

**NEMETH PROGRAM IN HUMAN TRAFFICKING RESEARCH
AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS**



Submitted by:

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**Final Report
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The nature and extent of human trafficking and sexual exploitation among college students have rarely been examined, especially within the United States. Therefore, the purpose of this research program was to identify human trafficking and sexual exploitation risks among college students in San Diego County and Imperial Valley, US-Mexico border regions where some of the highest rates of human trafficking are documented (National Human Trafficking Hotline, 2019). Through research, we can estimate the prevalence of human trafficking and sexual exploitation risks among college students in order to develop strategies to combat it. A gap remains especially in our knowledge about how college students are recruited into or at risk for human trafficking. Therefore, our specific aims were to:

1. Explore the nature and extent of human trafficking/sexual exploitation among college students in San Diego-Imperial Counties, and
2. Explore the factors associated with sexual exploitation and potential solutions.

Methods: First, we held several community advisory board meetings with six human trafficking survivors to vet the survey before disseminating it. We also held focus groups and interviews in the community with 20 individuals which informed the survey content and questions and helped provide context to the survey responses.

Second, student research assistants posted flyers on campuses after we received study approval from each of the campus institutional ethics review boards (IRBs), as needed. These online anonymous college surveys were disseminated to over twelve San Diego and Imperial County campuses: UC San Diego, University of San Diego, Point Loma Nazarene University, San Diego State University-Imperial Valley, California State University San Marcos, Community College Districts (San Diego, Southwest, Cuyamaca/Grossmont, and Imperial Valley). The link to take the survey spread to students at other campuses via social media as well.

In the surveys, we included resource lists and contact persons at each campus (e.g., counseling centers). We made sure campuses were aware of the study. Trauma informed research staff were also available for any survey taker who requested to be contacted.

Third, we explored solutions by presenting the preliminary results to various county and community advisory councils and universities. Brainstorming occurred on ways to better prevent human trafficking recruitment and sexual exploitation on college campuses, as well as how to better help students seek assistance.

Results: This final report (8/31/23) reflects responses among the 971 participants who answered the survey (of the 1,013 who consented to take it). The results are similar to those in the preliminary report on the first 500 participants. In this sample:

- Nearly 1 in 5 experienced force/coercion into selling sex as a college student.
- 2 out of 3 students thought human trafficking was a medium-to-large threat to students on their campus; 14% witnessed it.

- Nearly half said they were pressured as a college student into a sexual activity; Nearly 1 in 5 said it was by an instructor.
- 1 in 5 said as a college student they or someone they knew as a college student had crossed the U.S.-Mexico border to provide sexual acts for something of monetary or other value.
- More than 1 in 5 had ever exchanged sexual activities for something of monetary or other value; 14% said they were very likely or likely to do so; 20% said they considered it. The top reasons for selling sex as a college student were to provide for someone else, to pay for school/rent/food, and to have extra cash for spending and for unaffordable things.
- Shame, fear, stigma, and discrimination were top reasons for not seeking help on campus.

Recommendations:

- Top requests for campuses were: “more counselors who have experience working with people who have been exploited,” “support groups and organizations,” and “an anonymous way to report sexual exploitation,” and “more counselors with cultural, racial, or ethnic backgrounds and identities that match my own.”
- Qualitative data revealed the need to educate and warn freshmen in their campus orientations about human trafficking and sexual exploitation (recruitment, deception, coercion).
- Target prevention efforts especially towards vulnerable populations such as undergraduate freshmen, foster youth, BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color), and those who are economically vulnerable.

Accomplishments:

- Nine university students gained hands-on research experience to become more aware of the importance of data and research in addressing community-wide issues.
 - Several helped recruit participants, interviewed key informants, co-led focus groups, and designed the survey.
 - Two graduate students wrote publishable papers and one doctoral student won a travel award to present at an international research conference.
- Dr. Urada (Principal Investigator):
 - Presented preliminary results to four local councils; spoke to four Institutional Ethics Review boards; collaborated with over 12 universities.
 - Formed a community advisory board of 6 human trafficking survivors who vetted and co-designed the survey.
 - Abstract accepted to present at International Women’s and Children’s Health and Gender Group (InWomen’s) Conference.
 - Abstract accepted to present at the 28th San Diego International Summit on Violence, Abuse, and Trauma Across the Lifespan: Promoting Resilience amid Global Challenges.

BACKGROUND

HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN SAN DIEGO



- Sexual exploitation is the use of force, fraud, or coercion to cause a commercial sex act.
- Human trafficking is also exploitation of anyone under the age of 18.
- San Diego is ranked among the top 13 regions in the U.S. for Human Trafficking: 8,000 victims and \$810 million annually.¹

GAP IN RESEARCH



Few studies in the U.S. have examined college student involvement in sexual exploitation and their associations with food/housing and financial insecurity.²⁻⁵

RESEARCH STUDY AIMS:

- 1) Explore the nature and extent of human trafficking/sexual exploitation among college students in San Diego-Imperial Counties**
- 2) Explore factors associated with sexual exploitation & *what can be done about it?***
 - Force, coercion
 - Financial insecurity
 - Trauma, substance/alcohol use

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

9 Student Researchers

PhD (2 SDSU/UCSD), MSW (3 SDSU-IV), (2 SDSU-SD), BSW (1 SDSU), BA (1 UCSD)

- University students gained hands-on research experience to become more aware of the importance of data and research in addressing community-wide issues.
 - Several helped recruit participants, interviewed key informants, co-led focus groups, and designed the survey.
 - Two graduate students wrote publishable papers and one doctoral student won a travel award to present at an international research conference.

Student papers/presentation titles:

- Human Trafficking of College Students across the US-Mexico Border: An Exploratory Study in San Diego County and Imperial Valley
- Forced Farm Labor: US-Mexico Border College Students' Experiences with Seasonal Farm Work and Risk Factors Associated with Human Trafficking
- Characteristics and factors associated with non-fatal overdose among southern Californian college students
- Racial disparities in non-fatal overdose and related risk factors among college women in southern California

2023 Presentations

Dr. Urada (Principal Investigator) presented preliminary results to four local councils; spoke to four Institutional Ethics Review boards; collaborated with over 12 universities. She also formed a community advisory board of 6 human trafficking survivors who vetted and co-designed the survey. The following is a list of key preliminary presentations conducted and future conference abstracts accepted:

- SDSU-UCSD Human Trafficking Awareness Workshop (1/28/2023)
 - Dr. Urada co-organized this workshop with UCSD and presented preliminary research results of this data with students from two campuses.

Outcome: The District Attorney's office who attended invited Dr. Urada to present to the Advisory Council.

- San Diego Regional Human Trafficking-CSEC (Commercially Sexually Exploited Children) Advisory Council meeting. (3/8/23). Dr. Urada presented preliminary research results to the Advisory Council (representing nine sectors across San Diego).

Outcome: The talk triggered 3 more presentation invitations:

- San Diego County Child Welfare Services' Human Trafficking-CSEC Steering Committee meeting- "Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation of San Diego/Imperial Valley College Students with Foster Care Histories" (4/14/23).

Outcome: Child Welfare Services held a discussion afterwards to focus on prevention efforts of current middle and high school students who are in foster care.

- San Diego County Office of Education, College Connection Advisory Council/Council of Colleges (5/18/23)

Outcome: Invitation to return for a Fall follow-up discussion with colleges.

- San Diego Human Trafficking Research and Data Advisory Roundtable (6/6/23)

- International Women's and Children's Health and Gender Group (InWomen's) Conference (6/16/23). PhD student Ashley Weitensteiner received a travel award to present research results on a panel.
- San Diego International Summit on Violence, Abuse, and Trauma Across the Lifespan (August 2023)
- American Public Health Association (November 2023)

METHODS

- Online survey with Qualtrics (anonymous responses)
- Recruited college students or alumni in San Diego/Imperial Counties who knew someone or were trafficked/sexually exploited/sold sex
- Community advisory board of human trafficking survivors vetted the survey

- Flyers were posted on campus bulletin boards, bathrooms (November-April 2023)
- Social media posts
- \$15 incentive Amazon gift cards
- Provided resource lists & option to talk to someone



Methods (continued)

In Phase 1, qualitative data (interviews, focus groups, community advisory board) helped inform the survey's design and content.

In Phase 2, survey research was conducted to test the following hypotheses:

- 1) Financial-need related risk factors—including housing insecurity, lack of food, and finances—are associated with the risk for sexual exploitation;
- 2) Force, coercion, or deception is used to recruit college students into the commercial sex trade.

The survey also included validated health and mental health measures. Open-ended questions captured the nature and extent of human trafficking and sexual exploitation on college campuses and the barriers to seeking assistance.

Data were quantitatively analyzed* using STATA and qualitatively analyzed using a thematic approach.

*Note: The number of responses varied by type of question:

Number who responded	Survey question categories
971	demographics
935	housing, alcohol and substance use
895	HIV, pressured into sex
892	labor trafficking
856	known anyone sexually exploited/selling sex; seen/heard/suspected HT on campus; have or would sell sex
848	sold sex across the border
826	nature of sexual exchange for monetary value, how it was set up
823	effects of sexual exploitation, overdose
725	condom use

RESULTS

Survey results are reported below, including both qualitative and quantitative data. In addition, a number of respondents requested to be contacted.

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHICS

Median **Age: 20** (interquartile range: 19-22)

<u>Age</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
18	140	13%
19	156	15%
20	201	19%
21	142	13%
22	100	9%
23	59	6%

Gender and Relationship Status

26% Male
73% Female
68% Heterosexual

10% "in an open relationship"
37% "in a closed relationship, not married"
4% married
47% single

Race/Ethnicity

White	38%
Latinx	36%
Black/African American	17%
Asian/Pacific Islander	18%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	5%

Approximately 22% immigrated or had a parent who immigrated from a country outside of the U.S., such as: Africa/Ghana/Nigeria, Afghanistan, Armenia, Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, China, Columbia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Equador, France, Germany, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Iran, Iraq, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jamaica, Korea, Lebanon, Malaysia, México, Middle East, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Puerto Rico, Singapore, Sri Lanka, South Korea, Syria, Taiwan, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Ukraine, Venezuela, Vietnam.

Education

<u>Year in School</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1st year undergraduate	230	24%
2+ Undergraduate	587	60%
Transfer student	193	20%
Graduate student	97	10%
Graduated/alumni	35	4%

Educational Institutions (Current or Ever Attended)

<u>Institution</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
University of California, San Diego	196	20%
Point Loma Nazarene University	178	18%
Community Colleges - San Diego County	147	15%
Community College - Imperial Valley	128	13%
California State University - San Marcos	127	13%
San Diego State University - San Diego	71	7%
San Diego State University - Imperial Valley	67	7%
University of San Diego	64	7%
Other campuses, as specified*	75	8%

*Calexico, San Diego City College, Mesa College, Miramar College, Cuyamaca College, Grossmont College, Mira Costa College, Palomar College, Southwestern College - Chula Vista

(Secondary institutions named): Amarillo College, Art institute San Diego California, Columbia College-Imperial, CSU Sacramento, Cal Baptist, Cal Poly SLO, Coastline Community College, Columbia College-Imperial, Diablo Valley College, East LA college, El Camino College, Los Angeles Mission College, Mira Costa College Oceanside CA, Mira Costa community college, MSJC, Mt. SAC, NCCU, National University, National University Spectrum, Northeastern junior college, Northern Arizona University, Pasadena City College, Riverside City College, SBCC, San Joaquin Delta College, Santa Monica Community College, SFSU, Stanford University, UC Berkeley, UC Davis, UCLA, Universitas Padjadjaran, University of Southern California, Victor Valley College

13% were affiliated with a Greek student organization.

Sorority	63	7%
Fraternity (all male)	28	3%
Fraternity (coed)	24	3%

Over half worked.

<u>Employment status</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Employed by college/university	161	17%
Employed outside of college/university	330	34%
Self-employed	80	8%
Unemployed	383	39%

7% were in foster care.

<u>How long were you in foster care?</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
0-5 years	51	6%
More than 5 years	26	3%
More than 5 years and emancipated as a teen/adult	10	1%
0-5 years and emancipated as a teen/adult	8	1%

Current housing situation

50%	currently paid for housing
35%	living with family
31%	off campus apartment/housing
18%	university residence halls
12%	on campus apartment/housing
2.0%	inconsistent housing (couch surfing or moving frequently)
0.3%	in a fraternity or sorority house
0.3%	in a shelter
0.4%	in their car
0.5%	ever homeless or unstably housed
0.1%	living on the streets

Financial instability & Food insecurity

11% said they were currently not financially stable at all
35% said they were slightly financially unstable
10% said they often wonder how they will get their next meal when they couldn't afford it, 19% said they occasionally wonder.

41% ever wondered as a college student how they would get their next meal due to financial constraints

5% (43 students) said they always wonder.

Other demographics: 3% said they were ever incarcerated.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING PERSPECTIVES

On a scale of 1 to 5, how much of a threat do you think human trafficking is to students on your campus?

1 = no threat at all	14%
2	27%
3	23%
4	14%
5 = a large threat	21%

58% of students thought human trafficking was a medium to large threat to students on their campus.

13% said they had ever heard, seen, or suspected human trafficking recruitment (force, fraud, coercion, or under age 18 involvement in selling sex) on a college campus

When and where they saw suspected recruitment occur on or off college campuses are described in the quotes from participants below:

Recruitment on campus

“Some nights, **boys and men hang around college hostels in their flashy cars**, solely to make off with any interested girls around. Some of these girls just want to have fun and would go with any one they think they could have a good time with; of course, they understand they would have to have sex with them at the end of the day, but yeah, they are good with that.”

“This happens in different ways - One, a girl or a set of girls come to school in expensive cars and don luxury clothes and shoes. Whomever wants to feel-among tries to be friends with them and joins the train. She starts to feel left out or look the odd one and later asks to be taken along everywhere they visit.”

“This is a way they easily recruit on campus.”

“Of course. Students get poached for sex trafficking on campus. The traffickers lurk around campus disguised as workers in different parts of the institution. They just make you feel like it’s the only way for you to survive college, easy money, if discretion is promised and maintained. You get to meet a lot of people who are way older, but wish to have sex with young girls.”

“Recruitment for sex trafficking don’t occur often due to the level of security on campus, as per my source(s). They know the implications and consequences and therefore don’t risk speaking to possible recruits. **Only thing these pimps and their agents do on campus is to assess their possible recruits**, ensure they can be tamed and observe them quite well before approaching them in less congested areas.”

Th(eir) approach doesn’t look deliberate or intentional, rather accidental. The manner and approach in which they eventually make their words believable are discrete to themselves alone but it’s how it’s done.”

“Some are actually college students who have as well been tasked with imploring their mates and peers into selling sex. **These recruits get maltreated by their eventual sugar daddies and appear the next day with bruises and injuries**. Perhaps they weren’t aware of the consequences that came with being alone in a room with a stranger. **I think BIPOC students are mostly targeted to avoid less suspicion**. Forgive me for revealing this but it’s just the simple truth.”

“There are traces of it all over them on campus. You see these boys and girls coming to classes in luxurious cars, wearing renowned brands of expensive clothes and shoes. They try to use this to intimidate others who may not have as much as they do and also in the process, try leaning towards them, make acquaintances whilst they introduce them into how it is they can afford this items.”

“College students are quite fickle and gullible. Despite various attempts by the school management on the education of sex trafficking and their operations, they still fall prey to the lies these **agents** tell. These traffickers are actually students whose actions and activities are at the behest of drug lords and cartel members. They sell drugs on campus albeit no one really knows their faces but sources say their numbers rise on the daily, despite the attempts to curb the spread. They do this just to make money they would actually not make working at groceries or shops.”

“At San Diego city college guys looking for girls to work for them”

“It happened between my friend and bully”

“My 1st year in school”

“I have seen this couple it times and it seems people are not talking about it”

“In my sophomore year in college, I got a whiff of some girls get into this business with an older guy who used to sponsor them financially; later on, he introduced these two girls into going clubbing with him from there, things escalated.”

“Girls belong to **sorority groups**, yes. Some only actually **join these groups to recruit** other babes into their line of work, as **they are given a percentage/commission for every new girl who gets introduced**. It’s in no way a forced recruitment, but I think so much more can be done within these groups rather than be a center or avenue for sex-for-hire girls/ladies.”

“Underage recruitment on campus? Definitely not. But I can attest to the fact that sex-selling is lucrative for college girls. They are young, perhaps naive, and tend to appreciate every little dime they get, so they just try to flex these little luxurious things they get. Seeing the flex, Some Others start to feel inferior and would want to match their spendings, ultimately they become a part of this business as well. **College boys buy sex, Rich, Old men buy sex, and even the Fathers of these college boys tend to buy sex from these college girls through their son’s’ introduction.**”

“Happens discretely on campus. Got guys who seduce juniors into coming to their homes to have sex.”

“Dealers exist on campus, some even go as far as staying on campus because they believe dormitories and school surroundings are kind of insulated, thereby using different ‘dead spots’ in campus to conduct this shady business of theirs. Various students have been met across different places on campus, many of whom now push drugs and other substances ,even outside the campus.”

“They approach people on campus, of course. On one occasion, an acquaintance of my sister’s was approached, the lady who accosted her tucked a card into her pocket and asked her to call the number on it if she ever needed money or other material things. At

first, she thought it was a prank, but it wasn't. She called to confirm the legitimacy of it but the number was a blocked one. Days later, she got a call and to her surprise, it was a woman at the other end of the phone. Pretty sure they did all this as a precaution to avoid being tracked or whatever. Discussions on how they could help her financially if she was willing to hookup with young men around took place .. She lied she wouldn't follow through with them but I'm sure she did. She definitely followed up at her discretion."

"Older students and other ladies in the business try as much to persuade younger ones, new intakes, into this business. They lie and tell them they need someone who watches out for them financially and are convinced sexual favors is the only way to repay them. The young(vulnerable) ones start to feel like it's only logical they fend for themselves and fall victim."

"On campus, during the faculty's dinner party one year."

"In rare cases, sex trafficking occurs right under everyone's nose on campus, considering how discreet these people operate. They look sharp, smart and wealthy, even students among them. They try to look impressive, as a first impression matters to people a lot. Whoever is approached or contacted online feels impressed and would want to do what they say to live a life like that, getting deceived or less, exploited , vis-à-vis."

"You can't pinpoint where exactly their base of operations is on campus, but I can assure you they are everywhere. They look for pitiful ones who seem too young to be a problem. **They go around classes looking out for those who don't attach themselves to others and wouldn't be noticed were they to skip or miss classes often.**"

"A few girls tried to get me to go out with them last semester. I know they are into some kind of weird stuff, but I declined. Boys do this as well. They try to poach college girls for men of ranks outside the university in exchange for commission, like a kind of percentage for every student they introduce. This is in no way a forced process, rather than lobbying and devious persuasions."

"No one's intentions are clear, because **even your closest friends may be agents of theirs**. There are boys, in their thirties who act as intermediaries (pimps) between these girls and whoever's getting sex from them. Some girls hide behind going to parties, unknowingly to their parents, are really escorts and sex toys. These boys take these ladies away every weekend in cars deep into the night and bring them back very early in the morning."

Invitation to "parties" and social groups

“I heard that there are fake parties where it’s a trap for sex trafficking”

“Whilst I was an undergraduate, I almost joined a group of girls whom I thought were doing well as regards Feminism on campus. Little did I know it was just a smokescreen and they were actually these promiscuous ones who skipped schools for parties with older & rich men. They were used by these men to push drugs across various campuses and among dorm students.”

“In **sorority groups** on college grounds, students try to recruit other students into giving sexual services to boys from other schools, all these to get a percentage of the proceedings/transactions. They themselves get into the act, and use the referral ls as another way of making money without lifting a finger.”

“I for one, got an invite to an **exclusive party right on campus**. I went, but party wasn’t really what I expected. Of course, the party was held outside college ground. It was atypical of a college students’ party. Grown men, some of whom clearly were into organized crime were in attendance, hoping to get a dance, or more, with the college girls around. Some went home with a few of them & I’m pretty sure it wasn’t the first time they did.”

“On Campus, there are college students who aid and abet sex trafficking. Some are older and happen to have these newbies under their thumb. They appear under the guise of caring and looking out for them, using their manipulative instincts to encourage these girls to see boys and other men outside college and have sex, “to settle your bills”, they often say.”

“According to sources, the **sorority girls’ club is actually where most of the girls get recruited**. It’s actually easy to recruit girls through this group as there’d be lesser suspicion of their activities. Not the leaders of the group though. The bad eggs are just in camouflage and mix with the whole group, keenly observing anyone who feels dejected.”

“Students recruit other students into selling sex, some are as a result of accident and victims of circumstances, others as willing sellers. Nevertheless, recruitment takes place on and off campus, **members of the cheerleading group on campus were said to have been involved in selling sex** at a time. they use newbies as well as tools for making waves in the business by deceiving them into having sex with boys or they themselves, claiming it’s a form of ritual for new intakes.”

“Sex trafficking recruitment takes place on campus. **In dormitories and at the ladies’ centre-** knowing they can’t see a better gathering of ladies than there- they try to encourage other ladies to make fast money being call girls as opposed to the grocery stores most of them work in, where they don’t even get paid much. There are girls who stay on campus who are hookers and sex for hire off campus at night; these girls in turn try to downplay the risks associated with the hustle and tell their fellows it ain’t actually bad.”

“Information as regards parties are everywhere on campus; **Students decide which to go and which is perceived to be unsafe.** However, some students persist and go to parties that would otherwise not be expected of responsible students. Here, they meet people whose agenda they don’t know and may get trafficked sexually, raped afterwards and defiled.”

“From **school parties to dorm parties**, college girls introduce boys and men to one another, men whose interest in them is purely sexual. Don’t really know the details of the sexual transactions, one thing that’s certain is that there’s always an exchange of sex later on, for monetary or other incentive purposes.”

“Most girls in college tend to be 18 years old and above, so I think assuming that under 18 are being forced to sell their body for sex might be a difficult argument to make for college students. However, that doesn’t mean they don’t happen. Recruiting people is always easy, think **it’s all about saying a few words to them** with the hope that they are manipulated and leave their comfort zone to work for a pimp. **From school parties and dinners to sorority events, girls meet a lot of people who are double-faced and who use them as instruments of sex of they could.**”

“It occurred as part of a **fraternity initiation** routine of which I saw from a distance”

Online recruitment

“It’s an Online recruitment thing at UCSD. Most don’t have knowledge of it but it’s how it’s done. A broadcast list exists on some social media groups that have been created mainly to disseminate info, quite exclusively reserved for those who wish to attend parties outside the universities or so. They go within and beyond San Diego, California and the States generally. To the outside, it looks like a group merely for fellowship discussions, but it’s much more than that.”

“There are **online groups** where students associate with one another and are supposed to meet other students; these groups are created solely for academic purposes but dysfunctional set of people take people’s cell numbers on the group, share them with certain outsiders, who may or may not be college students, and whose end game is to try to cuddle them up in the hope that they get to meet them in-person, convince them to acquaint each other, with the hope of having sex with them.”

“**Don’t know how it is they get privy to these information but for a fact, they have the cell numbers of a few girls on campus**, either copied from their social media pages or school broadcast list. But those who have mostly been contacted, who were fortunate to not fall prey, were mostly BIPOC girls. I’ve got a feeling they are targeted, the feeling is they will entice them with money and other expensive stuffs that are difficult to turn down in the hope they become call-girls for them.”

Sex for grades

“Some Instructors and Professors pressure a few students into having sex with them in exchange for mark and grades. Not trying to pinpoint, just saying some deceive these girls and renege on their promises while some come through with their words. The ones who deceive really make you think you are well off the required mark to make a nice CGPA and would propose that you do as they say to ensure your stay in school. They take this relationship outside college grounds in order to not arouse suspicion. What’s saddening is that these girls appear to be enjoying the relationship when they are actually scared of pulling out not knowing how consequential it can be.”

“Threats; that’s what a few professors use to get sex from girls in college. Those who don’t make threats, most girls fear to detach themselves from them for fear of the unknown.”

“I suspected sex in exchange for help in assignment between two of my mates.”

“A few College Professors are infamous for grading students for sex; Retrospectively, they have successfully had their way with past students and wouldn’t stop until they are stopped or exposed. It happens a lot across campus, where students are coerced into having sex with lecturers to get a good test and exams score.”

“Some Class representatives also use their position to mediate between College professors and these girls, with tests and examination marks guaranteed for both.”

“Sexual favors, really are granted amongst students, on and off campus, a fact not known to the University management. A lecturer once threatened to make life and school miserable for a college girlfriend of mine at a time just because she kept refusing his advances. He tried to convince her of his innermost intentions, offering to pay her and help with college assignments as well.”

Off-campus recruitment

“Most of the actions definitely happen off campus as no one really wants their involvement known.”

“Some even travel as far out as Mexico, of course.”

“People get exploited, trafficked perhaps, but in my opinion, I don’t think it happens on campus because of the too much exposure around as well as the risk attached to it. It’s easier trying to get at people rather outside, at events, clubs, occasions, dinners and sorts than trying to poach them on campus.”

“Exploitations occur outside off college campus as well, sex trafficking included. Desperate ones turn to prostitution for money and get raped or harmed in other ways. Some even get lost and have not being found till this day. Ofcourse they have their ways of connecting with these pimps, who use other businesses as a front for their shady dealings.”

“**Local loan Sharks** offer sometimes require sexual services as a form of debt repayment. This occurs outside college grounds often. Female students who take loans and default on the payment may often be required to tend to the services of the one of the creditors as a form of repayment.”

“**Pubs outside school, strip clubs, bars and restaurants are places where these pimps peek at vulnerable kids.** They study them and may even put a tail on them for observation. They may even make acquaintances of them just to make themselves trustworthy. They offer to pay for their lunch, walk them home, humor them and do all sort of convincing things, just to make them feel close enough to trust them to say YES whenever they feel they are ready to be sexually trafficked.”

“Although there have only been a few cases of sexual exploitation amongst students only, it ain’t the case generally, as per these girls mingle with even those who are outside the University grounds.”

“Rather, most of these people poach their preys right outside campus to avoid detection and suspicion.”

“Anonymous invitations to parties are always honored by university students, when they do not even know who and who’s gonna be there. They get in the mix with those whose intent are unknown.”

“A few get entangled and may decide to link up again and again, and a few get lucky and meet nice, rich men who would have sex with them and spoil them with money and luxury.”

“Been to a couple of strip clubs with them boys, and we was offered sex as a VIP treatment if we were interested. Strippers are supposed to just dance and be cuddled with, no phones are allowed, nor cameras, which makes it an option for struggling college students to do, knowing their secret is safe. But these ladies offer much more than meets the eye - been used by the agency as a tool for selling sex and paying them enough money to keep them happy... and mute. A failed system.”

“It’s been said around campus that these traffickers are a large organization with a wide network, hence it should come as no surprise if you, who happens to find yourself in need of assistance, get approached by a stranger, who offers a way out. This is how they recruit young ones on campus, they attack and catch them off guard, when they are vulnerable.”

“A certain friend used to live in La Jolla in her first two years in IV college. We met an Alumnus who came for an oratory event one day on Campus while I was an undergraduate as well; He made sure he got our contact numbers and followed up with calls. She later informed me the man asked if she would be “interested in rolling with Men at the top” for a weekend. Like “these men were having a party and were in need of young girls (basically ESCORTS)”. Man spoke like he was a conduit of a kind, a pimp who recruited party girls for Men. The Pimp kinda felt confident asking this; like it wasn't his first time doing that. I'm pretty sure there are series of this on campus that we don't know of. She said she was open for such an experience as she wouldn't be the only girl at the party after all. They been real close since, like she felt any of the men could set her up for something later on. Shows how much she doesn't understand the consequences of her actions.”

“Human trafficking, to my knowledge, doesn't happen anywhere on campus grounds. School Resource Officers are always on everyone's neck which makes it difficult for people to come on campus to recruit students for trafficking. However, selling of sex is a major issue the school authorities could try to address. Even those who stay in campus dorms and rooms smuggle themselves out some nights to party and have sex, getting paid after the acts.”

“Heard different tales of human trafficking right outside CSU, but recruiters have laid low over the years at CSU as SROs on campus have been working tirelessly to curb the spread. Although, a lotta students still engage in hookups and call-girl businesses, considering their activities cannot be monitored outside the university.”

“Off campus seems ideal enough to observe and try recruiting some young blood. Maybe some of those who recruit are students as well or maybe affiliated with college students in a way or the other. Dance clubs, Strip clubs, other relaxation centers are possible places where recruitment do take place. Students visit these places frequently, to party and most end up going with newly acquainted men to their homes.”

“To call it Human trafficking would be too extreme, or too serious, concerning the happenings at CSU. No one, to my knowledge, is being forced to have sex or taken against their wishes/will. Rather, a few of them, emphasis on the FEW, flock into these dealings of their own accord, albeit not mostly at their own discretion. This doesn't make it any less true that Pimps - whose connections make these dealings possible - exist around the university and surroundings, and would jump at the opportunity of having one more person join their ranks. I have learnt that the more they are, or show up, the more money they get paid. In short, the higher the number of girls made available for sexual activity, the more the agency's commission, or in this case, the PIMP's.”

“Sex selling and exploitation, without an iota of doubt, occurs outside school, although we are yet to fathom how students are targeted. We presume, based on our projections, that CSU being further away from the border, makes the traffickers want to lurk around, as they understand it's the last place anyone would look for traffickers, considering the distance to the outer country.”

“As lucrative as the business may seem, and as fearless as those in the industry may be, there’s been no traces of their operations on college grounds. However, it’s come to my attention that a lot of ladies make their acquaintances as a side hustle outside college grounds. They feel the reward transcends the risks, but unknowingly to them, it is just a ploy to entice them until they let their guards down.”

“There’s absolutely no clue as regards the activities of traffickers on college campuses, but I do know of them outside school - it’s a fact that college girls often travel outside the States on escort duties. So they don’t get sanctioned by the school for missing classes, they only do weekends and return to campus on Sundays with the pretense of having gone to see visit their parents over the weekend.”

Deceived

“A cousin of mine made an acquaintance sometimes ago, when she was in college. She wasn’t aware of the line of business her new-acquaintance was. She felt she could be trusted as they had been together for a couple of months. She started going out together and went missing for about a couple of weeks or so.”

“She kind of reported to her parents that she would be attending an academic program in Mexico, but it wasn’t true. Said it was a private, informal thing so the school wasn’t really involved and that it was just a ladies’ thing. Unknowingly, all those who traveled together with her felt they were going for an academic program as well. But she herself didn’t know. She got there and got struck when she found out the kind of thing her friend was into. She was forced to engage in all the sexual shenanigans her friend had planned for her, just to preserve her life. She claimed they were literally in another world. She only returned a couple of weeks later using the funds she gathered from her doings. She was deceived, and to keep her life, concurred. All this because she trusted a lady she never knew well. The lady-friend never returned Stateside, by the way.”

“Sex traffickers are usually well-informed in my opinion. The agents try to attend all college parties they can, hoping they could prey on drunk girls and boys. Once you’re drunk; tipsy, they approach you and try to shepherd you into going home with them. They try to have their way with you when you go with them to a hotel or sort, where they must have registered under an alias to make them untraceable.”

“It’s a low-key thingy amongst college students, most especially the girls. Some of them have “Madams” -Pimps- whom they work for, who sends them to college and sort their bills; In return, they help these people’s illegitimate businesses by providing other girls who may or may not understand what they do at first.”

“According to sources, **some parents actually sign off on their children, in search of greener pastures**, leaving Imperial valley with certain agencies who promise to provide and take care of their children overseas. **Parents think these kids just do menial jobs**

with whomever they leave with, but little do they do know it's actually not. A girl was fortunate to flee back to El Centro to tattletale."

"A certain girl who lives with her madam, heeds whatever her Madam says. The Madam pays her tuition fees and takes care of her other bills but in return, she grants sexual favors to one or two or her Madam's clients. Albeit she is older than 18, which makes her an adult, the fact that her situation is been exploited makes everything so messed up. Madam could claim the sex is always consensual, when those who know of the girl's story know she only does that out of responsibility as her madam's ward. It's that bad. It's a girl I know; I know all these because we used to date. And yes, it happens here in El Centro."

"Trafficked" to Mexico

"These individuals partake in orgy and other wild things with one another during these visits. These kids parents, have got a Holiday home across in Rosarito & they take these wildness as far as out of San Diego."

"There, we learnt that they engage in all sorts of sexual activities which can never be condoned anywhere in San Diego, each girl giving excuses to their parents for spending the nights out at their friends'. One of them almost got abducted once."

"My sister was a victim. She was trafficked a couple of years ago right before the Pandemic struck, and she's been amiss since. Had a struggling father who couldn't provide all she needed, but we thought my sister worked at a store where she earned money. Little did we know she was an escort at night , selling sex to men in clubhouses. As a naive girl, she left house one day and never came back. It's assumed she was probably deceived into fleeing the country for MEXICO just so she could make more. We know this because a girlfriend of hers confessed to been almost recruited as well."

"What's even more alarming is that these girls venture as far as Calexico and other neighborhoods in Mexico."

"Of course, I no longer think it's a secret that college girls go as far as Mexico to sell sex, most times, they get taken there by their buyers who happen to frequent the other side of the Wall very often, whether on business trips or just to wind down. But how they convince these girls to go along with them is what baffles me. Hence, I have come to discover that there's an especially certain group of girls who do this all the time, who report directly to their own "Madam" outside of college grounds, on whose directives they do whatever are told. learnt they get paid before and after the trip, with little guarantees of their safety."

Financial vulnerability

“I was down financially, really affected me big time. Tried a number of relatives & known people to source for funds but it wasn’t promising.”

“Already, ladies get approached by guys and other men all the time so I was used to being walked up to by these men. But this time it was different. The approach of this lady was much more direct, which meant she understood my situation really well, and **knew I was in need of money**. This meant one of my room mates or friends really shared this info with her, which ultimately means that’s how it happens all over campus. They got people all around who watch out for distressed students, whom can be preyed on. She promised it was just going to be a one time thing but that I’d get much more than I needed, maybe wanted, but I knew better. She didn’t feel like a student, so arousing attention was gonna be needless. Besides, she could deny she actually said that. Any other person could have fell for it.”

“Most traffickers know how tight campus security is, so they seldom try to recruit on campus. But it’s a completely different case outside campus. Organising parties and inviting students over, they tease them with desirable amounts, and the desperate ones fall for it. Not everyone does alright, but those who do later become lady-escorts, some even push drugs for them on & off campus, **“to make ends meet”**, they say.”

“College students, boys especially, **struggle to make ends meet**, unlike their female counterparts. They try to do any job they come across and some get entangled in drug business. Depends on the group you work for though, which kinds of determines how you get treated. Some aren’t as lucky and may be used for labor outside the States, the ones who remain work their asses off as distributors and as drug mules.”

“A friend of mine, a Girl, works as an escort and does introduces the trade to a few of her acquaintances. I understand that she sells hers to **take care of school bills and fees**, as she’s only got her grandmother to depend on for funds. This is definitely not me justifying her actions, I’m just saying it’s something that I personally think she wouldn’t be doing were there a better way to raise the amount needed by a college student. She does this and says she’s not ashamed to admit it, as no one gives her money for free, hence she decided to commercialize it. Funny huh? She feels it’s unfair to criticize her if you aren’t willing to help her. I know a couple of other girls who have ventured into this industry through her who are UCSD students as well.”

“In all consciousness, I think kids from **foster homes** are being targeted mostly, due to the weak attachment they have with their foster parents. They are easier targets and would make for weaker preys, easily swayed and enticed as most of them probably **never got to enjoy luxury** much. The boys are easily enticed into the drug trade, ladies into prostitution and sex sales. **They emancipate at 18, so most don’t get easily missed, it’s assumed.**”

“Competition amongst girls for luxurious stuffs is quite unhealthy and most would do anything to stay or get ahead of others, hence the need to sell sex. **Most parents can’t afford to buy these expensive things for them**, so they take it upon themselves to fend for and sort themselves. Most venture into the business knowing exactly what it is they are doing, whilst some just get caught in the middle, as they gallivanting around in their promiscuity.”

Rape, assault, sexually transmitted infections, disappearances

“A few get carried away at parties and get raped just around a corner, and cases like that.”

“Walking at USD I saw someone grab another girls butt and she started screaming.”

“I heard about a friend of mine who goes to [university], her roommate was raped by someone she didn’t know when walking home one day.”

“Being a victim of deceit, I can testify to this. **As an undergraduate, I had serious issues making ends meet and was open to all form of hustle**. It was then I discovered that a few of the girls actually knew where the clubs were, even the ones outskirts the city and were usually in attendance, to hook up with men and make money. I partook once, and **got raped on my first outing.**”

“I heard of a certain incident in one of the colleges around. **Some girls was arrested for being an accomplice when a college girl went missing**. Said they attended parties together alright, but that the victim started going out without her and the one she went to the night she went missing was actually one of the few. Heard there are **girls who recruit willing girls** into the paramour doings.”

“**The girls who recruit actually get paid in advance** against future events and prepare themselves to entertain certain set of men. **These girls don’t use their college’s health facilities when they contract sexually transmitted infections, and visit certain medical centers around their colleges to avoid suspicion**. I know this ‘cause I’m an intern in one of the medical centers around and see/hear a lot of stuff, these girls coming in with guys who pose as their boyfriends to protect their cover, in case the medical personnel get uncomfortable with their stories and wanna involve the authorities.”

“I feel safe at my college/university”

5% Disagree
26% Neutral
69% Agree

Sometimes people are prevented from leaving an unfair or unsafe work situation by their employers.

13% said they have ever been afraid to leave or quit a work situation due to fears of violence or threats of harm to yourself or your family.

21% said they or a family member experienced force/coercion as a seasonal farm worker as a college student.

SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Have you ever **felt pressured** to engage in a sexual activity as a college student?

Yes 38%
No 54%

Have you ever **felt pressured** to engage in a sexual activity by others on campus?

Yes 23%
No 73%

Who on campus pressured you or someone else you know?

Instructor 12%
Student 37%
A partner (e.g., boyfriend or girlfriend) 23%
Other 5%

Over a third said they were pressured as a college student into a sexual activity; Nearly 1 in 8 said it was by an instructor.

Asked “How comfortable are you in reporting the person (who pressured you or someone you know) (on a scale of 1-5)” over **40%** said they were not comfortable.

1 (not comfortable at all)	2	3	4	5 (very comfortable)
16%	25%	21%	14%	24%

EVER FORCED/COERCED/TRICKED (FRAUDED) INTO SELLING SEX?

YES, AS A COLLEGE STUDENT	18%
YES, NOT AS A COLLEGE STUDENT	10%
YES, ANOTHER PERSON PROFITED (e.g., pimp)	3%
NO, BUT KNEW OF ANOTHER COLLEGE STUDENT	24%

Asked “Have you known anyone who has been involved in selling sex or sexual exploitation/ sex trafficking?” the survey respondents said:

Yes, I have known or currently know someone	30%
Yes, I have known and currently know more than one person	12%

35% said the person was a **college student** when they were involved in selling sex or sexual exploitation/trafficking

When asked about involvement in any sexual exchanges, selling sex, or sexual exploitation experiences as a college student from personal experience or of an acquaintance, the chosen **perspective held** throughout the rest of the survey was:

Self	67%
A friend or acquaintance	17%
A family member	5%

Of note, **African American/Black Students** were **2.8 times** and **American Indian/Alaskan Native** were **2.2 times** more likely to be forced/coerced into selling sex as a college student.

HAVE YOU EVER EXCHANGED SEXUAL ACTIVITIES FOR SOMETHING OF MONETARY OR OTHER VALUE?

Yes, as a college student	21%
One time	10%
More than once	11%
Never, but considered	20%
Never & never considered	55%

How likely are you to exchange sexual activities for anything of monetary/other value?

Very likely	3%
Likely	11%
Unlikely	22%
Very unlikely	60%

20% said they ever received anything in exchange for sex (for example, a place to stay, gifts, or food)

16% said as a college student they or someone they knew as a college student had crossed the U.S.-Mexico border to provide sexual acts for something of monetary or other value.

9% said they had ever been tricked or forced into doing any kind of work that they did not want to do, specifically “selling sex.”

REASONS THEY SOLD SEX AS A COLLEGE STUDENT

Have extra cash for spending (<u>frequency</u> = 256)	42%	If forced, 2.5 times more likely to sell sex to pay for food
Pay for school (246)	40%	
Pay for food or rent (225, 223)	37%	
To provide for someone else (191)	31%	2.6 times more likely to pay for school
<u>Forced/ Out of Fear</u> (121, 98)	20%, 16%	
<u>Feel needed or wanted</u> (88)	14%	2.3 times more likely to pay for rent
<u>Experiment sexually</u> (83)	14%	
<u>Under the influence of a substance</u> (80)	13%	
Convinced or persuaded (70)	12%	
To <u>feel in control</u> (63). <u>Distract from life stressor</u> (68)	10%, 11%	
As <u>part of an initiation (fraternity/sorority)</u> (35)	6%	

1 out of 5 said they were forced to sell sex and were twice as likely to do so to pay for food, school, or rent when they were forced to sell sex.

How was the sexual exchange established (for something of monetary or other value)?

In-person (set up independently)	36%
Online or over the phone (set up independently)	25%
Online or over the phone (set up by someone else)	12%
In-person (set up by someone else)	12%
Psychological manipulation by another	10%

Who set up the monetary sex exchange with a buyer?

Friend	30%
Pimp, madame, "folks", "bottom", "sister wife"	14%
Partner	13%
Online platform (website to view profile)	11%
Agency or business	8%
Family member	6%
Criminal group	4%
Group posing as a religious group	3%
Greek Panhellenic student organization	2%

Which best describes the nature of the sexual exchange for something of monetary or other value? (frequency = 477)

Coerced	26%
Deceived	23%
Not externally influenced	17%
Threatened	12%
Forced	12%

27% (frequency = 238) were ever forced/coerced into sexual contact with another person whether for something of monetary value or not.

SEXUAL EXPLOITATION EFFECTS*

If they or another college student they knew ever exchanged sexual activities for something of value (410 participants or 42%), they said they or the other student was:

Emotional or psychologically harmed	65%
Physical abuse/violence	45%
Rape/sexual violence	38%
Initiated in drug/alcohol use	36%
Acquired a sexually transmitted infection	34%
Were asked or told to recruit or traffic	25%

SEXUAL EXPLOITATION EFFECTS*

26% (216)	affected academic performance
22% (180)	increased alcohol use
6% (45)	began using alcohol after the experience
3% (28)	decreased alcohol use
16% (130)	increased drug use
7% (53)	began using drugs after the experience
4% (29)	decreased drug use

*of 821 who answered

Did you or the person you know experience any of the following internal feelings following the sexual exchange(s)?*

(Post-traumatic Stress Disorder Scale)

Any reminder of it brought back feelings about it

Moderately 30%

Quite a bit 24%

Extremely 18%

Trouble staying asleep

Moderately 25%

Quite a bit 25%

Extremely 11%

Other things kept making me think about it

Moderately 20%

Quite a bit 24%

Extremely 19%

I avoided letting myself get upset when I thought about it or was reminded of it

Moderately 30%

Quite a bit 23%

Extremely 17%

I felt as if it hadn't happened or wasn't real

Moderately 23%

Quite a bit 23%

Extremely 18%

I tried not to think about it

Moderately 20%

Quite a bit 26%

Extremely 26%

I felt irritable and angry

Moderately 23%

Quite a bit 24%

Extremely 21%

My feelings about it were kind of numb

Moderately 25%

Quite a bit 22%

Extremely 21%

I had trouble falling asleep

Moderately 18%
Quite a bit 23%
Extremely 18%

I felt watchful or on guard

Moderately 21%
Quite a bit 21%
Extremely 23%

*of 419-433

**PERCEPTION OF SEXUAL ACTIVITY
AS THEY EXPERIENCED IT (of 764 who did not say it was N/A)**

The first time:

As an act of intimacy	67%
As a transactional exchange	7%

Now:

As an act of intimacy	71%
As a transactional exchange	3%
Both	17%

17% now perceives sexual activity as a transactional exchange

Quotes on perceptions of sex:

“I personally associate sex with trauma, unfortunately.”

“I first thought of it as an achievement, something to count and increase.”

“I knew it was wrong of them, but I was in a safe situation so I did not feel in danger, I simply blocked them after the date, and knew if they can’t respect consent I will never go further with them.”

“Just sex.”

“I wanted to wait until marriage, but my (younger, but less chaste) boyfriend didn’t. He “encouraged” me to explore with him, which barely feels like coercion—so it brings about confusion and guilt—but truly was and was harmful.”

“My first sexual encounter were acts of sexual violence.”

“It felt like something that was happening to me without my input or consent.”

“I originally perceived it as something I had to do to please a partner.”

“Just the action of it.”

SEXUAL HEALTH RISKS

Have you used **condoms** or other contraceptives during any sexual exchanges? (725 responded)

Yes	82%
No	15%

Have you ever been tested for **HIV**? (895 responded)

Yes	34%
No	65%

Compared to the 55% who never considered selling sex as a college student, those who sold sex as a college student or considered it were 2 times more likely to take an HIV test.

SUBSTANCE USE

50% (of 935) said they ever used illicit drugs as a college student; 8% did unknowingly.

Knowingly used illicit drugs	50%
Unknowingly used illicit drugs	8%
Never used as a college student	40%
Prefer not to respond	2%

Frequency of illicit drug use in the past 6 months: 45% said “never,” 23% said less than monthly, 16% said monthly, **10% said weekly, 5% said daily/almost daily**, and 2% preferred not to respond.

Substances use types (past 6 months) (among 935 students)

<u>Type of drug</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Alcoholic beverages (beer, wine, spirits, etc.)	54%
Cannabis (marijuana, pot, grass, hash, etc.)	31%
Tobacco products (cigarettes, chewing tobacco, cigars, etc.)	19%
Amphetamine type stimulants (speed, diet pills, ecstasy, etc.)	8%
Cocaine (coke, crack, etc.)	8%
Sedatives or Sleeping Pills (Valium, Serepax, Rohypnol, etc.)	6%
Hallucinogens (LSD, acid, mushrooms, PCP, Special K, etc.)	6%
Opioids (heroin, morphine, methadone, codeine, etc.)	4%
Inhalants (nitrous, glue, petrol, paint thinner, etc.)	4%

Alcohol Use

In terms of alcohol use, of 935 students, 8% (77) said they drank 2-3 times a week, 2% said they did 4+ times a week. On a typical day when they drink, 32% said they had 1-2 drinks, 24% said they had 3-4 drinks, 10% said they had 5-6 drinks, 4% said they had 7-9 drinks, and 1% said they had 10 or more drinks. 6% (53) said they had 6+ drinks on one occasion on a weekly basis.

Overdoses

30% (250) said they ever witnessed an overdose as a college student.

16% (131) said they ever experienced an overdose as a college student.

On the day of the overdose, 107 had drunk alcohol, 73 cannabis, 45 had cocaine; 60 took amphetamines; 36 had inhalants; 45 had sedatives; 19 took hallucinogens; 20 (15%) had opioids.

PERCEIVED BARRIERS TO SEEKING HELP ON CAMPUS

- Fear (53%)
 - Shame (50%)
 - Stigma (49%)
 - Didn't want family/friends to find out (44%)
 - Discrimination (34%)
 - Felt threatened by person facilitating commercial sex trade (23%)
 - Didn't want to expose the commercial sex trade experience (20%)
 - Unaware of where to get help (17%)
 - Insurance (9%)
 - Cost (10%)
 - Transportation (8%)
- Of 422, 40% were not comfortable reporting a perpetrator**

Involvement in sexual exchange(s) ever **inhibited seeking support of:**

Mental Health Services	43%
Academic Counseling	31%
Health services	33%
Police	24%
Housing services	17%
Food services	12%

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM STUDENTS

What would be helpful to students who have experienced sexual exploitation?

61% said **“More counselors who have experience working with people who have been exploited.”**

56% said **“An anonymous way to report sexual exploitation”**

55% said **“Support groups and organizations”**

50% said **“More counselors with cultural, racial, or ethnic backgrounds and identities that match my own”**

47% said “More consequences for those who exploit people”

47% said “Education on campus about human trafficking”

39% said “Better campus security”

38% said “Remove consequences for those who are seeking help”

“Other”:

“Support for those trying/wishing to leave exploitative situations”

“Rehabilitation for those who exploit. They’re hurting too. They need consequences, but also help.”

“Having gates on campus.”

“Disability mindful counselors”

21% were interested in getting more information or training on this subject of sexual exploitation or human trafficking and 22 were willing to talk to a trauma-informed survivor advocate. **The following student quotes illustrate further recommendations.**

IMPLICATIONS FOR UNIVERSITIES

- Educate in Freshman orientations
- Student financial burdens
- Campus security, lighting
- Prevent, intervene recruitment
- Anonymous reporting
- Promote available resources
- Training for staff about human trafficking (counseling centers)



PREVENTION THROUGH EDUCATION

“In every practical sense, sex exploitation and trafficking happen almost everywhere, but it’s kind of perplexing that **college students whom everyone understands are adults**, and should be aware of all the dangers and risks that come with trafficking/ traffickers,

are the ones who fall prey to all these. It only shows how much the kids are struggling to fend for themselves.”

“Some get into this due to deceit, others know exactly what they want to do. Either way, education on drug and sex trafficking must continue on campus to enlighten the majority who may fall victim of sexual exploitation and hope to dissuade those already committed to this from continuing.”

“Students need to be implored of the dangers of going out with strangers whose roots can’t be traced, to avoid being raped or defiled. There is the need for continuous counseling, training of students on the ways of traffickers.”

“Students need to be wary of promiscuous Professors who wish to have their ways with them, one way or the other. they need to be on guard so not to fall victims to their schemes and deceit.”

“Sex orientation should be given to all college students as soon as they are enrolled. **Informative article could be written or printed on pamphlets for dissemination.** Let them know and understand no Professors could threaten or jeopardize their future if they don’t have sex with them because a few of these girls are that gullible. They spread their legs just to satisfy their professors and not fail their courses/classes.”

“Disguise and camouflage are usually their forte. They poach students, using their fellow colleagues into pressuring them to do their bidding. Ultimately, the decision lies with whom is being pressured though.”

“Sex isn’t even supposed to be transactional, in my opinion. But then, people with authority at various levels try to wield their “supposed” power over this naive ladies; and the most annoying part is that they fall victims this scheme. If there’s no threats, fine, you can, not saying you should but then no one should be threatening me to have sex with me. I’d report such a person to the authorities right away.”

“Students need to be aware of the risks associated with Sex trafficking/traffickers. Most of them meddle with them without knowing they are really not in charge and could be disposed off when they no longer served their purpose.”

“It definitely is an issue I imagine that is kept quiet.”

“Opportunists use every bit of energy to entice vulnerable individuals. However, students need to be educated on the need for dignity even in the face of financial hardships; and not just go about looking for “simple but demeaning “ways out of these hardships they find themselves in.”

“Most girls...tend to be gullible enough to believe everyone or anyone is actually on their side, and thus could trust just anyone. This makes them vulnerable as these pimps exploit them and make them do stuffs they themselves wouldn’t want no one to hear about.”

“Just saying ladies should be more careful with the kind of people they share their secrets with or confide in. Most use this story as a way of manipulating them into things they originally wouldn’t want to do, but as soon as they are within the grasp of these people, they tend to not be able to get out unless there’s a hiccup.”

“Ladies should be **wary of getting entangled with strangers everywhere they party, no matter how nice and good looking they are.** A friend of mine fell victim to Rape at party after she got drunk.”

ATTENTION TO TARGETED STUDENTS

“Students need to be wary of people they make friends with on campus, lest they become victims of circumstances. In my own opinion, I think students who often are victims of sexual assault and exploitation belong to the **BIPOC [Black, Indigenous, People of Color]** community; as opposed to the number of Whites. **Latina are often used as well in order not to arouse suspicion when going outside of the Country.** Authorities think they are probably returning home from School.”

“In addition, these college students get promised a lot of things, which ensures that they remain attached to these men. The girls don’t want to lose out on the good things hence a few of them endure the maltreatments that come with these shameless men who buy sex from them. They even go as far out as the country just to enjoy the luxury and views they never thought they could.”

“Lastly, I’ll like to add that these college girls sometimes travel out of the States with some of these men, “depends on how rich your clientele is”, they’d say. And since there’s no report of abduction, there’d really be no flag raised at the port and other checkpoints. Of course, **college girls are mostly 18 and this only makes it easier for them to be trafficked.**”

INTERVENTION

“I think it is very important to bring these topics to the spotlight. There is a lot of stigma and discrimination to victims of sex trafficking and sexual exploitation which prevents them from seeking help without feeling judged.”

“Students need to be ready to get themselves out of the clutches of these predators by coming out to expose them, and not readily give themselves up out of fear of what might be done to them should they do so. They need to understand it’s for their sake and others’ who might yet also find themselves in the clutches of these people.”

“I am really glad my friends shared this survey with me, I always feel scared to talk about how I feel mostly. And I know there are a lot like me too.”

“Much more could and can be done to ease students’ welfare in college, lest they continue to fall prey to those who are privileged enough to rub these advantages on the faces of those who need them badly.”

“Had a Professor who took my innocence for the roll in my first and sophomore years; as a naive girl, I fell for the theatrics and granted sexual favors, as demeaning as it may sound now. Later in my sophomore year, I was finding it uncomfortable and threatened to report, only for him to start offering monetary values and grades in exchange for my silence. I took them because I knew I was broke and this man knew it, coupled with the fact that no one was going to buy my story, if I ever said I consented under threats. Horrible time for me, who really had no one to go to for help.”

“There are certain barriers that exist for students who wish to explore certain support services on campus- Some of these college students get pregnant and do not want others, especially the school’s health services to be aware. They take matters into their own hands and seek solutions to the unwanted pregnancy themselves. They commit such atrocious acts outside the school’s health services because they neither want themselves exposed nor do they wish to expose the sales of sex.”

“I or any other affected person, never had much protection from the school from these Carnal Professors. I felt I was all alone and had nowhere to turn to for help, hence, I had to give in. This happened in my third year in College. A certain Professor in my department threatened that I would fail his course if I wasn’t really gonna give in to his pressures. God knew I needed those marks, besides, I thought it was only gonna happen once. But it didn’t. He asked for me, and it got to a point, I wasn’t feeling bad any longer.”

“Victims of sexual exploitation need to come together and help each other heal. Therapy is good, but being with other people, who are also victims of sexual exploitation could help lift spirits as well. Support groups should endeavor to do this.”

CAMPUS SECURITY

“Campus security need to be notified of the ways these predators hang around at night in the hope that girls get party-drunk and go out with them, thus providing an avenue for trafficking and exploitation.”

“Campus security could have stopped all these late parties of my sister’s had they not been lax. SROs can do much more better in ensuring the safety of students who at least reside on campus.”

“Drug and Sex trafficking has become a norms in the college students’ underworld and the earlier its curbed, the better. What should be done? A lot. Security in campus needs to be tighter, and more conspicuous to at least frighten these instigators.”

“Our location close to the Mexican border comes with a unique set of challenges that should be considered when student safety needs are brought up. More lighting around the campus at night would be great as well as surveillance equipment and security staff.”

“There’s really nothing much that can be done other than the already existing checks that have been out in place all over campuses to curb the activities of traffickers”

“School Resource Officers should ensure that they remain vigilant and watch out for suspicious activities on campus.”

“Some girls tend to use their staying on campus as a shield for their waywardness. To think they are right in their dorms whilst they are actually far away with God knows who is quite baffling. Campus security’s gotta step and ensure that no students sneak out at night to God knows where.”

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

“Parents’ fears need to be allayed as regards sex trafficking and the involvement of their children. This can be addressed when school management give constant updates on the doings of these pimps to make sure students don’t go amiss.”

“I think Campus security is good though. Ever since the incident in 2010, security has been very good, hence, most of the recruitment take place outside the campus. Left to parents and other guardians to see to it that their wards don’t wander off to do shady stuff.”

COLLEGE CLUB SUPERVISION

“I’m of the opinion that there should be a supervisor who manages every college clubs, for monitoring purposes and to ensure that the group members do not stray from the goals of establishing the group. Leaving these groups to students alone to handle has made bad eggs infiltrate these groups whilst pretending to really represent a portion of them.”

“Ensuring that groups are closely monitored can help to deter trafficking agents and disrupt their operations of recruitment”

ADDRESS FINANCIAL AND HOUSING INSECURITY

“The housing insecurity is insane for city college students especially since we’re downtown. The waitlist for housing has stretched itself thin and the new apartments won’t be built until 2026+ , there should be vouchers or agreements with the city to ensure housing for students if colleges actually want graduates out of there colleges because if not the dropout rate is only going to get bigger”

“I, myself was exploited sexually in college. I needed the money and the attachment, got used to it that it certainly wasn’t looking bad no more until things took a turn for the worse. I discovered I wasn’t really the only one that was being treated that way and backed out.”

“I’m just of the opinion that the system is rigged against these young ladies; desperation propels them into going out of their ways for these desirable things, and the fact that they believe it’s fair to give out their bodies for these things, makes me wonder how risqué they’ve become.”

“I have lived with guilt and shame became a drug addict and been in jail and prison even tried to dress as a woman to feel better about myself exploring who I was. Drugs are the thing that takes away inhibition and I did many things while on them because I was exploited as a child and was shone porn and told to do as the picture was doing. I am a survivor and can help others who come after me to keep going forward and take another road. Here on campus or off I can and will help anyone through life's challenges.”

“My auntie was actually a student at UCSD, at a time. Had to transfer to another University due to pressure from members of a particular cartel to help them push drugs on campus. The threat was becoming real and my parents had her shipped to New Jersey to another University.”

“I never expected that recruitment could be done on campuses as I felt campus security was so tight. But imagine my surprise when I found out it actually happened. These demons in human flesh prey on the often less-privileged who struggle with school. They don’t approach you directly as agents, rather they pose as friends and engage you for a while whilst they look for a weakness. They make you jealous of what they have gathered and later ask if you are up for it; I fell for this as well. I was a long way from home, and really struggled financially. I felt it was easier that way, easy money. Until it turned awry. They could actually ask you to go out with them to vacation homes, as far as the Mediterranean coast. What could befall you over there, no one knows.”

“Of course, a college student like me, an acquaintance of mine, was forced to have sex with her Mistress’s husband/boyfriend sometimes last year. The Mistress kept her as a ward and in return, she thought it was best to go to college from home so she could always help her Mistress with chores. But her Mistress was seldom around, so she was always left with the husband at home. This man forced himself on her and threatened to send her out if she ever revealed this to anyone. And underestimating her Mistress to handle the situation delicately, she kept mute on the situation, until she got pregnant, just in her first year in College. Had she procured a good housing situation, all this wouldn’t have happened. This devil of a man unjustly took her pride over a place to stay.”

“Some Students find it difficult to sort their bills with the little they get from their struggling parents and families , and tend to go out of their way ti make ends meet. The student loans don’t suffice and the debts don’t help as well, so some resort to desperate measures, hooking up and selling their body to Men and Women with carnal needs.”

“Sexual exploitation leads to trafficking in some places. You give items of value to whomever it is you’re exploiting and may decide to pass along to another person when they no longer interest you, fully exploiting their situation as a student whose parents may not really be financially buoyant.”

“Some girls on college are really struggling to make ends meet and only venture into the escort industry for survival, especially the ones of color. They don’t enjoy the privileges the Whites have and feel like they could only match them by making more money than they do, hence the desperation.”

“I wish we had more food we could choose from and feminine products at our school, maybe more condoms and other contraceptives around campus too.”

SELLING SEX HAS BECOME A “NORM”

“Students who sell sex, do this at the detriment of their health. It’s to prevent this, that the school has strict rules against sex exchanges among Professors and Students at CSU. They frown at any accusation or suspicion of such. But girls still do this, just to satisfy their needs. But what is to be done? We hope they have a change of heart as the School board continues its struggle to eradicate the operations of sex selling that’s become norms among University students.”

“The lucrative idea and notion college students hold of selling sex should be corrected, lest they risk getting infected by STD’s, as well as being trafficked. Human trafficking is real and these people need to understand that as much as parents, campus security and authorities are responsible for their wellbeing, they could make things easier by doing away with sex selling and focus more on honorable businesses, though not as profitable as the escort business, their safety is assured.”

“Nothing much, other than what’s always been said as regards the operations of these traffickers and how students can help eradicate them from campus by shunning all forms of sex sales either to their fellow ones or college Professors.”

“Sexual trafficking among Universities and Colleges should be put to an end as soon as possible. If people whom are educated don’t speak up, despite their better access to various levels of/in government, I see no way of stopping this if it festers in high schools, God forbid.”

Apart from the limited and exclusive access a few of the boys have to these girls ONLYFANS online accounts, some go further, paying huge sums just to have an actual shot at what they see online. They probably link up outside campus grounds, most times, eventually these babes may come to go out with a few of the boys within the same circle... as long as they get paid, they don't mind at all.

Note, students were split on whether they “perceived monetary sexual exchanges as sexual exploitation.” 33% said Yes, 44% said No, 15% Didn't Know.

Some illustrative quotes of over 140:

“Monetary sexual exchanges create an unbalanced power dynamic between the one that is receiving it/the one that is giving it.”

The money brings in an imbalance of power which could affect consent.”

“Just give whoever you feel is in need of the money, without conditions. Once you demand something in return for your money, it becomes a way of exploiting each other”

“If it's a consensual agreement, then I believe it is not exploitation.”

“Some people do sex work because they want to/it's their preferred lifestyle. However people who have paid sex to make a living don't count in my mind because it's a last resort measure.”

“College student are ostensibly understood to be financially restrained, always in debt. And there are boys and other sexual predators who use this vulnerability to their own advantage and benefits.”

“Any transactional sexual intercourse is exploitative. You are trying to take advantage of the other person's libido by asking for money and the other is trying to do the same by offer to pay - exploitation on both ends.”

“Very emotionally damaging.”

“The basis is not based on mutual pleasure but one sided pleasure.”

“All the people involved in sex selling are mostly adults whose actions are theirs alone. Unless the sex is forced, there’s no exploitation of any kind in my opinion.”

“Basically, sex a’int even supposed to be transactional but the fact that college girls try to make the most out of it makes it so commercial. They exploit boys for almost all we’ve got and don’t even want to date us unless we can foot some of their bills. This being said, I think men and college boys prefer to buy this sex from them other than sort their bills as girlfriends”

“I was in an emotional and somewhat sexually abusive relationship, to which I didn’t realize at the time. I say yes because while some form of consent is present. It is not necessarily always going to be the best choice/scenario for the SW. It still can leave said SW with negative feelings, even when money is involved.”

CONCLUSIONS

Implications for Policy

- Campuses could implement more policies and measures to prevent human trafficking. As recommended above, these could involve stronger surveillance, campus lighting, and warning messages.
- Policies should target interventions towards vulnerable populations such as those facing economic insecurities, foster youth, and BIPOC (Black Indigenous Persons of Color).

Implications for Practice

- Community based agencies can be partners in training college campus counseling offices and staff, faculty, and administrators on how to strengthen services for those experiencing human trafficking and sexual exploitation.
- Educating students in freshmen orientations and their parents about human trafficking, including some of the scenarios shared in this report.

Implications for Research and Future Directions

- Dissemination of the research in publications, news outlets, conferences.
- Data sharing with other universities/colleges.
- Prevention intervention work with councils, county, universities.
- Scaling up the research nationally.
- Developing and testing novel interventions for college campuses to scale up.

Proposed Next Steps – Dissemination to Spread Awareness & a Call to Action

- Disseminate findings to society (beyond San Diego)
- Produce Educational Materials to spread Awareness and a Call to Action
- Presentations at regional, national, international conferences and other arenas
- Podcast results
- Advocate for legislation expansion/amendments to include a mandate of human trafficking awareness in new student/freshman orientations and for faculty/staff and support services at all colleges/university campuses.

APPENDIX: ADDITIONAL DATA ANALYSES

FOSTER YOUTH DATA

FOSTER YOUTH

38% who were foster youth said they were forced/coerced or tricked (experienced fraud) into selling sex as a college student.

FOSTER YOUTH QUOTE

“In all consciousness, I think kids from foster homes are being targeted mostly, due to the weak attachment they have with their foster parents. They are easier targets and would make for weaker preys, easily swayed and enticed as most of them probably never got to enjoy luxury much. The boys are easily enticed into the drug trade, ladies into prostitution...sex sales. They emancipate at 18, so most don't get easily missed, it's assumed.”

FOSTER YOUTH

Compared to those never in foster care, being forced/coerced into selling sex as a college student was:

SIX TIMES more likely if in foster care for 5+ years

FIVE TIMES more likely if 0-5 years **AND** emancipated as teens/adults **OR** still in foster care

FOSTER YOUTH

FOUR TIMES more likely if 5+ years **AND** emancipated as teens/adults **OR** still in it.

TWICE as likely if in foster care 0-5 years.

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