Reviewer’s report

Title: The recovery experience of people who were sex trafficked: the thwarted journey towards goal pursuit

Version: 0 Date: 15 Sep 2018

Reviewer: Makini Chisolm-Straker

Reviewer’s report:

Background: briefly problematize this estimate of "victims"

Data collection: how was the interview guide developed? where were participants interviewed more than once? interpreter is for oral language conversion, translator is for written. pls correct.

Study population: why did you only interview sex trafficking survivors? explicitly explain what you mean by "safety measure" (third sentence, first paragraph).

being pregnant and having a child does not make you childless. count that person among those w/children.

what is the study team's relationship to the shelter-home? describe.

Data analysis: what does the descriptive "broadly" mean here?

i like this bit about writing narrative about service users. has this been done in other work? if so, pls cite.

Terms: put your definitions in the text, not the appendix

Ethics: move this to under study pop or at beginning of methods

Results: Overall too long; be concise first quote does not exemplify "self-representation." and it (all the quotes) needs attribution (which respondent was this? what number?) as per standard of writing and analysis for qual data

Page 7, last line: new sentence is discussion not results. A lot of speculation and concluding in the results, needs to be moved to discussion. i have attached annotated text to help point out areas like this, thruout.

Team would benefit from English language writing assistance, to help with grammar, syntax, word choice. I annotated a lot of areas that need help here, and annotations are in the text. Areas of need are more than what is annotated, but these are examples.
Page 9: framework was adopted when? after initial analysis (familiarization) or when the whole bit was complete??

"the past," second sentence, this sentence doesn't make sense. do you mean to say, "The interviews did not begin with questions about their trafficking experiences, unless participants explicitly stated it was their preference to do."  ?

Page 10, end of first paragraph, do you have an illustrative quote to include?

Page 11, second paragraph, line 23 sentence needs reworking, for proper English comprehension/communication.

Page 12, line 24/5, where you say "common" do you mean "other?"

Page 12, line 41/2, another example of when this is discussion (speculation), not results

Page 18, line 30/1, expand on this last sentence; it's interesting. and do you have an illustrative quote?

Page 18, line 45-51, another example of when this is discussion (speculation), not results

Page 19, line 50/1, ends in "a" but reads better as "friends and a family" otherwise "a" modifies both nouns (since not using oxford comma)

Page 20, line 37-50, should only report results from interviews/the study in this section. can discuss how the study results interact with the literature and experiences in the discussion section.

Page 22, line 17, "lie" should be "lay"

Page 23, line 51-6, discussion, not results

Page 28, line 45/6, don't report new quotes/findings in discussion; share in results

Page 32, line 2/3, the work from this investigation is too short-term for the last clause's inclusion.

Page 32, line 10-15: don't report new quotes/findings in discussion; share in results

Page 33, line 25-35: run-on sentence

At the beginning, when you describe the objectives you say the aim was to determine what service users think should be the goal of services; and what approaches to service provisions should be. Discussion doesn't get there, not sure you can from the results quotes shared. Certainly results and discussion gets at how service users conceptualize their experiences in the shelter homes.
Limitations: seems like the team didn't use interpreters so that participants speak in their native tongue, and express themselves comfortably. Should note in the limitations.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Unable to assess

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

No

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

Not relevant to this manuscript

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

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