should be available to discuss difficult topics, and if pornography exposure occurs, allow it to be a conversation starter about sexuality (Luder, et al., 2011).

     Setting boundaries. Parents indicate a concern for online dangers and a need for boundaries, yet often do not set limits or boundaries (Cho, 2016; Kunnuji, 2013). Establishing recommended boundaries to protect children from sexually explicit material include limiting recreational use time of the Internet, spending more quality time with their children, and communicating the importance of time away from the Internet with their children (Cho, 2016; Kunnuji, 2013). Filtering and blocking software are other boundaries that can also reduce the risk of unwanted pornography exposure (Mitchell, Finkelhor, & Wolak, 2007). Also, setting proper boundaries regarding the Internet and communication technology should be coupled with communication on topics such as why there is a need for safety, disclosing of personal information, and the risk of exposure to violent sexual behaviors (Fleming, Greentree, Cocotti-Muller, Elias, & Morrison, 2006; Rosen, Cheever, & Carrier, 2008).

     Embracing religion. Considering immersion in a religious community correlates with the discouragement of pornography use and considering religious practices are still reported by 79% of people in the United States, embracing religion may be worth considering by parents as another protective factor from the impact of pornography among children and adolescents (Grubbs, Exline, Pargament, Hook, & Carlisle, 2015; Newport, 2017; Rasmussen, & Bierman, 2016; Hardy, Steelman, Coyne, & Ridge, 2013). While Internet Pornography use has shown to be lower among those who are religious as it is often morally charged, it is also vital to maintain a positive relationship with children by being aware of certain perceptions concerning

pornography use such as perceived addiction and the expression of potentially harmful feelings such as shame and guilt (Grubbs, Exline, Pargament, Hook, & Carlisle, 2015; Grubbs, Sessoms, Wheeler, & Volk, 2010; Hardy, Steelman, Coyne, & Ridge, 2013; Rasmussen, & Bierman, 2016; Rhea & Issler, 2015; Volk, Thomas, Sosin, Jacob, & Moen, 2016). Finally, given sexuality and sex education is often a controversial and uncomfortable topic among religious parents, a need for education regarding healthy communication on sensitive topics such as pornography likely exists (Dent, & Maloney, 2017; Svedin, Åkerman, & Priebe, 2011).

Parental education. Children and and adolescents want to learn about sexual matters from their parents and benefit greatly when parents are engaged in their learning, therefore, parents should find ways to be involved in the sexual education of their children (Goodall, & Montgomery, 2014; Turnbull, Van Wersch, & Van Schaik, 2008; Allen & Lavender-Stott, 2015). Parents can begin by educating themselves on safe media use, ethical practices, and by becoming informed about the risks of pornography use and exposure (Gabriel, 2014). Educating themselves on the benefits of counseling as an intervention for children who have been exposed to pornography is also worth consideration among parents (Svedin, Åkerman, & Priebe, 2011). In addition, parents need to be open to all aspects of prevention and intervention efforts regarding pornography and their children including learning how to talk to their children about sex and seeking counseling if they are concerned about pornography use or exposure among their children (Eversole, Berglas, Deardorff, & Constantine, 2017; Thornburgh & Lin, 2004). With respect to the education of children, parental involvement is complex and should occur at home and at school (Jezierski, & Wall, 2017). Accordingly, parents may consider working with school counselors who can provide counseling and education for students and parents as a way to prevent and intevene when concerns about pornography exposure and sexual behaviors arise

among children and adolescents (Gonzalez, Borders, Hines, Villalba, & Henderson, 2013).

Schools' Knowledge and Involvement

Considering the Internet brings challenges such as pornography use and exposure, school personnel must be knowledgeable that the Internet plays a huge role in the lives of children and adolescents that is not going away (Bower, 2013). Sex education in one aspect of tackling the problem of pornography use among children and adolescents, yet other methods of prevention and intervention should be explored and considered (Litras, et al., 2015; Löfgren-Mårtenson, & Månsson, 2010). School counselors can expore other methods of prevention and implement indirect and direct services for students impacted by pornography use and sexual behaviors (Baker, 2016; McEachern, McEachern-Ciattoni, & Martin, 2012).

Knowledge and involvement. Within cultures and countries where the majority of children are educated outside of the home, it is not surprising that pornography use is a common issue school officials are dealing with among students (Livingstone, & Smith, 2014). Many students (10%) report viewing pornography in school (Rothman, et al., 2015). Sexting, which can be an aspect of pornography, is often disruptive to the learning environment (Powell, 2016). Therefore, if students are being impacted by pornography at school, educators need to respond with effective prevention and intervention efforts (Livingstone, & Smith, 2014).

Sex education. Rather than occuring mainly in the form of formal education in the school setting or at home with parents, sex education is often occurring on the Internet (Döring, 2009). The current legislation promotes abstinence-based education in which educators are encouraged to teach that abstinence from sexual activity outside of marriage is the health standard and includes teaching information about the psychological and physical aspects of not practicing abstinence including the influence of drugs and alcohol (National Conference of State

Legislatures, 2015). In the US, each state has different requirements and curriculum for sex

education (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2015). Twenty-four states and the District

of Columbia require public education to teach sex education (National Conference of State

Legislatures, 2015). Thirty-eight states and the District of Columbia require schools to allow

parental involvement (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2015). However, currently

there is no information regarding teaching about the specific effects of pornography with the

abstinence-only context, and it is recommended to implement comprehensive sex education in

addition to abstinence education that utilizes an action model (Lerner, & Hawkins, 2016). While

all the debates in legislation are occurring about sex education, most adolescents seek sexual

information for educational purposes online and from their peers (Hesse, & Pedersen, 2017;

Wallmyr & Welin, 2006). Regardless of how sex education is offered, providing proper sex

education in schools means considering that adolescents use online pornography as a part of their

psychosexual development (Ševčíková, & Daneback, 2014).

   Prevention and intervention efforts in schools. Schools may benefit from intervention

strategies that be effective in reducing negative effects of pornography exposure such as

educating students, implementing filtering program, and targeting at-risk groups (Baker, 2016;

Bower, 2013; Rothman, Adhia, & Kirsh, 2015; Isaacs, & Fisher, 2008; Livingstone, & Smith,

2014). Educating adolescents on the importance of being aware of the violent and degrading

messages associated with pornography exposure while encouraging teens to find healthy and

respectful ways to handle their sexuality is recommended as an intervention and prevention

strategy (Romito, & Beltramini, 2015). The strategy of implementing safety measures such as

filtering programs should be taught, used, and monitored in schools because many students may

be viewing pornography at school (Baker, 2016; Bower, 2013; Rothman, Adhia, & Kirsh, 2015;

Isaacs, & Fisher, 2008; Livingstone, & Smith, 2014). Efforts of intervention in schools should not only include filtering programs but should target at-risk groups for smaller group interventions, include education about sexual violence among other educational efforts, and focus on the consequences of sending images to a third party (Isaacs, & Fisher, 2008; Barrense-Dias, Berchtold, Surís, & Akre, 2017). School programs, such as those offered by school counselors, that include assessment, education, and evidence-based interventions promoted through an open and safe environment are recommended for children and adolescents impacted by pornography use or sexual behaviors (Ahern, et al., 2013; Band, 2017).

School Counselors can lead Prevention and Intervention efforts

The ASCA model should guide school counselors as they seek to meet the needs of students impacted by pornography use and sexual behaviors (Martin, & Carey, 2014; McEachern, McEachern-Ciattoni, & Martin, 2012). School counselors can lead in prevention and intervention efforts related to pornography through indirect and direct services guided by the ASCA model (Martin, & Carey, 2014; McEachern, McEachern-Ciattoni, & Martin, 2012). Spearheading schoolwide involvement in creating and evaluating evidence-based interventions for students impacted by pornograhy use or sexual behaviors is vital work done by school counseling staff that may require additional training (Patrikakou, Ockerman, Hollenbeck, 2013; Mason, 2010).

The America School Counseling Association Model. The American School Counseling Association (ASCA) model that suggests school counselors offer direct and indirect services for students. Direct services include the core curriculum, student planning, and responsive services (Martin, & Carey, 2014). The core curriculum includes psychoeducational lessons designed to help students attain knowledge, attitudes, and skills appropriate for their level of development,

and the student planning component is intended to assist students in achieving their personal goals and in developing their plans (Martin, & Carey, 2014). Responsive services including individual counseling, group counseling, and crisis response are direct efforts used to respond to students needs and concerns that arise (Martin, & Carey, 2014). The ASCA model also includes indirect services which include personnel evaluations, program management processes, program evaluation processes and program advocacy processes often requiring collaboration with school staff, parents, and community members (Martin, & Carey, 2014). Gaining administrative, parental, and community support is encouraged through collaboration when seeking to implement new programs (Goodman-Scott, Betters-Bubon, & Donohue, 2015).

Prevention and Intervention Strategies. School counselors can help students receive proper guidance for making healthy decisions instead of merely allowing popular media and pornography to be the educators of sexuality (Allen & Lavender-Stott, 2015; Mcgovern, Crofts, Lee, & Milivojevic, 2016). Proper guidance offered by school counselors to help students impacted by pornography use and sexual behaviors is offered through indirect and direct services (Martin, & Carey, 2014). Indirect services include planning and collaboration to assess and engage students, school staff, community agencies, and parents in prevention and intervention efforts (Burrow-Sanchez, et al., 2011; Hill, Witherspoon, & Bartz, 2018; Martin, & Carey, 2014). In addition, direct services may include individual and group counseling and offering educational programs for parents and teachers about pornography use among children and adolescents. In order to use the most effective services and evidence-based practices, counselors may need additional training in tackling the concerns associated with pornography use among children and adolescents (Martin, & Carey, 2014).

Indirect services include planning and collaboration. School counselors can help

prevent or reduce problems such as pornography use among students by collaborating with teachers, administrators, and parents in order to develop partnerships (Epstein, & Van, 2010; Duslak, & Geier, 2017). Successful partnerships with families and communities include communicating, volunteering, learning, decision making, leadership, and advocacy while providing flexible formats that respect the time of family and community members involved (Griffin, & Steen, 2010; Gonzalez, et al., 2013; Goodman-Scott, Betters-Bubon, & Donohue, 2015). Once partnerships are established through collaboration, school counselors should begin preparing prevention and intervention efforts for students impacted by pornography use and sexual behaviors by conducting a needs assessment (Martin, & Carey, 2014). After a needs assessment has been done, services can be planned and implemented (Martin, & Carey, 2014). School counselors can spearhead and organize efforts at their schools for prevention and intervention programs related to pornography among children and adolescents by bringing together parents and community members as they seek to help students (Braun-Courville & Rojas, 2009; Bryan, Griffin, 2010; Whiston, Tai, Rahardja, & Eder, 2011; Wolak, Mitchell, & Finkelhor, 2007).

Direct Services offered by school counselors. Prevention and interventions efforts for children and adolescents impacted by pornography use or sexual behaviors should also include direct services offered by school counselors such as individual counseling, group counseling, and educational programs (Dönmez, Odabaşi, Yurdakul, Kuzu, & Girgin, 2017; Griffin, & Farris, 2010; Trolley, 2011; Ma, & Shek, 2013; Martin, & Carey, 2014; McEachern, McEachern-Ciattoni, & Martin, 2012). Individual counseling that responds to student needs enhances the school connection with the student, and therefore, can be viewed as an intervention for students in academic and nonacademic areas of concern such as pornograhy use and sexual behaviors

(Braun-Courville & Rojas, 2009; Lapan, Wells, Peterson, & McCann, 2014; Russell, 2012). While providing counseling, school counselors should use culturally appropriate communication with children and adolescents concerning pornography use and never indicate shame, blame, guilt, or failure (Wernik, 2012). In addition to individual counseling, school counselors should implement interventions such student-led discussion groups, which are forms of group counseling (Hudson, & Fetro, 2015). Interventions such as groups, may include looking into social norms and personality traits among children and adolescents concerning sexual behaviors (Hudson, & Fetro, 2015). Lastly, education programs are recommended for students, parents, and school staff because education has shown to be an effective way to address pornography (Baker, 2016; Martinson, 2007). The design of the psychoeducation lessons should help participants attain knowledge, attitudes, and skills appropriate for their level of development and should account for gender differences when implementing lessons on sex and relationships (Martin, & Carey, 2014; Häggström-Nordin, Tydén, Hanson, & Larsson, 2009). Knowledge offered in educational programs should be accurate and able to be evaluated for future initiatives which may require additional and ongoing training (Bryan & Griffin, 2010; Ekstrand, Engblom, Larsson, & Tydén, 2011; Lim, Vella, Horyniak, & Hellard, 2016; Short, Wetterneck, Shutter, Chase, Bistricky, Tannah, & Chase, 2016; Villares & Dimmitt, 2017).

Training and Education of School Counselors

In order for school counselors to become knowledgeable and comfortable discussing or educating students on sensitive topics, they need more training on implementing evidence-based practices for sexual behaviors and pornography use (Bryan & Griffin, 2010; Ekstrand, Engblom, Larsson, & Tydén, 2011; Short, Wetterneck, Shutter, Chase, Bistricky, Tannah, & Chase, 2016; Villares & Dimmitt, 2017). School counselors desire to be trained in order to increase self-

efficacy and competence in classroom management, which can help them to be more comfortable dealing with tough subjects such as pornography use (Bloom, et al., 2016; Bloom, Gutierrez, Lambie, & Ali, 2016; Buchanan, Mynatt, Woodside, 2017; McCarthy, Kerne, Calfa, Lambert, & Guzman, 2010). Training and education on how to work with students impacted by pornography use, the current technology being used by children, understanding the steps to ensure online safety, maintaining personal online/technology integrity, and knowing how to address issues when things go wrong can be beneficial for school counselors (Bloom & Hagedorn, 2015; Bond, & Hine, 2012). With evidence that the public supports efforts to increase awareness for children and pornography, through taxpayer increases there may be funding available for training of school counselors in the area of pornography prevention and intervention (Mears, Mancini, Gertz, & Bratton, 2008). In sum, a need for training when addressing issues related to sexuality has been indicated by school counselors seeking to implement prevention and intervention programs regarding pornography and sexual behaviors among students (Mattebo, Larsson, Tydén, & Häggström-Nordin, 2014).

Summary

The review of literature initially explored pornography exposure and use among children and adolescents, due to the impact of the Internet and increase in communication technology (Coopersmith, 2006). Parental knowledge of pornography use among children and adolescents, and the parental involvement in the sex education of their children was also reviewed as pornography has shown not to be an ideal educator for children and adolescents on sexual matters (Flood, 2009). Educators, such as school counselors, are involved with children and adolescents concerning sex education and the impact of pornography and sexual behaviors, therefore the review examined how school counselors could lead prevention and intervention

efforts in this area (Russell, 2012). The review concludes with the discovery of a need for specific training of school counselors, who were indicated as interacting with students impacted by pornography and sexual behaviors (Russell, 2012).

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

In this chapter, the research methods are discussed. This study implemented a qualitative survey within the design of a case study. The research includes survey data and the methods are explained which include information on the design, how the study was conducted, how the case study evidence was analyzed, and how the conclusions, implications, and recommendations were developed (Tellis, 1997).

Overview

This study explored school counselors' experiences regarding pornography exposure and sexual behaviors among children and adolescents. School counselors', from a school system in North Carolina, responses were assessed through an online qualitative survey. The case study methods explained in this section include the design, research questions, participants and setting, information on the role of the researcher, and data collection and analysis. The goal of this case study was to explore and collect thematic and descriptive information that answered research questions, allowed for recommendations for future studies, and provided implications for school counselors for further inquiry, further policy, and for training, programming and implementation of programming and services.

Design

This study was a qualitative case study design of research utilizing a survey for collection of data. The design of a qualitative survey was used to produce a description of experiences and themes with the goal of understanding a phenomenon verses a quantitative survey which may have sought only to provide descriptive information (Hepner, Wampold, Owen, Wang, & Thompson 2015; Warner, 2012; Yin, 2018). The specific design of this study was a case study as case studies have been used to investigate contemporary phenomena within real-world contexts

(Yin, 2018). A case study also allows for multiple variables of interest to develop and relies on multiple sources of evidence for data to converge and triangulate (Yin, 2018).

The Logic Model was used to provide conceptualization and a theoretical framework for the study. School counselors use the Logic Model while implementing the American School Counselor Association National Model (ASCA) for direct and indirect services they provide. Individuals and programs plan somewhat for the unforeseeable and evaluate the effectiveness of specific activities by utilizing the Logic Model (Waghmare, & Srivastava, 2016). The Logic Model includes four major components: inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes (Waghmare, & Srivastava, 2016). Many case studies use the Logic Model by following the steps of collecting information, describing problems, defining elements of the logic model, constructing the logic model and verifying the logic model (Kalu & Norman, 2018). The goal of using the theoretical foundation of a Logic Model and case study in this study was to explore the resources for school counselors, activities implemented, and thus outcomes which impact students (Waghmare, & Srivastava, 2016).

A qualitative survey was designed for this study in order to assess information with the goal of studying a complex phenomenon within the context of school counselor experiences (Baxter & Jack, 2008). The case study methodology provided the tools necessary for this study of the experiences of school counselors related to pornography use and sexual behaviors among students (Baxter & Jack, 2008). The rationale for a case study which implemented a survey of school counselors from an entire district including elementary, middle, and high school counselors, allowed for the possibility of different themes to be found from across levels and allowed for the exploration of how the themes differed among the levels which aided in triangulation of data. A case study approach is also advantageous when a research question

posed includes "how" (Yin, 2018). Therefore, the qualitative case study design was an appropriate design for this study.

Following IRB approval, the survey was given during the fall semester of the 2018-2019 school year. Announcements regarding the anonymous, optional, survey were made at school counselor meetings and via email. The survey link was emailed and encouraged to be completed within two weeks of receiving the survey. No formal controls were available to prevent participant collaboration in completing the survey.

Research Questions

RQ 1: How are school counselors involved when students have been referred to them for problems related to pornography use?

RQ 2: In what ways are school counselors adapting services and interventions for growing trends related to sexual behaviors in students such as pornography?

RQ 3: In what ways are school counselors working with school staff and parents on issues related to pornography use among students?

RQ 4: What training experiences have school counselors had pertaining specifically to responding to pornography use among students?

Participants and Setting

Participants for this survey were school counselors in the Piedmont region of North Carolina. The county is a suburb community of one of North Carolina's major cities. The sample provided data and information relating to school counselors' involvement in working with students who have been impacted by pornography or sexual behaviors such as sexting. School counselors were chosen because of their access to students and work with students at all levels k-12. Professional school counselors are certified/licensed educators with the minimum of

a master's degree in school counseling and are uniquely qualified to address the developmental needs of all students through a comprehensive school counseling program addressing the academic, career and personal/social development of all students (ASCA, 2011). School counselors, who seek to assist all students in their academic, career, and personal-social development, are typically not in classrooms with one specific group students all day but rather have a case load of students with whom they work. The assistance and counseling provided by school counselors includes addressing mental health issues and other behaviors that negatively impact students (Trolley, 2011). Teachers and administrators regularly seek the assistance of school counselors to help deal with negative student behaviors and mental health issues (Dahir, Burnham, Stone, & Cobb, 2010). Therefore, school counselors on all levels may deal with issues that negatively impact students including pornography use and sexual behaviors and therefore should be considered as leaders in prevention and efforts (Eversole, Berglas, Deardorff, & Constantine, 2017; Peter, & Valkenburg, 2012; Hesse, & Pedersen, 2017). The participant group included male and female school counselors in elementary, middle and high schools. All, a total of 125, school counseling professionals in the district were invited to complete the survey with the support of the Superintendent and Director of Student Services.

Procedures

This case study followed the guidelines recommended by Tellis, (1997): Design the case study, conduct the study, analyze the case study evidence and develop conclusions, implications, and recommendations. This study began with the researcher attending local community meetings comprised of school counselors, school social workers, and community mental health providers. Connections through collaboration were made at this meeting allowing for the researcher to approach the Director of Student Services about the possibility of surveying school counselors in

the Cabarrus County District. The researcher asked the Director of Student Services at the meeting for an appointment to discuss a possible research study including the school counselors in the district. At the meeting with the Director of Student Services, the idea of surveying the school counselors was discussed. The next step included emailing the Superintendent for permission to survey the school counselors. The survey was then developed for the school system leaders to review. The survey began with a few demographic questions and proceeded to questions regarding school counselor experiences. The superintendent included the Associate Superintendent of Accountability and Director of Student Services in the approval process by having them review the proposal and survey. Once the Superintendent, Associate Superintendent of Accountability, and the Director of Student Services reviewed the survey, full permission was granted to move forward with the study.

The survey was created online via Qualtrics.com. The survey was piloted tested with a group of four counselors from another district. The pilot group of school counselors was from a district adjacent to the district proposed in this study to be researched. The researcher emailed the Associate Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction and Director of Student Services for permission to obtain feedback for the survey from three to five counselors for the purpose of a pilot survey. After permission was received from the pilot district, the survey was emailed to the pilot group. The pilot group had one week to complete the survey. After the pilot group was surveyed, the survey was adjusted according to recommendations. Following the process of reviewing recommendations and making adjustments to the survey, a link for the survey was emailed to all school counselors in the district to be researched. The email with the survey link was sent from the Director of Student Services to all school counselors. The school counselors were given two weeks to respond. Two weeks allowed a window of time for school counselors to

respond while decreasing the chance of forgetting about the survey. A reminder email was sent after the first week.

The Researcher's Role

As the researcher, I played the role of human instrument in this study. Yin (2018), suggests the researcher seek to ask good questions and interpret answers fairly, be a good listener who is not trapped by preconceptions, and be one who stays adaptive seeing new situations as opportunities and not threats. The relationship the researcher had to participants was one of a mental health professional within the community where the school counselors were employed. I, the researcher, am a former school counselor and thus have had past experiences similar to those discovered within this study. In addition, I have served as a resource in the community aiding school counselors in the district by providing implications and recommendations they can use in future program development.

Instrumentation

The Instrumentation for this study included a self-report, anonymous, survey created by the researcher. Permission was granted to give the survey to school counselors by the superintendent, associate superintendent of accountability, and director of student services in the district assessed. The survey was comprised of nine total questions (one question had two parts) and was intended to take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. The first four questions of the survey included demographic questions concerning years of experience as a school counselor, grade level of students worked with, and level of school counselors work in currently. The remaining part of the survey investigated the experiences of school counselors related to pornography use and sexual behaviors of students.

Example: Over the course of your career, have you noticed any trends in issues that students have related to sexual behavior or questions? Please describe the trends you are currently are seeing and how those issues may have changed over time.

The survey provided information for the researcher on the questions posed in this study. Pilot testing for the survey was completed by a group of four counselors from another district and was adjusted according to recommendations in order to provide a measure of credibility and trustworthiness. Distribution of the survey was implemented via email to all of the school counselors in the district.

Data Collection and Analysis

The survey data from this study was collected via an online survey on Qualtrics.com. These data collection procedures followed the recommendations of including using multiple sources of evidence (used for data triangulation), creating a case study database (separate files for data and reports), maintaining a chain of evidence (to increase construct validity) and exercising care when using data from social media sources (Yin, 2018).

After the descriptive data was reviewed and documented, the qualitative data was analyzed by first taking notes on responses and organizing themes from meaningful quotes. The themes were coded and reviewed in SPSS. The data collection procedures followed the recommendations of attending to all the evidence, investigating all plausible rival interpretations, addressing the most significant aspects of the case study, and demonstrating a familiarity with the prevailing thinking and discourse about the case study topic (Yin, 2018).

After two weeks of response time given, the survey data collected was analyzed. Intentional analysis was used with the absence of judgment in a written description of the participants' experiences (Hepner, et al., 2015). Due to the possibility of investigator bias in this

study, one other individual uninvolved with the study was asked to review the descriptions collected (Stiska, Volk, & Rymsza-Pawlowska, 2004). The analytic strategy included putting information into different themes and subthemes, making a matrix of contrasting categories, creating visual displays to examine the data, tabulating the frequency of different events and putting information in chronological order or another type of sequence (Yin, 2018).

The analysis began with the researcher looking at the open-ended responses from the surveys, capturing meaningful quotes that inferred themes throughout the data collected. The themes were coded and organized in SPSS. The analytical techniques used were explanation building to explain the phenomenon and utilizing the logic model which consists of matching empirically observed events to theoretically predicted events (Yin, 2018). In order to seek a high-quality analysis, the researcher attended to all evidence, investigated all plausible rival interpretations, addressed the most significant aspect of the case study, and demonstrated a familiarity about the case study topic (Yin, 2018).

Trustworthiness and Validity

Trustworthiness included triangulation of data. Data used for triangulation was data reviewed across different levels (elementary, middle and high) of schools worked at among school counselors. The trustworthiness was also related to the source of the sample considering the survey only asked about first-hand experiences. The researcher sought to meet the test of construct validity by defining the phenomenon in terms of specific concepts and identifying operational measures that match concepts (Yin, 2018). Internal validity was not a concern to do the descriptive and exploratory nature of the study (Yin, 2018)

Credibility

Credibility was sought by gathering adequate information describing reality of the participants' experiences. The credibility was based on the choice of the sample. The limitations are due to the data being limited to school counselors in one district.

Dependability and Confirmability

Dependability and confirmability were sought in the survey by providing adequate detail about the context and setting of the study.

Transferability

The study sought to provide possible transferability such that the information collected was applicable to different contexts meaning different districts and school counselors. However, external validity was limited due to the study including only one district being surveyed and therefore hindering the generalizability of findings beyond the immediate study.

Ethical Considerations

The survey was anonymous and did not require signed informed consent. There was a consent included at the beginning of the survey for the participants to review before proceeding on to the survey. There were little to no risks for the participants. The data collected was kept on a password protected private computer.

Summary

The study presented was a case study approach to qualitative research. The case study methodology explored school counselor experiences regarding pornography exposure and use among children and adolescents. The case study methods discussed included the design, research questions, participants and setting, information on the role of the researcher, and data collection and analysis. A qualitative survey was the tool by which the data was collected. After the surveys

were completed, the data collected was analyzed. The survey assessed the experiences of school counselors regarding pornography and sexual behaviors among the students they serve. Qualitative analysis was used to provide information to promote understanding of the phenomenon of school counselors' interactions and experiences regarding pornography and sexual behaviors among students with the goal of answering the research questions and providing implications and recommendations for school counselors.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Overview

The purpose of this study was to explore school counselor involvement, interaction and experiences with students impacted by pornography use and sexual behaviors. Data collection was completed by October 31, 2018. A total of 51 respondents out of 125 took the survey and provided data to be analyzed. The number of school counseling professionals (40.8%) who responded was greater than expected. Initial data was reviewed for descriptive information and frequencies. The qualitative data was then analyzed by coding and organizing themes that developed. The results including theme development, findings, and responses to research questions are presented in this chapter. The chapter concludes with a summary of findings.

Participants

Participants for this survey were school counselors from a district in the Piedmont region of North Carolina. The response rate was 40.8% or 51 out of 125 school counseling professionals participated in the survey. The county is a suburb community of one of NC's major cities. Participants included elementary, middle, and high school counselors from the district. The school counselors ranged in levels of experience from less than one year to 28 years of experience with a mean of 10.95 years (Table 1). The experience level of respondents in the specific district ranged from less than one year to 25 years with the mean 6.77 years (Table 2).
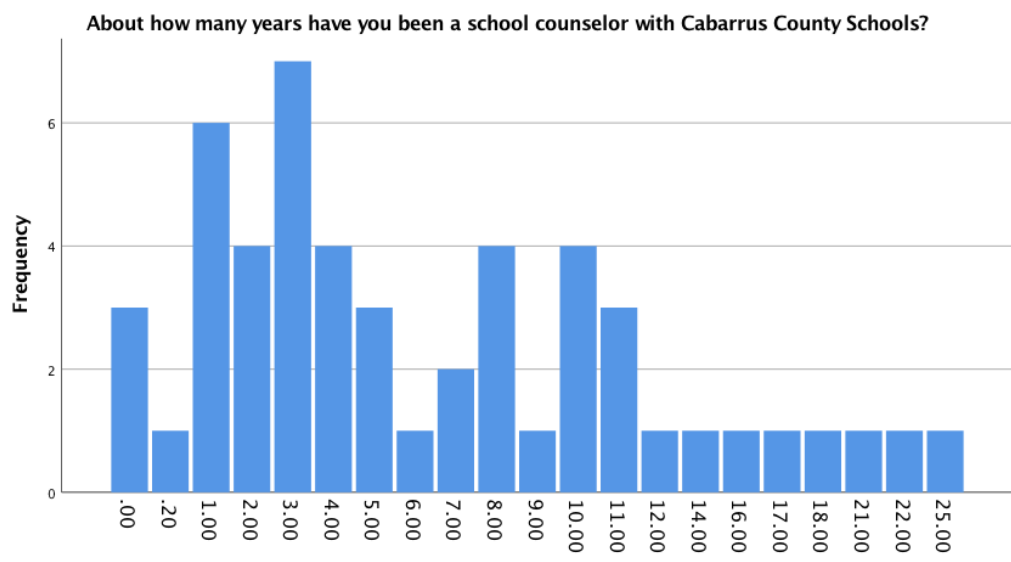
Table 1

School counselor experience
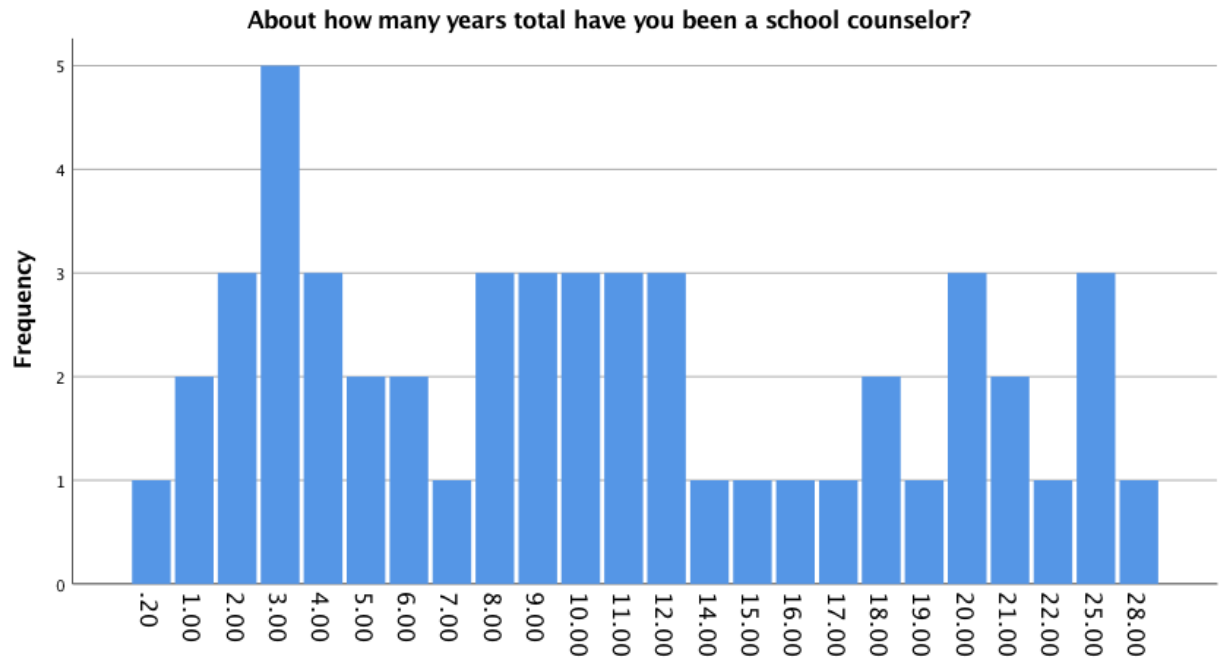
The most frequent amount of time spent as a school counselor among respondents was three

years. There was a notable decrease of frequency among those with 14 to 17 years of experience.

Those with 12 years of experience or less were among the most frequent of respondents, with

those having 13 or more years being the least frequent among respondents.
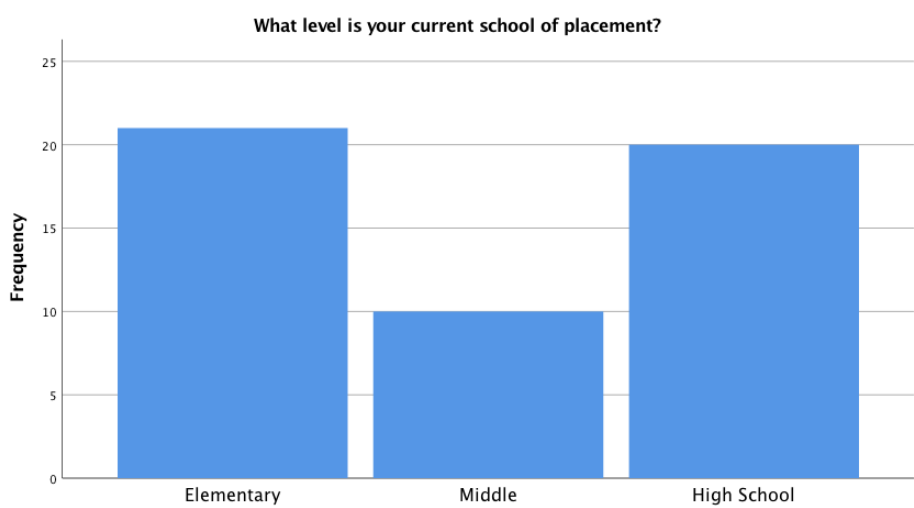
Table 2

School counselor experience in specific district

This table suggests most respondents have worked for the specific district less than 12 years.
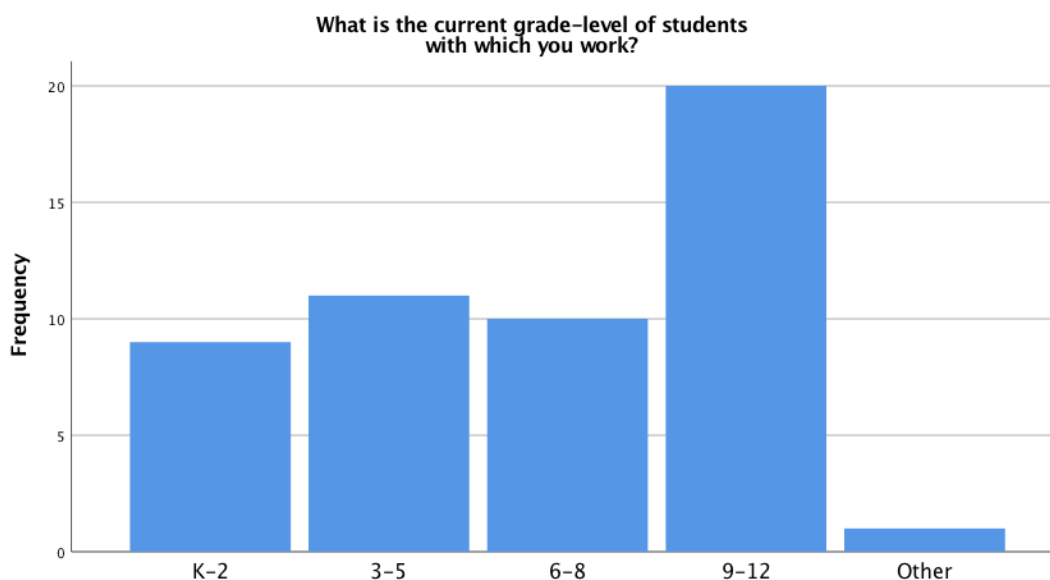
Table 3

Current level of placement in schools

This table shows most respondents were from the elementary level. Middle school respondents

were the least group to respond and high school counselors were in the middle.

Table 4

Current grade level of placement in school

Elementary school counselors

This group was comprised of counselors who work with students aged five to eleven and in grades Kindergarten through fifth grade. Most of respondents were from the elementary level, which may have included some in the preschool programs in the district. Specifically, there were nine respondents who reported working in grades kindergarten through second, and 11 reported working in grades third through fifth. The one who reported "other or system" which could have represented the preschool area or among multiple school levels. The higher response rate among elementary school counselors was somewhat unexpected due to the topic of the survey.

Middle school counselors

This group was comprised of counselors who work with students aged 11-14 and in grades sixth through eight. It may be notable to consider the lower amount of middle school counselors in the district compared to elementary and high school counselors. There were ten

respondents from the middle school area who reported working in grades sixth through eighth. This response was somewhat expected due to the lower total number of middle school counselors compared to total number of counselors in elementary and total number of counselors high within the district.

High school counselors

This group was comprised of counselors who work with students aged 14-18 and in grades ninth through twelfth. This group was the second highest group of total respondents with 20. The result was expected due to the likelihood of high school counselors possibly having dealt with the topic of the survey more often than counselors at lower levels. Adolescents reported at a rate of 71%, having been exposed to pornography (Leung, Chen, Shu, and Yang, 2013).

Other or System school counselors

The category of other emerged out of respondents not specifically replying to a question about grade levels within the range of K-12. Therefore, this likely indicates a counselor who works among multiple levels or possibly in the preschool area. There was one respondent within the "other or system" category.

<div align="center">**Results**</div>

In this section, the results are discussed. The first section includes descriptive data, followed qualitative data from the results. The qualitative data is discussed in terms of theme development. The last section explains and answers the research questions related to the findings.

Descriptive Data

The survey asked specifically about whether or not school counselors had incidents related to pornography use. There was a total of 31 or 60.8% of respondents who reported yes to having incidents related to pornography use or exposure among students. There were 20 respondents or 39.2% who reported not having incidents related to pornography use or exposure among students. Counselors across all levels indicated having incidents with students in their related specifically to pornography use or sexual behaviors. Table 5 shows incidents related to pornography use or sexual behaviors by level (elementary, middle, and high) of counselors.

Table 5

Incidents related specifically related to pornography and sexual behaviors
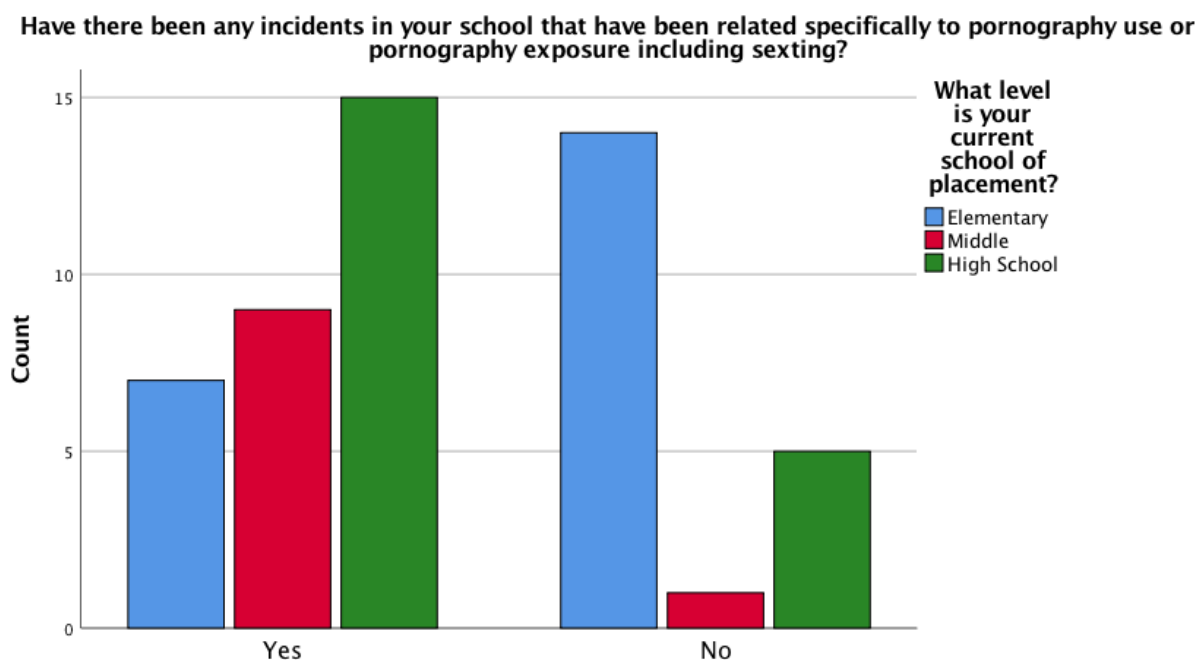
Theme Development from Qualitative Data

There were six themes that developed from the qualitative data analysis. The first theme developed was the typical engagement of counselors with students regarding sexual behaviors

and pornography. The second theme developed was trends in sexual behaviors, sexual related questions, and pornography. Themes three through five developed from the survey question which asked about the most challenging incident dealt with by the school counselors related to pornography or sexual related behaviors. The last theme developed was school counselors' desires for training in order to prepare for challenging incidents in the future related to pornography use and sexual behaviors. The analytical techniques used were explanation building to explain the phenomenon (Yin, 2018). The structure of the analysis includes the defining the theme, describe the results, and analyzing the results based on a comparative structure (Yin, 2018).

Typical Engagement of Counselor. The first theme developed from the data and analysis was the typical engagement among counselors and students in situations dealing with pornography and sexual behaviors. The typical engagement involved three different types of interactions with students including counseling, collaboration, and teaching. Counseling was the most frequent typical engagement with 72.5% total (Elementary N=13; Middle N=7 and High N=17). Collaboration was the second highest typical engagement with a total of 21.6% (Elementary N=5; Middle N=3; and High N=3). The final type of typical engagement was teaching with 9.8% (Elementary N=2; Middle N=1 and High N=2).

Counselors across all levels were similar in the theme of typical engagement. Elementary, middle, and high school counselors mostly interacting with students by providing counseling. Elementary counselors generally responded with typical engagement including counseling. For example, "Worked with students to address school appropriate use of technology and worked with parents to refer to outside counseling." Middle school counselors mainly responded with counseling as the typical engagement. For example, "Counselor engagement with issues:

Individual supports/response specific to the particular issue." High school counselors also mostly responded with counseling as a typical engagement. For example, "If a student is suspended for this then after the suspension, I would speak to them about it upon re-entry to the school." Collaboration was the next category among all levels of counselors, followed by teaching. Therefore, these results indicate elementary, middle, and high school counselors typically engagement with students through counseling. Other types of engagement include collaboration and teaching but these are not as frequent as counseling.
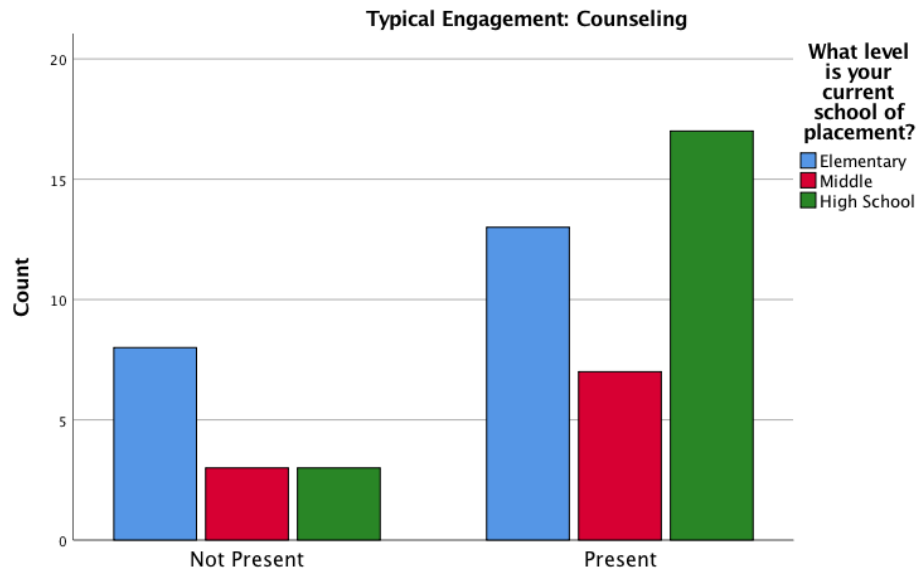

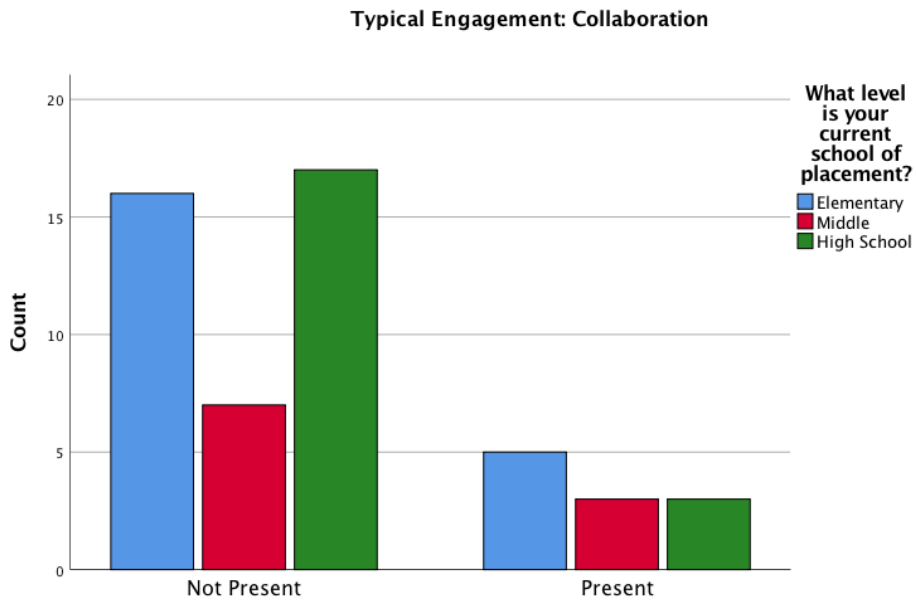
Figure 1

Typical Engagement Counseling

Typical Engagement: Collaboration

Figure 2

Typical Engagement Collaboration
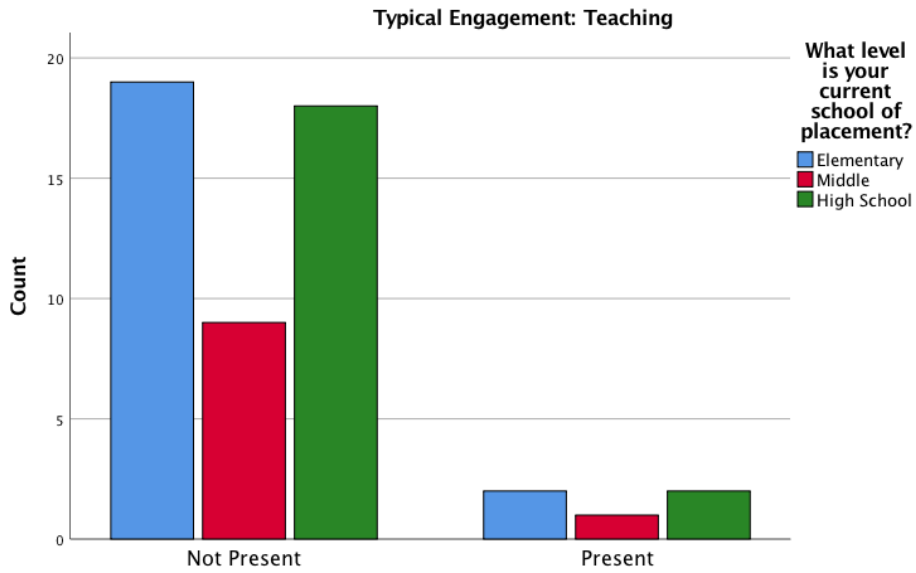
Typical Engagement: Teaching

Figure 3

Typical Engagement Teaching

Trends. The second theme that developed from the data and analysis was related to trends noticed by counselors on issues students have related to sexual behaviors or pornography. The first trend was an increase in sexual related behavior concerns 54.9%, followed by an increase in technology with 41.2%, an increase in social media 35.3%, an increase in issues related to sexual identity 13.7%; an increase in the lack of parental monitoring 11.8%, an increase in legal concerns 7.8%, and finally an increase in school interruptions 5.9%.

Counselors across levels reported at the highest levels in areas of increase in sexual behaviors and technology. Elementary school counselors differed from middle and high school counselors in the area of parental monitoring decreasing. For example, "Technology use is not monitored; Less supervision in general with more students living in dual working parent households." Middle school counselors differed from elementary and high school counselors in the trends categories of legal issues and school interruptions. For example, "…We have had to deal with many issues of "sexting", usually outside of the school day, but it has come to affect the student at school. Especially, if the sexts have been screenshot and shown around. I had an instance where a student filmed another student performing fellatio on him outside of school hours, but the entire 8th grade was affected because many people were sent the video and it caused a disruption to the school day." High school counselors differed from elementary and middle school counselors in the category of sexual behaviors. There was a much higher rate for trends in the increase of sexual behavior concerns reported by high school counselors. For example, "Trends I have noticed regarding sex: Females are more aggressive sexually and not at all trying to hide sexual activity; Students have a casual approach toward oral sex." Finally, middle and high school counselors reported the trend of increasing sexual identity issues, whereas there was no mention of this among elementary school counselors.
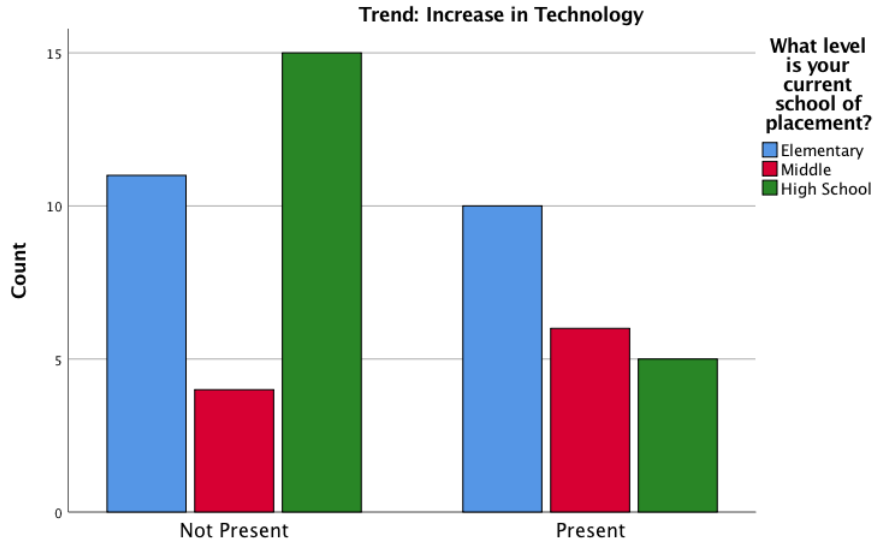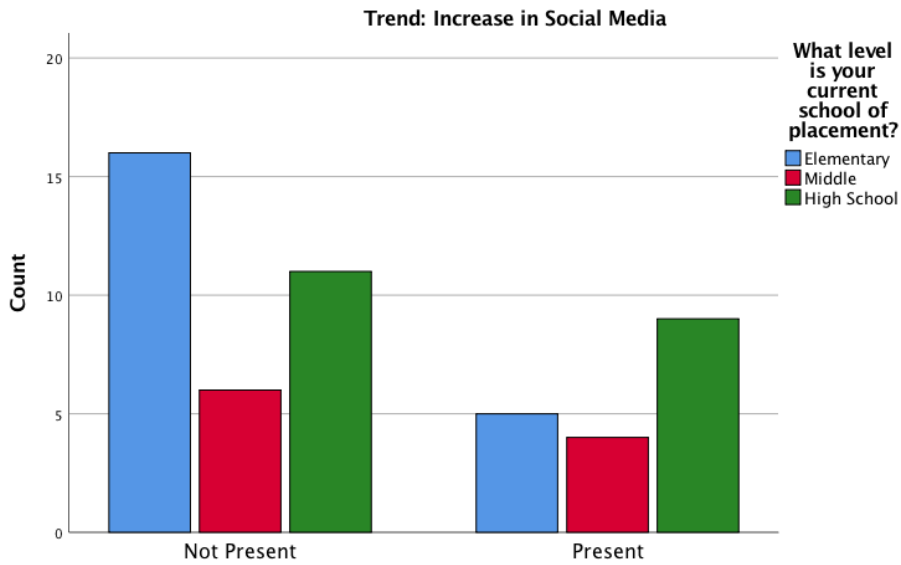
Figure 4

Trend Increase in Technology
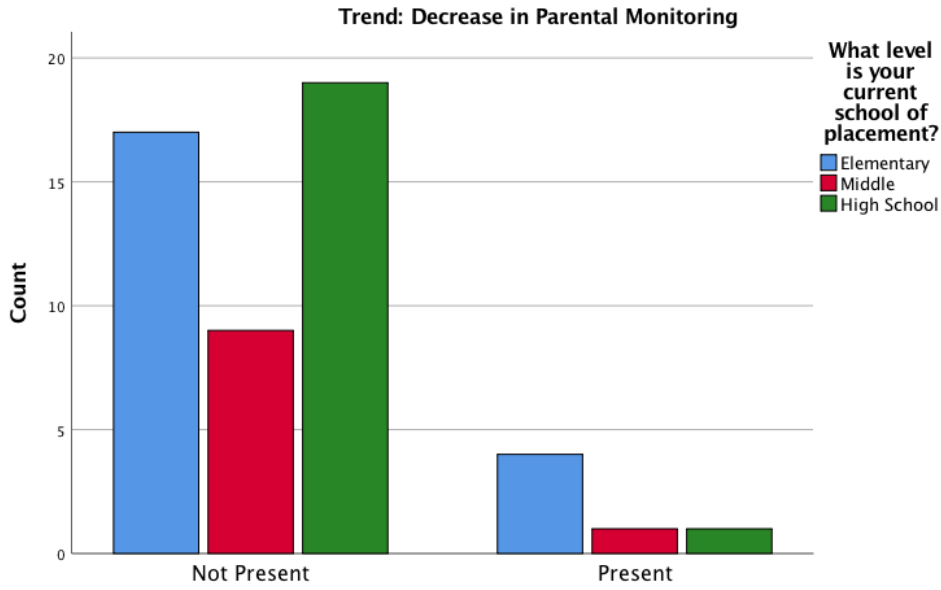

Figure 5

Trend Increase in Social Media

Figure 6

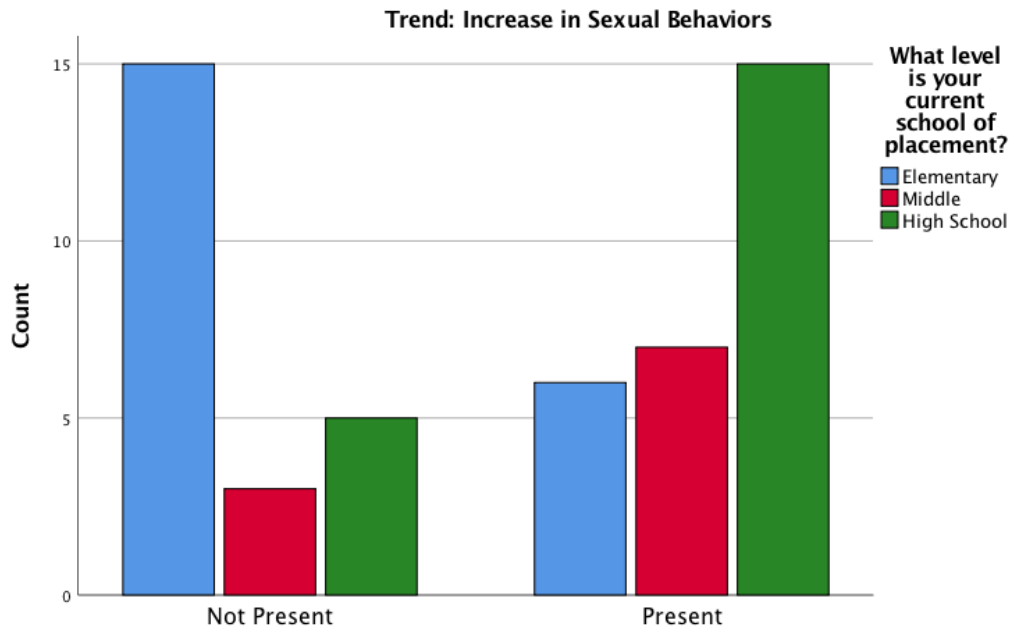*Trend Decrease in Parental Monitoring*

Figure 7

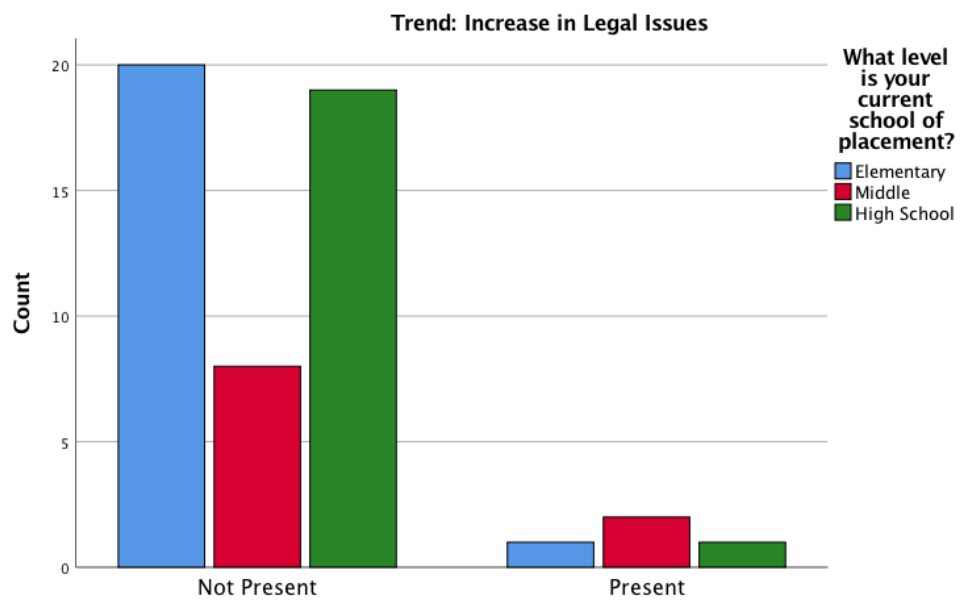*Trend Increase in Sexual Behaviors*

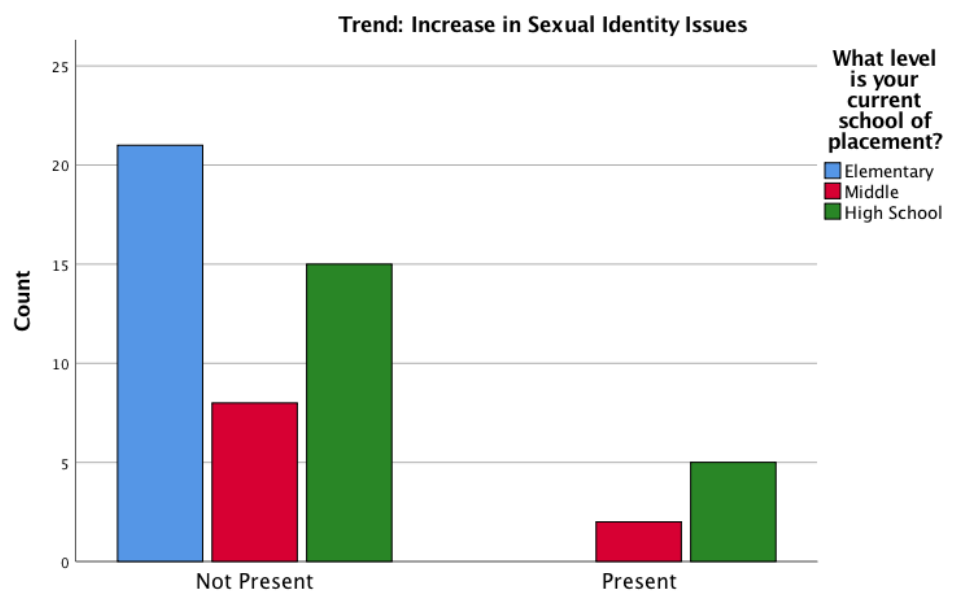Figure 8

Trend Increase in Legal Issues

Figure 9

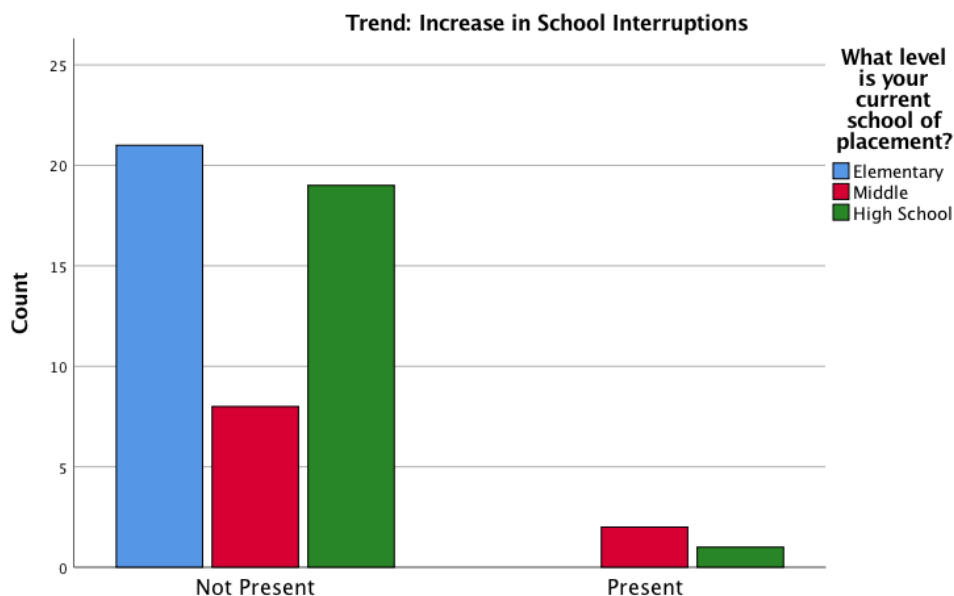*Trend Increase in Sexual Identity Issues*

Figure 10

Trend Increase in School Interruptions

Most Challenging Incident. The third theme that came from the data was the most challenging issue dealt with related to pornography or sexual related behavior among counselors. The most challenging issues fell into the following categories: Legal issues 27.5%; Pornography 37.3%; Sexual Abuse 11.8%; Sexting 31.4%; Sexual Behaviors 33.3%.

Counselors across all levels reported most challenging incidents in legal issues at about the same percentage per level. Counselors across all levels also had a high frequency in most challenging incident in the area of pornography. Elementary school counselors consistently responded with incidents related to sexual behaviors such as inappropriate language and drawings. For example, "Student had sexual drawings and showed to other students. She was using slang words (dick, pussy) and telling and showing other students in her class…" High school counselors also had a higher percentage in sexual behavior concerns. Middle school counselors frequently responded with challenging incidents involving sexting. For example,

"Student sent topless nude pictures to a boyfriend. Relationship ended and he sent those pictures to various other people…" High school counselors also reported challenging incidents at a high frequency related to sexting. Finally, sexual abuse as the most challenging incident was reported more frequent among high school counselors than among elementary or middle school levels. For example, "Student was sexually abused by her uncle. The student conveyed this to me at a very emotional time during her senior year. The abuse occurred when she was much younger though. The stress of the senior year caused her to have multiple breakdowns, and this confession was noted during one of those breakdowns...." Counselors reported challenging issues in the categories or themes developed but there were some differences among groups as discussed above.
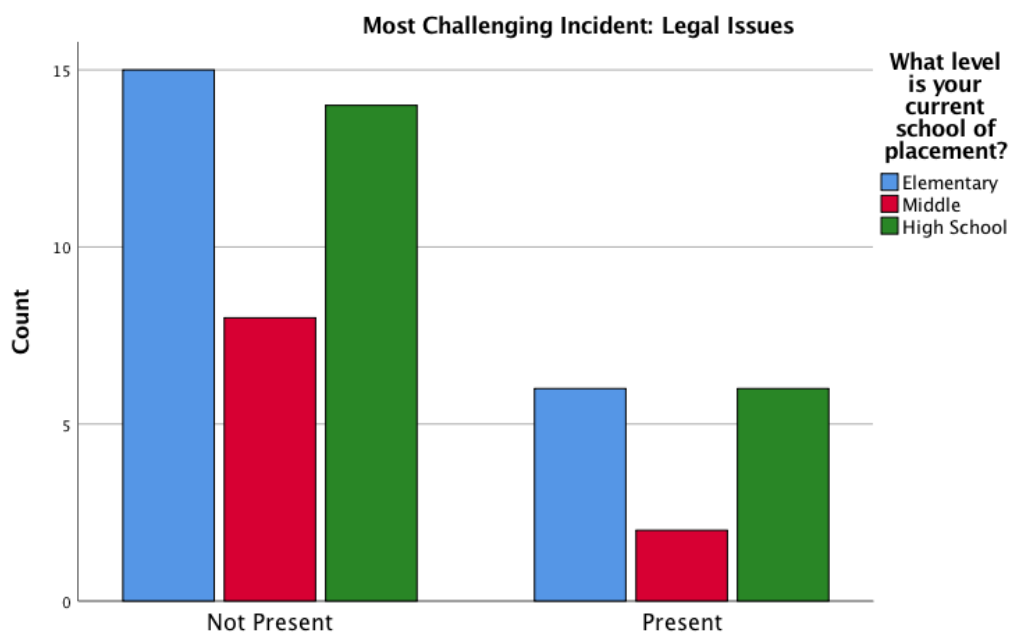

Figure 11

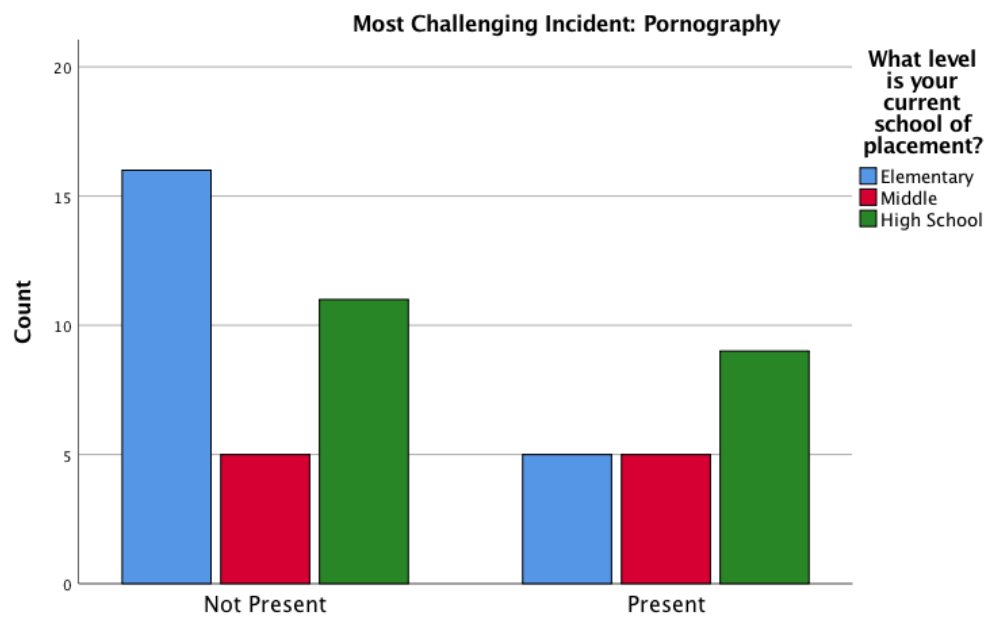*Most Challenging Incident Legal Issues*
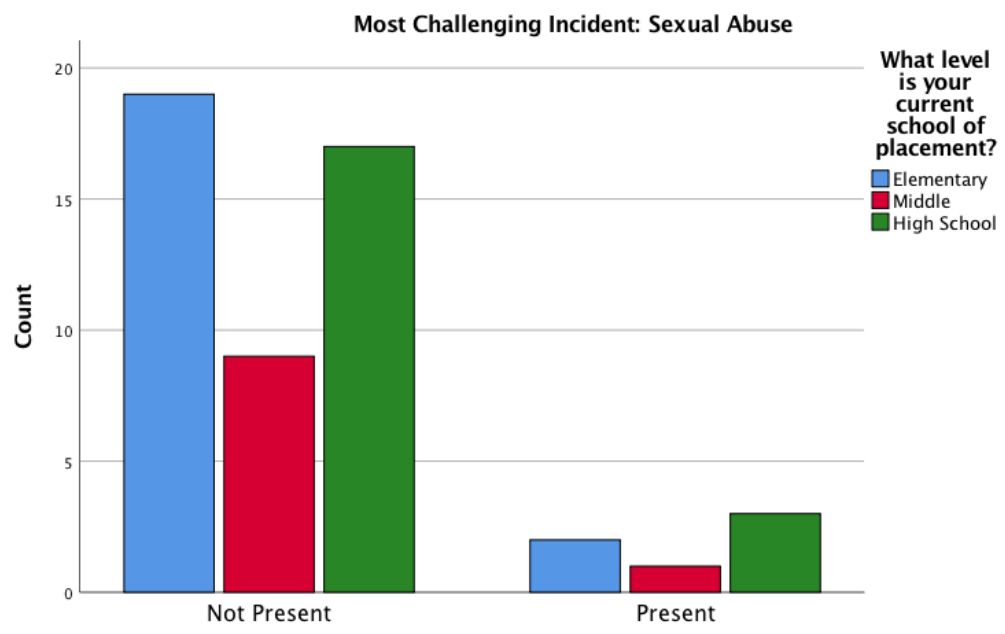
Figure 12

Most Challenging Incident Pornography Use

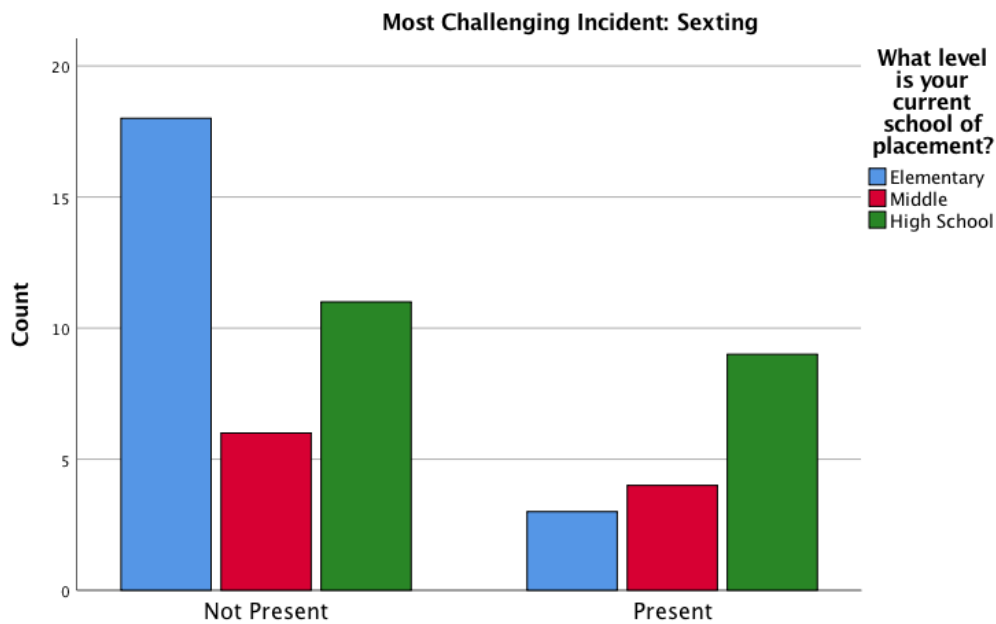Figure 13

Most Challenging Incident Sexual Abuse

Figure 14
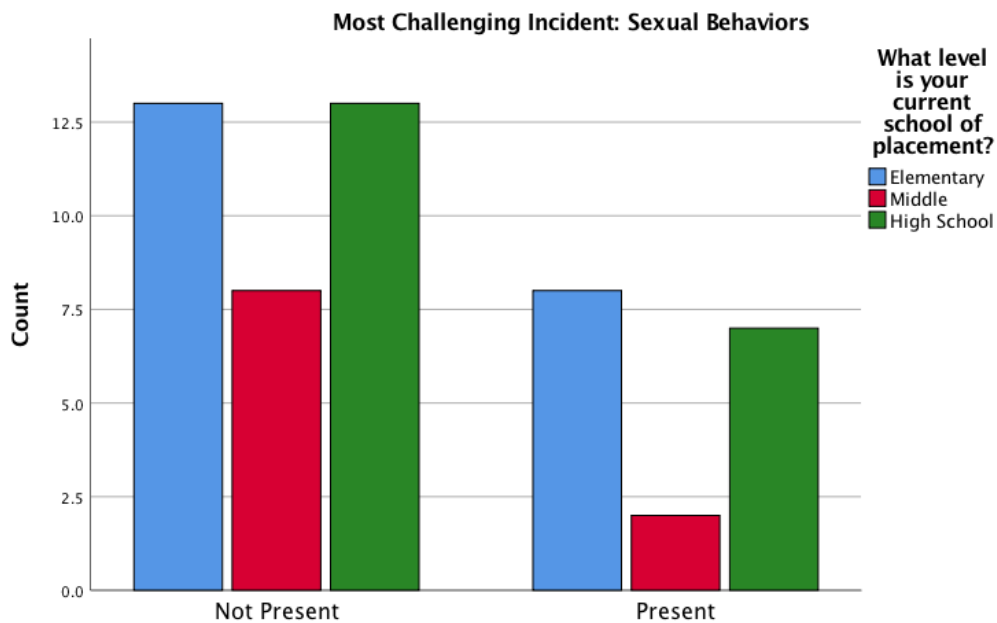
Most Challenging Incident Sexting

Figure 15

Most Challenging Incident Sexual Behaviors

Most Challenging Incident Involvement. The fourth theme that came from the data was the most challenging incident in terms of who was involved. The theme resulted in the involvement of counselors, administration, and parents. Counselors involvement was 68.6%. Administration was involved 56.9% and Parents were involved 66.7%.

Counselors across all levels reported counselor involvement at the highest frequency. Parent involvement was also reported among all levels frequently. Elementary counselors commonly responded with the involvement of counselors and parents for incidents. For example, "Student had sexual drawings and showed to other students. She was using slang words (dick, pussy) and telling and showing other students in her class. I counseled the student and other students on this issue. I called home to discuss our concern with the parents. I advised the parents to be watchful of internet use. I followed up with the student several times throughout the school year..." Administration involvement was reported across all levels but was reported at a lower frequency among elementary school counselors. Middle school counselors generally responded with involvement including counselors, administration and parents. For example, "Student sent topless nude pictures to a boyfriend. Relationship ended and he sent those pictures to various other people. Ongoing support for the student; Administration suspended the student who sent out the pictures as well as though those who resent them; Parents were very involved once notified. Counselor continued to provide support for student who sent nude pictures." High school counselors responded mostly with involvement including counselors, administration, and parents also. For example, "A girl was videotaped giving oral sex to a guy and it got out around the school. It was hard interviewing so many students. I interviewed students and talked with the girl and boy. Followed up with her after. Admin and SRO disciplined students who sent it out. Parents were notified." In sum, it was reported that counselors were involved in challenging

incidents, in addition to parents and administration with some differences in frequency among levels.
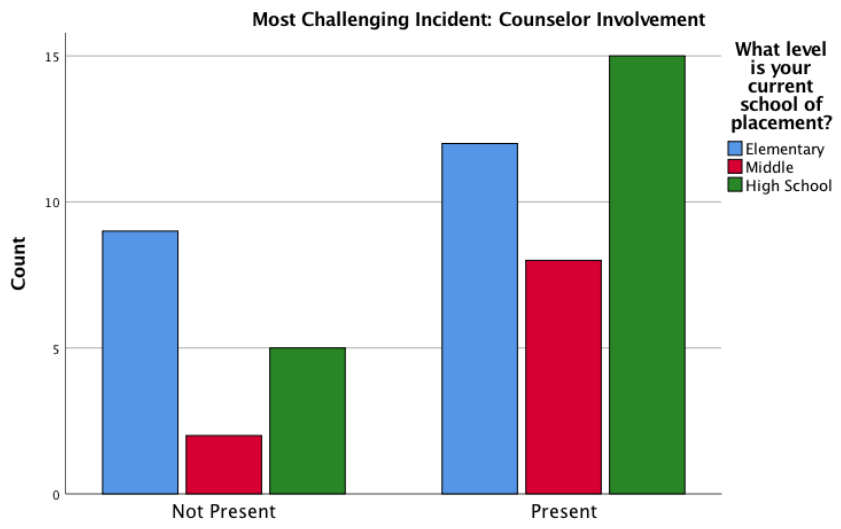
Figure 16

Most Challenging Incident Counselor Involvement
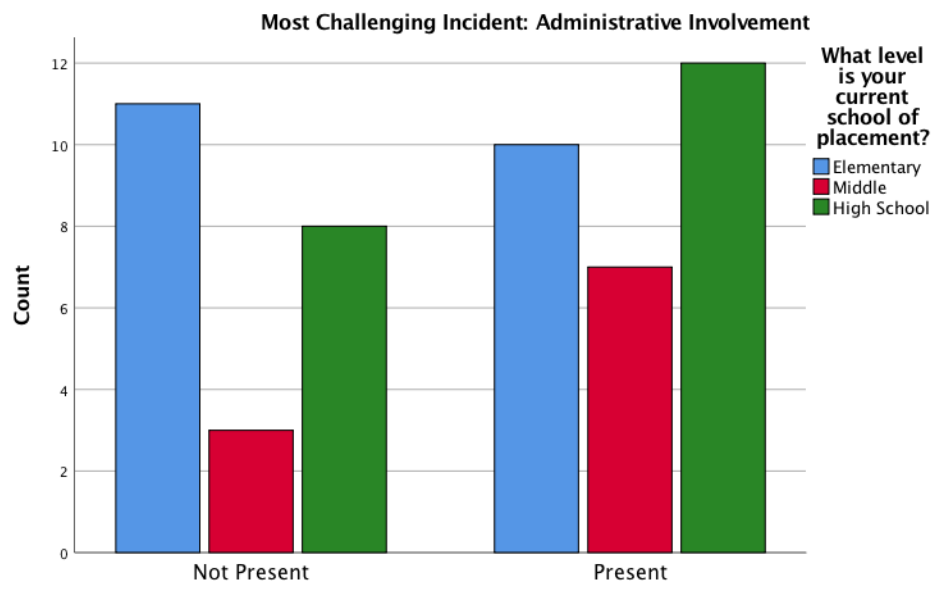
Figure 17

Most Challenging Incident Administrative Involvement
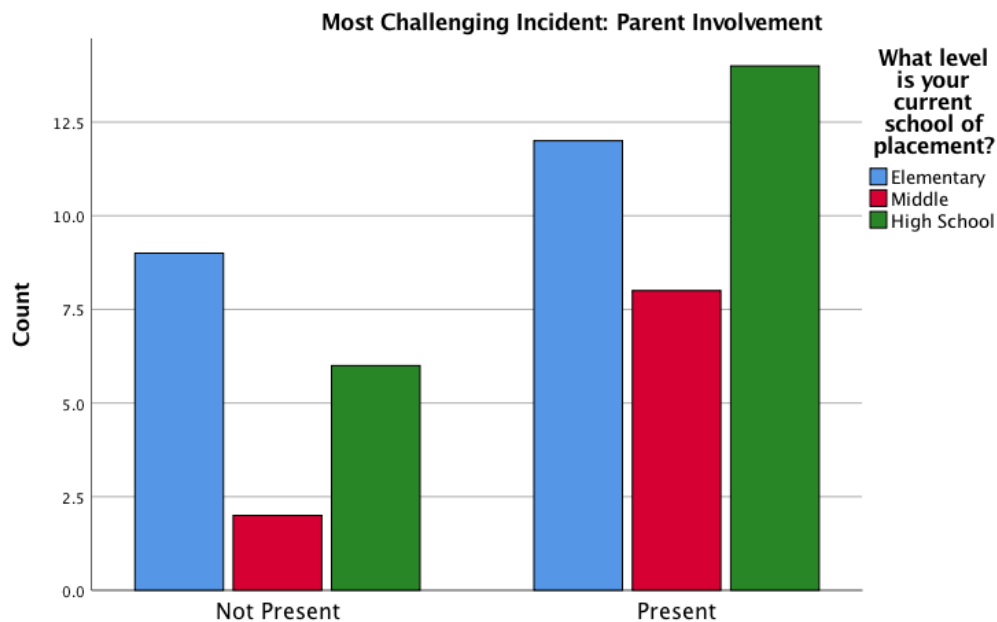
Figure 18

Most Challenging Incident Parent Involvement

Most Challenging Incident Counselors and Adequate Training. The fifth theme that came from the data was counselors' response of feeling adequately trained to deal with the most challenging incident reported. Counselors at all levels reported not having adequate training to deal with challenging incidents involving pornography and sexual behaviors. Examples include, "…I haven't received any specific training on dealing with sexual issues with elementary students"; "I felt inadequate in my training…"; "…No formal training." Only 13.7% of respondents indicated feeling they had adequate training. Therefore, counselors across all levels frequently did not report feeling adequately trained to handle challenging incidents related to pornography and sexual behaviors among students.
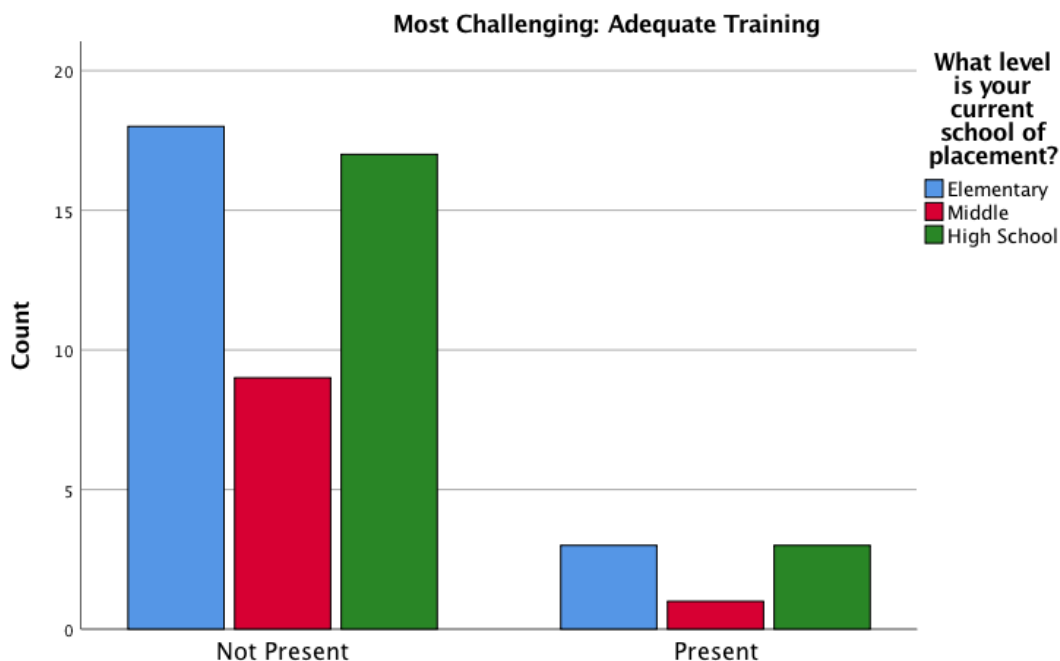
Figure 19

Most Challenging Incident Adequate Training

Training Desired. The last theme developed was training desired by school counselors in this study. Trainings desired were categorized as Legal Issues: 11.8%; Anything: 7.8%; Technology/Social Media 23.5%; Educating Parents: 21.6%; Internet Safety/Awareness: 23.5%; Counseling Best Practices: 33.3%; Resources: 13.7%; Trends: 6%. These categories indicate the areas in which counselors would like to receive training in order to work with students related to sexual behaviors and pornography.

Counselors across all levels indicated about the same desire for training regarding legal issues and social media. For example, "What are we legally required to do in regards to being the 'social media police'?" Some middle and high school counselors indicated a desire for training related to anything. For example, the response, "Open to anything." Internet safety and educating parents was reported among all levels but was reported at a higher frequency among elementary

school counselors. For example, "I need more understanding of what is currently out there on the internet that students are possibly able to view. I have a feeling it would make me very nervous as a parent and educator. It seems that there should be a way to keep some of this off the internet." The request for training on counseling best practices was higher among middle and high school counselors than elementary school counselors. For example, "Best practices for counseling and working with students and families dealing with these types of situations…" A need for training on resources was reported by elementary and middle school counselors but not by high school counselors. Finally, the desire for training regarding trends was reported by elementary and high school counselors, but not reported by middle school counselors.
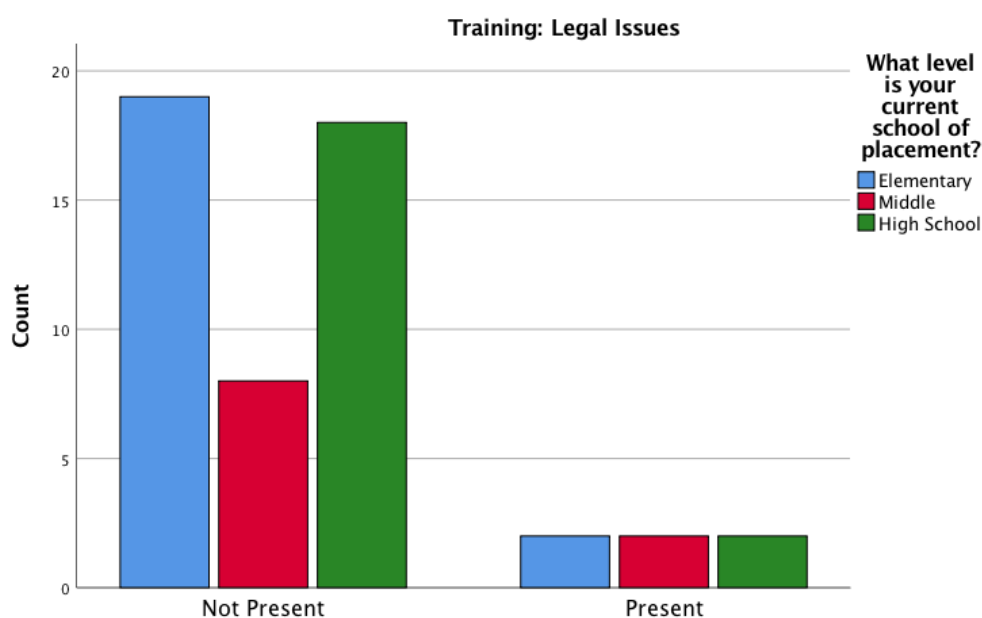
Figure 20

Training on Legal Issues
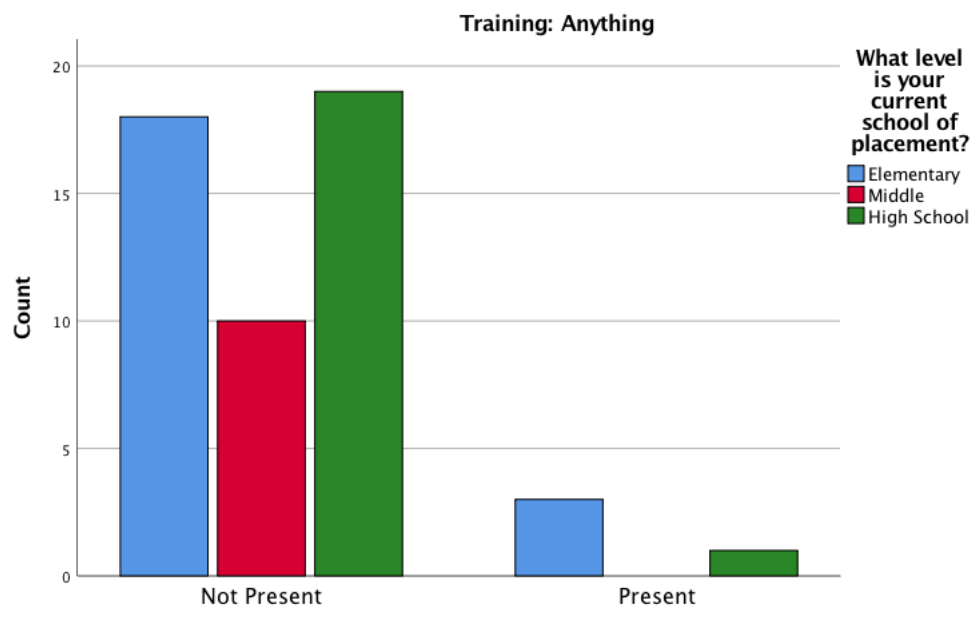
Figure 21

Training on Anything
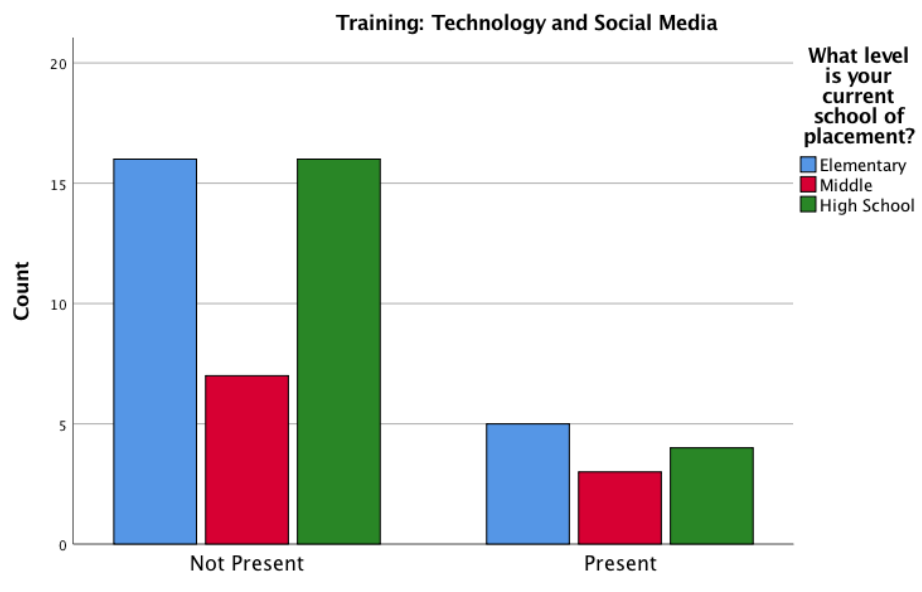
Figure 22

Training on Technology and Social Media

Training: Internet Safety and Awareness
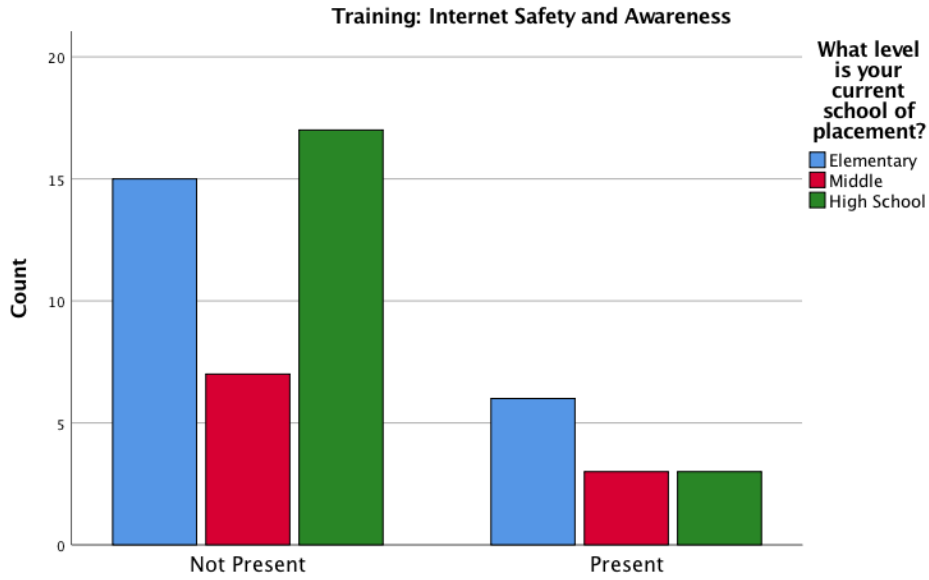
Figure 23

Training on Internet Safety and Awareness

Training: Educating Parents
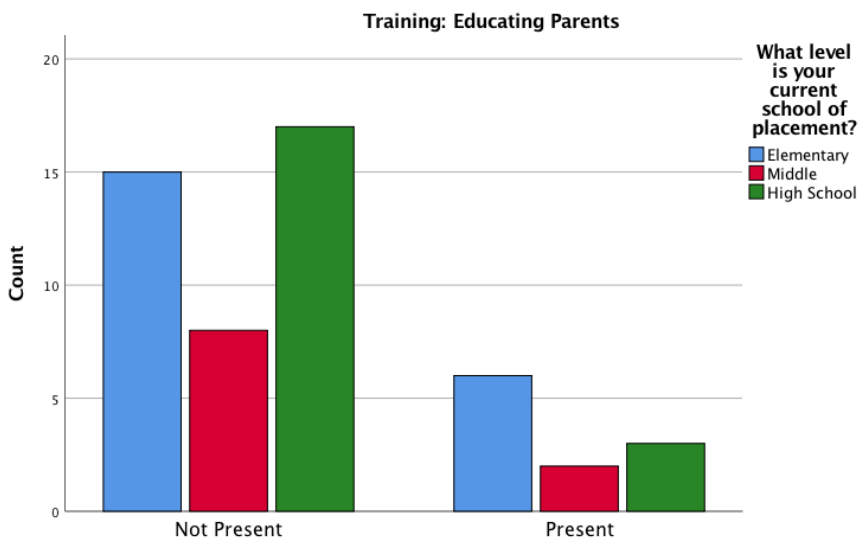
Figure 24

Training on Educating Parents
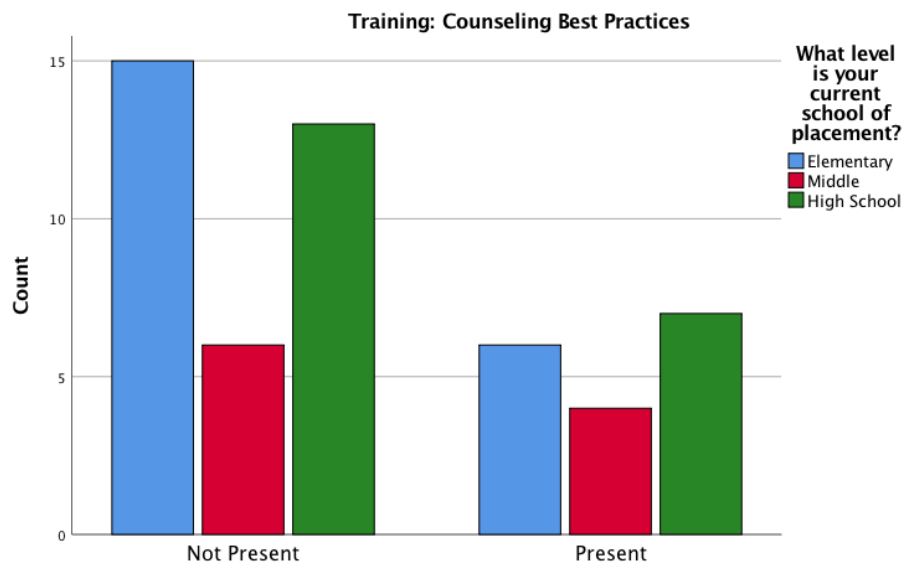
Figure 25

Training on Counseling Best Practices

Figure 26

Training on Resources
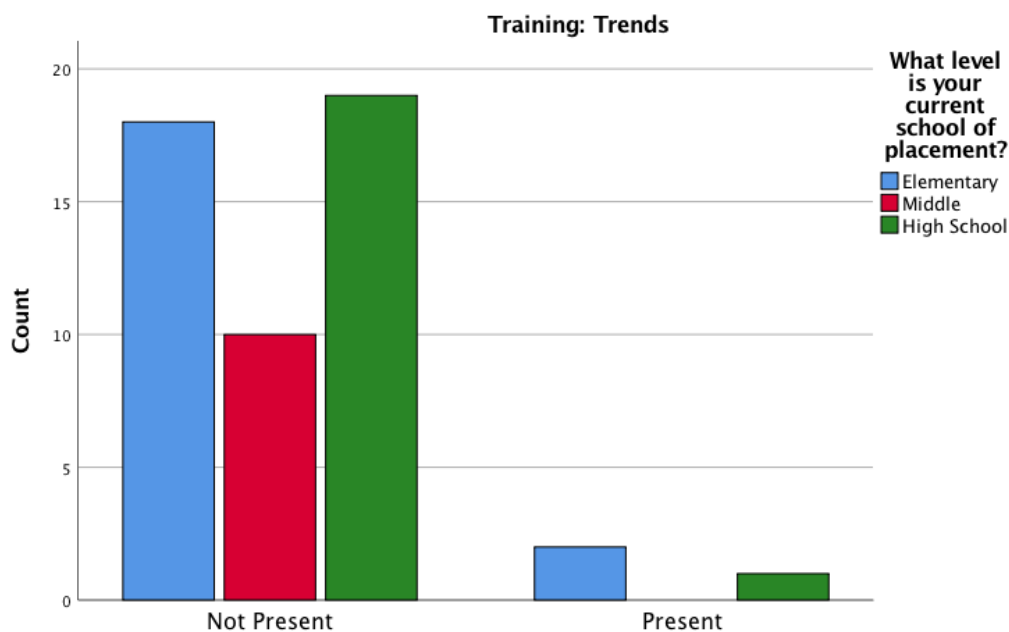
Figure 27

Training on Trends

Research Question Responses

Data presented in this section shows the response to research questions. Narrative data is given using data collected and themes developed. Selected participant quotes are included to support the responses to the research questions.

RQ 1: How are school counselors involved when students have been referred to them for problems related to pornography use?

School counselors were typically involved or engaged with students for problems related to pornography use through counseling, collaboration with others, and teaching. For example, "Students are brought to me during incidents at school where administration is dealing with them for an incident in the bathroom or sending inappropriate pictures. Students have shared with me

about something happening to them: date rape, inappropriate touching, etc. Students have come

out to me before talking to their parents and want help in how to tell their parents they are gay or

bisexual." Most counselors, 72.5%, engaged thru counseling while 21.6% reported being involved

through collaboration and 9.8% were involved through teaching. This finding shows that most

counselors are intervening with students through counseling to help students with problems related

to pornography use. The school counselors also indicated being involved in challenging incidents

dealing with legal issues (27.5%), Pornography (37.3%), Sexual Abuse (11.8%), Sexting (31.4%),

and Sexual Behaviors (33.3%). The challenging incidents also involved school counselors (68.6%)

of cases, in addition to Administration involvement (56.9%) of these incidents and parents (66.7%)

of these challenging incidents. This finding suggests that school counselors are involved in most

challenging cases involving pornography use and sexual behaviors of students.

RQ 2: In what ways are school counselors adapting services and interventions for growing trends

related to sexual behaviors in students such as pornography?

The trends reported by school counselors were an increase in technology (41.2%), increase

in social media (35.3%), increase in lack of Parent Monitoring (11.8%), increase behavioral

concerns (54.9%), increase in legal issues (7.8%), increase in sexual identity concerns (13.7%),

and an increase in school interruptions (5.9%). For example, "The availability of pornography has

dramatically increased so students are accessing that online at a higher rate or what seems like a

higher rate. Students feel pressure to watch it or participate in sexual acts that they or others have

seen online. Surge in reports of sexting…" School counselors were typically involved or engaged

with students for problems related to pornography use through counseling, collaboration with

others, and teaching. Most counselors, 72.5%, engaged thru counseling while 21.6% reported

being involved through collaboration and 9.8% were involved through teaching. This suggests that counselors are focused on interventions through counseling and collaboration, but may not have adapted services to deal with the growing trends through teaching.

RQ 3: In what ways are school counselors working with school staff and parents on issues related to pornography use among students?

School counselors were typically involved or engaged with students for problems related to pornography use through counseling, collaboration with others, and teaching. For example, "Sexting Involved with SRO and Administration. Notified parents SRO and Administration dealt with discipline. I dealt with processing with student the consequences and indications for this behavior. Also exploring with student, the possibility of sexual abuse in background or possible sex trafficking. Notified parents. Counseling set up to work with student on self-esteem issues." Most counselors, 72.5%, engaged thru counseling while 21.6% reported being involved through collaboration and 9.8% were involved through teaching. School counselors are also working on challenging incidents with parents (66.7%) and administration (56.9%). Collaboration includes working with administration, parents, outside community agencies, and other school personnel. This finding shows school counselors are working with school staff and parents through collaboration (21.6%).

RQ 4: What training experiences have school counselors had pertaining specifically to responding to pornography use among students?

School counselors frequently responded to training experiences by indicating not having adequate training to deal with challenging situations regarding pornography use and sexual

behaviors among students. Only 13.7% felt they had adequate training. School counselors responded to training desires with topics including: Legal Issues (11.8%), anything (7.8%), technology/social Media (23.5%), educating parents (21.6%), Internet safety/awareness (23.5%), counseling best practices (33.3%), resources (13.7%), and trends (6.0%). For example, "I would like to have better skills to talk to parents and students about sexuality issues. When I started my career, we were not allowed to have those conversations. All conversations had to be referred to the nurse. Parents look to us for questions regarding help in these situations and I am not sure what all of the available resources are and it would be helpful to have information available for parents." These findings show school counselors do not feel adequately trained and would like to be trained in specific areas in order to deal with students dealing with pornography use and sexual behaviors.

Summary

This study examined school counselor involvement, interaction and experiences with students impacted by pornography use and exposure. Data collection provided descriptive and qualitative data. The qualitative data allowed for six themes to be developed. Themes developed included typical engagement, trends, the most challenging incident, counselors', the involvement of others in the most challenging incident, and training. Finally, the four research questions were answered and findings were presented to answer each question. In sum, the findings suggest school counselors are engaged with students through counseling for challenging incidents involving pornography use and sexual behaviors, however, the school counselors do not feel adequately trained to deal with the incidents or prepared in light of the growing trends.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

Overview

The purpose of this study was to explore school counselor involvement, interaction and experiences with students impacted by pornography use and exposure. This chapter explains the interpretations and ideas of the researcher based on the results and findings. Included in this chapter is a summary and discussion of findings and implications for further inquiry, implications for further policy, implications for training, programming and implementation of services, an outline of delimitations and limitations of the study, in addition to recommendations for future research.

Summary of Findings

The findings of this case study include data surrounding the involvement and interaction of school counselors with students regarding pornography use and sexual behaviors. Themes developed from the findings were typical engagement, trends, most challenging incident, most challenging incident involvement, most challenging incident training adequacy, and training desires. The findings differed somewhat among levels of school counselors as discussed in chapter four. Overall, the findings suggest school counselors on all three levels are involved with students concerning challenging issues related to pornography and sexual behaviors, and they do not feel adequately trained to provide services and interventions in this area.

Discussion

The section is a discussion based off of the researcher's thoughts and discoveries from the findings. The format will be presented by research questions and discussion following each question. The themes will be woven into the discussion of each research question.

Research Questions and Conclusions

RQ 1: How are school counselors involved when students have been referred to them for problems related to pornography use?

The Internet has become the primary source for information for many children and adolescents, and is an integral part of the lives of many children and adolescents (Anderson, et al., 2017). The current study found 60.8% of school counselors surveyed indicated having dealt with incidents related to pornography or sexual behaviors among students. One theme derived from this data in this study was the typical engagement of school counselors with students involved providing counseling (72.5%) related to incidents dealing with pornography and sexual behaviors. The results did not inquire about developmentally appropriate counseling. In addition, the findings did not explore specific on implementation of direct or indirect counseling and other services provided for students impacted by pornography exposure and sexual behaviors.

The developed theme of counseling as a typical engagement is encouraging due to previous research indicating school counselors can address issues related to sexual health with students that may be related to mental health issues associated with topics such as body and sexual development through individual and group counseling (Russell, 2012). It was also found that school counselors can help students receive proper guidance for making healthy decisions instead of merely allowing popular media and pornography to be the educators of sexuality (Allen & Lavender-Stott, 2015).

While, the findings indicate counselor involvement, it is presumed but not known if the counseling is provided on developmentally appropriate levels. Research suggests children are often exposed to sexually explicit images during elementary school (Allen & Lavender-Stott, 2015). Leung, Chen, Shu, and Yang (2013), found that 71% of adolescents reported having been

exposed to pornography and many admit to using Internet Pornography regularly. However, the development levels should be considered when providing counseling. The ASCA model provides opportunities for counselors to implement the core curriculum which includes psychoeducational lessons designed to help students attain knowledge, attitudes and skills appropriate for their level of development (American School Counselor Association, 2005).

Finally, the findings do not indicate the specific type of counseling offered. It is assumed that these school counselors are following the ASCA model, and therefore are offering counseling through direct service for these personal and social concerns. However, it is not known specifically how counselors are defining and implementing counseling with students. School counselors should be guided by the America School Counseling Association (ASCA) model by including direct and indirect services as they seek to meet the needs of students. (Martin, & Carey, 2014). Indirect services among counselors include consultation of school staff, parents, and community members (Martin, & Carey, 2014). Direct services may include educational programs for parents and teachers in the form of seminars and workshops about pornography use among children and adolescents. Research indicates that education is a better way to address the issue of pornography than censorship (Martinson, 2007). Assessing for specific direct and indirect counseling services provided by school counselors regarding helping students impacted by pornography use and exposure in the future may be beneficial.

RQ 2: In what ways are school counselors adapting services and interventions for growing trends related to sexual behaviors in students such as pornography?

School counselors can lead in prevention and intervention efforts related to pornography (McEachern, McEachern-Ciattoni, & Martin, 2012). The current study suggests school counselors

at all levels are most frequently engaged and intervening with students by providing counseling. The term counseling isn't specifically defined in the current study in terms of specific counseling strategies dealing with pornography use and sexual behaviors among students. Research does indicate school counselors can address issues related to sexual health with students that may be related to mental health issues associated with topics such as body and sexual development through individual and group counseling (Russell, 2012). School counselors should consider current trends related to pornography use and sexual behaviors while implementing counseling and other inventions such as collaboration and teaching.

School counselors in the current study reported trends such as the increase of technology, decrease in parental monitoring, legal issues, school interruptions, increase in sexual behaviors, increase in social media, and an increase in sexual identity issues. The results are consistent with previous research. Pornography has been a part of modern society for a very long time that is now impacting more children and adolescents, due to the rise of technology (Lubey, 2015; Coopersmith, 2006). Also, parents indicate a concern for online dangers, research suggest they do not set limits and monitor their teens (Cho, 2016; Kunnuji, 2013).

School counselors can help students receive proper guidance for making healthy decisions instead of merely allowing popular media and pornography to be the educators of sexuality (Allen & Lavender-Stott, 2015). However, the current study results do not indicate a link suggesting service and interventions are being adapted to fit the trends reported. Considering counseling was indicated as the highest percentage of typical engagement (72.5%) and collaboration (21.6%), and teaching (9.8%) showing a lower percentage, this may indicate a lack of adaption of services and interventions relative to current trends. It is recommended for prevention and intervention efforts to be targeted in response to the rise of pornography exposure among students (Livingstone, &

Smith, 2014). In sum, the current findings suggest that counselors are focused on interventions through counseling, but may not have adapted services to deal with the growing trends through collaboration and teaching.

RQ 3: In what ways are school counselors working with school staff and parents on issues related to pornography use among students?

The results from this study align with previous research suggesting, school counselors work with students who have been exposed or who have been caught using pornography and their families through individual counseling (McEachern, McEachern-Ciattoni, & Martin, 2012). The current study indicated school counselors were typically involved or engaged with students for problems related to pornography use through counseling, collaboration with others, and teaching. Specifically related to working with parents and staff, most likely school counselors would be working through collaboration (21.6%). However, some school counselors may consider working with parents as counseling the parents.

Typical engagement in the current study didn't differentiate type of engagement with students, parents, and staff. It may be beneficial to consider specific strategies to collaborate with parents and staff. School counselors can help prevent or reduce problems by collaborating with teachers, administrators, parents and developing partnerships with families and communities (Epstein, & Van, 2010; Duslak, & Geier, 2017).

Counselors in the current study did indicate a desire to be trained on educating parents. Research also implies, parents need education and intervention in talking to their children about sex (Eversole, Berglas, Deardorff, & Constantine, 2017). One aspect counselors may want to educate parents is in the area of parental monitoring, which was a trend reported in the current

study. Parents can protect children from sexual explicit material by limiting recreational use time of the Internet, spending more quality time with their children, and communicating the importance of time away from the Internet with their children (Cho, 2016; Kunnuji, 2013). Safety measures such as filtering programs should be used and monitored in schools and state laws should be known by educators (Rothman, Adhia, & Kirsh, 2015). Although, counselors did not report teaching as a high frequency of typical engagement related to pornography use and exposure, the results on desired training did show a desire to educate parents among school counselors.

RQ 4: What training experiences have school counselors had pertaining specifically to responding to pornography use among students?

It is recommended for school counselors to become educated about Internet Pornography as they prepare to educate and help students mitigate the negative effects associated with pornography use (Bloom & Hagedorn, 2015). School counselors indicate a need for training when addressing issues related to sexuality (Mattebo, Larsson, Tydén, & Häggström-Nordin, 2014). In the current study, school counselors frequently responded to training experiences by indicating not having adequate training to deal with challenging situations regarding pornography use and sexual behaviors among students. The findings of the current study also suggest the desires of specific training among the school counselors.

Only 13.7% felt adequately trained to deal with the most challenging incidents. In order for mental health professionals to become more comfortable discuss or education students on sensitive topics, they need more training on evidence-based practices for sexual addictions and Internet Pornography (Short, Wetterneck, Shutter, Chase, Bistricky, Tannah, & Chase, 2016).

Adequacy of training was not measured specifically in terms of levels of feeling adequately trained, therefore some who reported feeing adequately trained may still desire more training. Also, there wasn't a great deal of adequate training mentioned specifically related to pornography use and sexual behaviors. Therefore, findings show school counselors overall did not feel adequately trained and would like to be trained in specific areas in order to deal with students dealing with pornography use and sexual behaviors.

The Logic model may be helpful in conceptualizing the aspect of needed resources for program implementation concerning pornography prevention and intervention. This model is helpful by accommodating the unforeseeable and evaluates activities for effectiveness (Waghmare, & Srivastava, 2016). The top desired training area reported was counseling best practices at 33.3%, which may reveal an overall desire to be trained on the best techniques and interventions for counseling students on issues related to pornography and sexual behaviors. Other areas of desired trainings included: Legal Issues (11.8%), anything (7.8%), technology/social Media (23.5%), educating parents (21.6%), Internet safety/awareness (23.5%), counseling best practices (33.3%), resources (13.7%), and trends (6.0%). These findings are consistent with other research recommending for school officials to stay up to date with current technology being used by children, understanding the steps to ensure online safety, maintaining personal online/technology integrity, and knowing how to address issues when things go wrong (Bond, & Hine, 2012).

Implications

In this section of the conclusion, implications will be presented. First, implications for further inquiry. Implications for further policy and implications for training will conclude this section. Specific recommendations for school counselors and school administrators may be

stated in each section as implications.

Implications for further inquiry

The results have the implication that school counselors can provide counseling to help students impacted by pornography and sexual behaviors. School counselors can address issues related to sexual health with students that may be related to mental health issues associated with topics such as body and sexual development through individual and group counseling (Russell, 2012). The results of this study have implications for further inquiry into the involvement of school counselors with students impacted by pornography use and sexual behaviors. Further inquiry may include defining the term counseling in more specific terms as used by elementary, middle, and high school counselors. In other words, inquire how school counselors define counseling as a service provided. Results also indicated the collaboration of school counselors with parents and administration, therefore, another implication for further inquiry is to inquire about how school counselors define collaboration with parents and staff and what collaboration is effective. Finally, inquiring about what interventions have been effective for counselors dealing with pornography use and sexual behaviors may be beneficial.

Implications for further policy

The results of this study have implications suggesting school counselors adapting services and interventions for growing trends related to sexual behaviors in students such as pornography. This study results also have implication for further policy related to growing trends related to pornography use and sexual behaviors among students. Implication for further policy may include dealing with growing trends technology and social media, and pornography. Further policy on training for legal concerns may also be beneficial.

The results also have implications suggesting school counselors should collaborate with

staff and should educate parents on current trends related to pornography use and sexual behaviors of students. School counselors can also organize efforts at their schools through prevention and intervention programs related to pornography among children and adolescents by bringing together parents and community members as they seek to help students concerning difficult topics such as pornography (Braun-Courville & Rojas, 2009; Bryan, Griffin, 2010). It may be worth consideration to initiate a school policy to include counselors educating staff members on appropriate techniques to use with student issues related to pornography use and sexual behaviors.

Implications for training, implementation and programming of services

Training has multiple implications from the results of this study. School counselors desire specific training to effectively work with students impacted by pornography and sexual behaviors. Training should also be considered a high priority need for school counselors. Also, consider training school counselors to work with parents and staff on the topic of pornography use and sexual behaviors. A final implication is to train school counselors to effectively adapt services and interventions for working with students, staff and parents in the area of pornography use and sexual behaviors related to current trends. School counselors can positively impact schools but school counselors have indicated the need more training (Bryan, Griffin, 2010; Villares & Dimmitt, 2017).

Delimitations and Limitations

In this section delimitations and limitations will be explained and discussed. Delimitations will begin the section. Limitations will conclude this section.

Delimitations

The first delimitation to discuss is the participant group came from one district. This

decision was made based off of the access available to the researcher. The researcher has a relationship with the district leaders. Leaders trusted the researcher enough to allow the school counselors to participate. Other districts who didn't know the researcher would likely have been reluctant to allow participation.

Limitations

The limitations of this study involve the number or participants. Only one district was surveyed, therefore, the number of participants were limited. Another limitation was the survey was optional therefore limiting the amount of results to analyze. Finally, the participant group being from a specific district in a specific location and demographic may limit the generalizability of results.

<div align="center">

Recommendations for Future Research

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In consideration of the study findings, limitations, and the delimitations placed on the study, multiple recommendations and directions for future research are included in this section. Arguments for what topics and populations should be studied, along with specific types of designs that should be employed are also discussed.

The first recommendation for future research is in the area of best practices for counselors dealing with the growing trend of pornography use and sexting among students. Counselors in this study indicated a need and desire for training on best practices. Therefore, this would be a beneficial area to research. School counselors would be an appropriate population to study across different districts. A case study or qualitative design may be an appropriate design for this research.

Researching effective prevention and intervention programs and services for student pornography use and sexual behaviors is the next recommendation. Some counselors in this

study indicated facilitating an intervention program they were a part of in the district. It may be beneficial to looks at programs such as the one mentioned and compare pre- and post- program results to measure effectiveness.

The final recommendation and likely the most important derived from this study to further research training needs and training programs available to school counselors. It may be helpful to research the types of program available. It may also be beneficial to encourage the design of new training programs related to the trends in pornography use and sexual behaviors among students. After designing new programs, it would be beneficial to research the effectiveness of the programs.

Summary

This case study explored the involvement, interactions, and experiences of school counselors with students impacted by pornography use and sexual behaviors. The findings suggest that school counselors are involved and interact with students regarding pornography use and sexual behaviors. The findings also indicate that school counselors in the district surveyed did not feel adequately trained to handle challenging incidents related to pornography use or sexual behaviors. Therefore, it is arguably vital that school counselors receive proper training to effectively work with students impacted by pornography use. It is also important to note when designing training programs, the specific training needs and desires of counselors related to pornography use and sexual behaviors among students, relative to growing trends.

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Appendix A: Survey

Part I: Demographic Information:

1-What level is your current school of placement?

Elementary   Middle High

2-What is the current grade of students with which you work?

preschool   k-2   3-5   6-8   9-12   other: please state_____

3-About how many years *total* have you been a school counselor? _____

4-About how many years have you been a school counselor *with* Cabarrus County Schools?

_____

Part II:

5-In your experiences as a school counselor, how often have you experienced counseling students with issues regarding sexual behaviors and/or pornography?

6-Please describe the typical engagement you might have with a student related to sexual behaviors, sexual related questions, and/or pornography.

7-Over the course of your career, have you noticed any trends in issues that students have related to sexual behaviors or pornography? Please describe the trends you are currently are seeing and how those issues may have changed over time.

8-Have there been any incidents in your school that have been related specifically to pornography use or pornography exposure including sexting?

If so, please describe the **most challenging incident** you have dealt with related to pornography or sexual related behavior including the following information: (Please do not list specific names, dates or other potentially identifying information).

- Original incident
- Your Involvement
- Administrative Involvement
- Parental involvement
- Any follow-up with those involved
- Describe how the training you have received influenced your response to this situation.

9-What training would you like to receive in order to better prepare you for these types of incidents in the future and with regards to current trends?

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board has approved this document for use from 9/25/2018 to -- Protocol # 3469.092518

CONSENT

School Counselor Experiences in an Age of Increasing Pornography and Sexual Behaviors of Students Natalie Atwell Liberty University School of Behavioral Sciences: Family Care and Counseling

You are invited to be in a research study of school counselors' experiences, involvement, and interactions with students impacted by pornography use and exposure. You were selected as a possible participant because you are a school counselor in the Cabarrus County School District. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

Natalie R. Atwell, a doctoral candidate in the School of Behavioral Sciences/Family Care and Counseling Program at Liberty University, is conducting this study.

Background Information: The purpose of this study is to find thematic information using a qualitative survey that can provide implications for school counselors and future studies regarding school counselor experiences, involvement, and interactions with students impacted by pornography use and exposure.

Research Questions: RQ 1: How are school counselors involved when students have been referred to them for problems related to pornography use? **RQ 2:** In what ways are school counselors adapting services and interventions for growing trends related to sexual behaviors in students such as pornography? **RQ 3:** In what ways are school counselors working with school staff and parents on issues related to pornography use among students? **RQ 4:** What training experiences have school counselors had pertaining specifically to responding to pornography use among students?

Procedures: If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things: 1. Complete an online survey. The survey will take approximately 10-15 minutes.

Risks: The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

Benefits: Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study. However, the findings will be presented for the school counselors after the survey is completed at a meeting in the spring.

Compensation: Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.

Confidentiality: The records of this study will be kept private. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researchers will have access to the records. Participants' responses will be anonymous. Data will be stored on a password locked computer and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.

Voluntary Nature of the Study: Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time, prior to submitting the survey, without affecting those relationships.

How to Withdraw from the Anonymous Survey Research: If you choose to withdraw from the study, please exit the survey and close your internet browser. Your responses will not be recorded or included in the study.

Contacts and Questions: The researcher conducting this study is Natalie Atwell. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you are encouraged to contact her at njroper@liberty.edu. You may also contact the researcher's faculty chair, Dr. Frederick Volk at fvolk@liberty.edu.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, you are encouraged to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu.

Please notify the researcher if you would like a copy of this information for your records.

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board has approved this document for use from 9/25/2018 to -- Protocol # 3469.092518

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY.
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

September 25, 2018

Natalie Atwell IRB Exemption 3469.092518: School Counselor Experiences in an Age of Increasing Pornography and Sexual Behaviors of Students

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under exemption category 46.101(b)(2), which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:101(b):

(2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: (i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any changes to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by submitting a change in protocol form or a new application to the IRB and referencing the above IRB Exemption number.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible changes to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.