
Granada, a City under Siege: Dynamics of the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children as a Human Rights Issue in Nicaragua

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ABSTRACT: This article presents the findings of a qualitative study conducted in Granada, Nicaragua. The study involved focus groups, individual in-depth and situational interviews, as well as observations. The research followed principles related to community-based participatory research. The data analysis was guided by a grounded theory approach. The findings confirm what advocates of human and child rights have long argued: economic disparities and gender inequalities are at the core of commercial sexual exploitation of children. The results presented in this article help clarify the complexities of the intersectionality of global and local realities – “glocalization.”

One significant marker of modernity is the development of a system of human rights. This is followed by the development of laws and a judicial system to sustain these rights (Domingues, 2008). Those seeking justice for themselves and for others have used human rights discourse globally. Human rights are sometimes conceptualized as involving a universal law or morality (Tirado Chase, 2012). In modern times, human rights tend to involve certain entitlements, and the obligation to survivors arises not from the heart, but from the head, in terms of legal, bureaucratic duties (Wilson & Brown, 2009). Parikh (2013) argued that in endorsing human rights, the state, its institutions, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have particular responsibilities and obligations. However, this process has not been easy because despite local and global commitments to human rights and the development of legal mechanisms to uphold them, human rights violations occur at an alarming rate worldwide (Parikh, 2013).

The commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) is an extreme violation of human rights (Phinney, 2001; Save the Children, 2007). While most countries have signed or ratified the United Nations' *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children*, CSEC continues to be a major problem globally (Guinn, 2008). This paper presents research about CSEC conducted in Nicaragua. Nicaragua signed the Convention of the Rights of the Child in February 1990 and ratified it in October 1990 (Gutierrez, 2007). Shortly after, the country made relevant amendments to its constitution. For example, in 1992 an amendment to the penal code prohibited the trafficking of persons and made specific reference to the protection of children against any form of economic and social exploitation (Constitución Política de la Republica de Nicaragua, Art # 84). In addition, Executive Decree No. 116-2000 gave rise to the National Commission on Violence against Women, Children, and Adolescents; this Commission is mandated to develop an annual national action plan to address this issue (Ley de Organización del Consejo Nacional de Atención y Protección Integral a la Niñez y la Adolescencia y la Defensoría de las Niñas, Niños y Adolescentes, 2000). Our research investigated the experiences and perceptions among the general population of Granada, Nicaragua, in order to clarify the local realities shaping CSEC in this country.

This article begins with a brief literature review regarding CSEC in Central America. It focuses particularly on the invisibility of perpetrators, demand for CSEC, and the perceived tolerance of this social phenomenon. The literature review is followed by a brief contextualization of Nicaragua. The next sections outline the methods and the findings, specifically the complexities of CSEC in terms of its public nature and the intersection of globalization and local realities, such as cooperation between local networks that act as suppliers of vulnerable children and as abettors of such illicit activities. A discussion of the findings follows.

Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) in Central America

Global responses from governments, law enforcement, and NGOs have resulted in increased prosecution of sexual trafficking charges when children and adolescents are victimized. However, CSEC is still a major problem in many regions of the world, including Central America (Beare, 2003; End Child Prostitution and Trafficking (ECPAT), 2000). One barrier faced by researchers trying to understand this social problem in Central America is the scarcity of local information about its nature and incidence, despite evidence of CSEC in the area. Moreover, although an increasing body of literature has focused on the structural inequalities at the core of global sex trade industry, including global economic disparities, the prevalence of violence against women and children, gender inequality, heterosexism, and racism (Azaola & Estes, 2003; Ellsberg, 2005; Flisher, 2005; Marshall & Thatun, 2005; Matibag, 2003; Organization of American States (OAS), 2007; O'Connell, 2001; Torres-Saillant, 2006; Voss, 1999), little is known about how local realities intersect with structural global issues to shape the nature of CSEC in specific Central American countries (Sanghera, 2005). Therefore, careful examination is needed of the specific features affecting the incidence of CSEC in the context of local realities in each country (Carranza & Parada, 2010). The dynamics of child exploitation in Central American countries are comparatively different from those in other regions, so it is important to examine these specificities empirically (Chun & Uck Lin, 2004; Jeffrey, 2002; O'Connell, 2005). This study was conducted to address this research gap.

Invisibility of the Perpetrator

Chiarotti (2003) argued that too much emphasis is placed on survivors of CSEC, and that this emphasis invisibilizes the perpetrator. For example, South American tabloids often portray police forces raiding brothels and nightclubs and detaining women and children who have been sexually exploited, rather than focusing on the traffickers (Rodriguez, 1999). Although the focus should be on the demand for CSEC, and the perpetrators of CSEC, blame also tends to fall on the survivors. Dimenstein (1994), for example, reported that Brazilian police would reputedly demand free sex from young girls involved in sex work by threatening to blackmail them should they fail to comply. The results of the present study will help clarify some of the factors related to CSEC, specifically the processes of cooperation within the network providing supply to meet demand, rather than focusing on the children involved in CSEC.

Tolerance/Apathy about CSEC

In Latin America, CSEC crimes often go unaddressed due to silence among the general population and corruption among government officials at all levels (Molina, 2008). Additionally, regional initiatives by academics, NGOs, and the private sector are still in their infancy in terms of raising awareness about this phenomenon limiting each country's ability to understand, prevent, and penalize CSEC (III-Latin American Congress on Human Trafficking (III-LACHT), 2012). The Organización Internacional del Trabajo (OIT) (2005 & 2009) reported that the general population in Central America became significantly more tolerant of crimes related to CSEC between 2005 and 2009. Furthermore, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) - America Latina & the Caribbean (2005) conducted a study about CSEC in the Caribbean and Latin America, and found that when this kind of crime is reported, accusations by survivors or bystanders are often not believed. The results of the present study will help clarify the nuances of tolerance about CSEC in Nicaragua, particularly in Granada.

Nicaragua's Context

From 1990–2006, neo-liberal policies led to a massive deterioration of Nicaragua's economy (Ocampo, 2011). Despite the country's efforts, such as the new social policies to improve the lives of citizens, in 2013 Nicaragua was deemed the second poorest country in Latin America (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 2013). In 2007, Nicaragua's total population was 5,142,098: 50.7% women and 49.3% men. Overall, 55.9% of Nicaraguans live in urban dwellings and 44.1% live in rural areas; 67% of the total population in Nicaragua is aged 25 years or younger; 79% of the total population lives on less than US\$2.00 dollars per day and 45% on less than US\$1.00 per day (Conferencias Internacionales de Educación de Adultos VI (CONFINTEA VI), 2008). In 2007, 2,089,773 (40.6%) Nicaraguans were employed (756,294 in the formal sector and 1,333,479 in the informal sector). Although Nicaragua's judicial system specifies the protection of children against child labour, 265,881 children and adolescents (13.4% of the total work force) were working in the informal sector in 2006. Significant gender inequalities appear, as men tend to receive salaries, while women tend to be employed in small family businesses (CONFINTEA VI, 2008). According to the Plan Nacional de Desarrollo Humano (PNDH) (2010), Nicaragua experienced a 2% decline in human development among girls in 2009.

Nicaraguans have used migration to neighbouring countries or the United States and tourism to escape poverty. In 2000, 20% of the total population migrated to another country, particularly Costa Rica. More than 75% of the 300,000 registered immigrants in Costa Rica were of Nicaraguan

origin; this number is the equivalent to 8% of the total population in Costa Rica (Villa & Martinez, 2001). Nicaragua has the highest migration rate of women in Latin America (Mahler & Ugrina, 2006). In 2011, remittances from immigrants totalled US\$905.1 million, a 29.8% increase from 2006 (PNDH, 2012, p. 19). Tourism is Nicaragua's best resource in terms of economic development. In 2008, the country received more than one million tourists, a 25.41% increase from 2007. In 2011, revenue from tourism was US\$377.1 million US, a 22.2% increase from 2010. In 2011, foreign investment was US\$967.9 million, a 90.5% increase from 2008 (PNDH, 2012).

Granada. The city of Granada (the site of the research presented here) has an estimated population of over 110,000, making it Nicaragua's fourth largest city. It is advertised as an ideal retirement place (see www.topretirements.com). As in many other colonial cities in Latin America, its downtown core has a central plaza and other important city buildings. These buildings have recently been remodelled to encourage tourism. In our initial community consultations Granada emerged as a suspected site of CSEC due to the high incidence of tourism.

Violence against women is an ongoing problem in Nicaragua. In 2011, 37,000 cases of sexual violence were reported (Riddell, 2012). On June 22, 2012, the current Nicaraguan government passed law #779, which criminalizes violence against women. Since then, 85 feminicides have been reported, with only 27 arrests and four prison sentences (Carlsen, 2013). Nicaragua has an anti-abortion law, which includes therapeutic abortion after sexual violence, thus rape survivors are forced to carry high-risk pregnancies. In 2011, 1,453 births were reported among children and adolescents aged 10–14 years, but none of these were investigated (Riddell, 2012). There is a high possibility that these births are related to CSEC.

The Study

A qualitative research methodology was selected to investigate the experiences of, and perceptions about, CSEC among the general population of Granada. Data was collected through focus groups (Krueger & Casey, 2009), in-depth and situational interviews (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005), and observations (Spencer & Davies, 2010). Together, this data helped clarify the multi-layered meanings of complex concepts (Gilgun, Daly, & Handel, 1992) and allowed in-depth analysis of participants' lived experiences and the socially constructed reality within which they were situated (Marshall & Rossman, 1995; Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1994).

During data collection and analysis, the research team tried to remain aware of the power imbalances between researchers and participants (Hollway, 2001). A critical step in addressing power imbalances is to view qualitative research as a process that may be used to further the social agendas and resilience of disempowered groups (Ungar, 2003; Ungar & Nichol, 2000). To this end, we applied the principles of community-based participatory research (CBPR) (Minkler & Wallerstein, 2002): (i) genuine partnerships, (ii) research efforts that include capacity building, (iii) findings and knowledge to benefit all partners, and (iv) long-term commitments to effectively reduce disparities (Israel et al., 2003). The present study is the product of previous and ongoing relationships among academic organizations, NGOs, and government institutions in Canada and Nicaragua funded by SSHRC – International Opportunity Grant (Carranza et al., 2008).

Recruitment

Given the sensitivity of the research topic, recruitment was carefully planned. We conducted initial consultations with key community leaders. This was followed with town hall meetings with community stakeholders. This community engagement was important in the development of a

community-based research advisory group (CBRAG), which was pivotal in providing feedback throughout the study. This group also provided essential feedback about the initial interview guides and supported the team in the direction of the project (e.g., recruitment strategies and local observations).

Participants' Description

We had a total of 72 participants: 50 females and 22 males. We conducted eight focus groups with some participants (N=48; 32 females and 16 males), including employees at government institutions, NGOs, human rights advocates, community leaders, adolescents at risk (13–17 years), youth at risk (18–27 years), parents of children and adolescents at risk, media, and parents in general. We also conducted 12 individual in-depth interviews (7 females and 5 males) with adolescents, community leaders, and family members of children involved in CSEC. An additional 12 situational interviews were carried out (11 females and 1 male), with community neighbours, street vendors, doormen, and business administrators. Situational interviews refer to those that were carried out in the moment and without previous arrangement.

Data Analysis

We applied the principles of grounded theory (GT): data was systematically gathered and analyzed using a “bottom up” strategy involving theme analysis (Charmaz, 2005). The process of data gathering and analysis was recursive. Data analysis began after the first few interviews, and the results of this analysis informed the direction of subsequent interviews (Patton, 2001). Transcriptions were entered into NVivo9, computer software for managing and analyzing qualitative data (Bazeley & Richards, 2000). As concepts were constructed and themes were identified in the analytical process, they were compared, contrasted, and grouped following the open coding procedure described by Strauss and Corbin (1990). Axial coding was also employed to construct conceptual schemas that reflected the relationship between categories. During this process, categories were changed, dropped, and organized hierarchically, and each was simultaneously related to its context (LaRossa, 2005). Each research team member carried a journal to record and systematize emergent themes, and regularly checked with each other about the themes that were emerging. The goals were to seek alternative explanations, to identify and account for disconfirming cases, and to ensure the quality of the data analysis (Seale, 1999).

Findings

This section begins by discussing the locations in the city of Granada identified by participants as having high incidences of CSEC. Second, it presents the research team’s observations, and finally describes the themes that emerged in the data analysis as most significant: (i) the supply/network of CSEC, and (ii) the intersection of globalization and local realities, or “glocalization.”

The Presence of CSEC

Locations were initially identified and mapped via initial community consultations. Participants in focus groups, individual interviews, and situational interviews later confirmed these locations. Participants reported several locations where CSEC could be observed, especially at night, in areas associated with the tourist sector such as the *Zona Central* (downtown), *la Calle* (street) *de la Calzada*, the central park (near the main Catholic cathedral), a corner near the local bank, and an area with many bars.

Participants said that the *Calzada* has been developed in recent years to attract tourists, with outdoor cafes, music, and European-style restaurants ready to welcome visiting nationals and foreign tourists. They said that most of these cafes and restaurants and the like are “equipped” to provide “combo” services: a female child or adolescent, drinks, drugs, a room, and a boy. According to participants, a teenage boy is placed outside the room for two reasons: (i) to ensure the safety of the male customer; and (ii) to ensure the child delivers the sexual favours in accordance with the verbal contract and payment received.

Other locations reported included: *la Calle de la Karaguala*, the beach at the lake, exits and entrances to the main highways, and *barrios* (neighbourhoods):

If you go to the highway or main entrance to Granada coming from Managua, you see a lot of them there. Or if you go to certain *barrios*, they're there...you see them in the open.

Interviewees were highly aware of the locations where CSEC occurred; these appeared to be common knowledge.

Observations

Prior to data collection, the research team visited Granada several times for community consultations through town hall meetings and observations; these were conducted at various timeframes: weekends/weekdays, daytime/night time, and holidays/workdays.

The team spent some time in Granada during the *hipica*, a week-long cultural celebration rooted in Catholicism. Many cultural events take place during the day, including traditional dances and horse races, and at night time the cafés are full of customers. The research team was able to observe many adult and/or elderly Caucasian, Black, and, what appeared to be, Nicaraguan men accompanied by female teenagers, who generally appeared to be 13–17 years old. Each man and the accompanying adolescent would be served food and beer. After a period of time, they would walk toward the rear, enter a back door, and disappear. They appeared to be accompanied by a male teenager at all times.

The research team also observed a teenage boy and one or two female adolescents walking back and forth on the *Calzada*. On other occasions, boys would arrive with one or two adolescent girls and talk with someone in the restaurant, usually a waiter, sit down at a table, and minutes later a Caucasian man would sit down with them. Sometimes they would eat together; other times they would talk for a couple of minutes and then walk up or down the *Calzada* or disappear down the street, near the local bank.

Other activities were observed further down the *Calzada*, by the central park, while children and teenagers were performing a dance for an audience of at least 70 people. In the shadows and at the margins of this public activity were groups of female adolescents (approximately 13–15 years old). A man accompanied by a local teenage boy would arrive and the girls would leave one at a time, while the teenage boy stayed. Approximately an hour and half later, the girls would come back and slip something into the boy's hand.

On other occasions, the team witnessed, several times, young Caucasian men (approximately 30–35 years old) calling, “*Cuanto?*” (How much?) to female adolescents walking home from school in their uniforms. The girls would look at each other and walk much faster, trying to get away from the foreign men. These types of interactions were carried out in public, in broad daylight.

The team noted a decrease in these public activities while conducting observations on workdays. However, on holidays the scenarios described above would recur; the number of locals participating in celebrations appeared to decrease, and fewer Nicaraguan male tourists were observed.

The Supply: Network of CSEC

Respondents said that some adolescents get involved in CSEC on their own accord and/or as a group endeavour, while others are involved in a more complex network. A street vendor commented:

They see a man and say, ‘*Oye Amigo sexo normal for \$40.00*’ [Hey friend, normal sex for US\$40.00]. Other say, ‘*20.00 Córdobas por un rato*’ [A bit of time for 20 Cordovas]. Other say, ‘US\$150 room included....Of course they charge more to the *gringos* [White men] and the foreigners. However, when they are in a group of three or four, they make the offer to the *gringo*. The *gringo* takes a look at their body and then says, ‘You,’ and then she names her price...

Other respondents said that Granada has a working network with a clear distribution of tasks and responsibilities. One adolescent said:

There are older people, men and women that get men for them. They [adults] get the money and then they give the money to the *chavalas* [female adolescents]. Also there are other *chavalas* that walk with *chavalos* [male adolescents] and the *chavalos* look for the men...like they do the *conecte* [link]...The men ask the *chavalos*, ‘Hey *tenes chavalas?*’ [Hey Do you have teenage girls?]. So... you see the *chavalos* walking up and down the *Calzada* asking men, ‘Do you want a *chavala?*’... Also taxi drivers look for clients and then they go to get them [adolescents] and say, ‘Let’s go I have a client for you’... They have specific hotels where they go to ...

A government employee commented:

They [adults] offer them money. Other adolescents that are involved in it, too. They [adults] tell them that there is money in that...They have a *red* [network], when a man asks for a *chavala*, they call her and say, ‘there is someone waiting for you in such and such a place’...The waiters are involved... they allow the *chavalas* to come into the restaurant. They tell them to what hotel to go. They call the taxi driver that they know...

The network sustaining CSEC in Granada is complex. Our results reveal a high level of awareness about the existing networks and perpetrators involved in CSEC. The government employee’s comment had undertones of fear and frustration, while the adolescent’s comment

reflected a sense of amusement; she described the situation in a matter-of-fact way. It is noteworthy that the open communication in the exchanges described in the excerpts appears to be common knowledge, and part of ordinary life.

CSEC: Intersection of Globalization and Local Realities – Glocalization

Respondents said that various forms of CSEC took place in Granada, such as child pornography, trafficking children to other cities for the purpose of CSEC, and one-time or regular customers.

There was a foreigner here that was sexually abusing the children. He would make videos; take photos in a local lodging place. There were a lot of children involved; the owner of the place would see that as if there wasn't anything wrong with it. [Community leader]

We know there is trafficking in children here. They offer them a kind of a job. Once they get there, they realize it was for prostitution. They had them like incarcerated them and told them, 'I fed you, you have to pay me now.' That debt goes on forever... [Government institution employee]

Demand

Participants reported that demand for CSEC in Granada comes from different sources: men from Managua, Masaya, León, locals, and foreigners. They said that when the men involved in CSEC are locals or nationals, they are usually older; i.e., middle-aged, and come from high social strata. This means they have the financial resources to spend on illicit activities involving CSEC. According to our respondents, these men are usually married and "bored with their wives," and seek out sexual favours from female children and adolescents to "entertain themselves," but respondents also stressed that they considered these actions to be disrespectful to the men's wives.

Respondents said that foreigners accessing CSEC also tend to be middle-aged men who come to Granada as tourists regularly or sporadically. They also referred to some foreigners who have moved to Granada permanently, and are involved in CSEC:

There is a kid that has a *gringo* [White man] as a boyfriend. He went to the house and asked for the mother's permission [consent] *para jalar con ella* [date her]. But that is not dating. He is an old man and she is a *chavala* [child]... I would have never agreed to that. That man takes her to Managua. They stay there for a couple of days there, doing who know what. [Mother #1]

There are several kids that *jalan* [date] *gringos* and you see them holding hands. Sometimes, the *gringo* [White man] even chooses which child he wants. Yes, yes, it would be nice if one of these *gringos* married one of them and took them away from all of these, you see cases like that. There was one that I know married the *gringo* and now she sends *reales* [money] to her mother. That is pretty... [Community Leader]

Although demand for CSEC comes from both nationals and foreigners, respondents said that foreigners who have moved to Granada permanently have contributed to a higher incidence of CSEC. Interestingly, respondents tended to blame the children and their parents, rather than the men soliciting sexual favours from children; this invisibilizes the demand and the embedded power dynamics of the perpetrator.

Additionally, foreign men appear to use Nicaraguan cultural traditions such as asking for a parent's permission to date their daughter, as strategies to legitimize their illicit actions. In Nicaraguan culture, asking parental permission to date a female adolescent indicates a suitor's good intentions, i.e., eventual marriage. Parents may also hope that a foreigner will take the child away from poverty and into a better life, which in turn might bring financial benefit to the family; if so, this would help illustrate the mercantile nature of CSEC.

The Myth of Tolerance of CSEC

Our data suggest that the social construct of “tolerance to CSEC” is situated within a complex process involving tensions, frustration, fear of retaliation from those involved in CSEC, fear of social stigma among survivors, helplessness due to the extreme poverty in which most children and adolescents in Granada live, perceiving reporting CSEC as a “waste of time,” lack of knowledge or sensitivity, and most importantly desensitization to the issue, leading to the perception of it as “normal” among the general population and local authorities. Our respondents made comments such as: “If I report it, she is just going to turn back, so why bother,” and “You call the police and nothing is done.” Other comments included:

I think is fear ... the children get attacked on the streets when it becomes known in their communities. They stop them in their communities and ask, ‘*Cuanto cobras?*’ [How much do you charge?]. ... Once in the legal system they make it about the victim and her family and not the man...before you know charges are being dropped because according to them the kid went looking for it... [NGO staff member]

I think is the lack of sensitivity on the issue because if other sexual aggressions are reported, particularly those that happen at home with a minor or an adolescent. This [CSEC] needs to be seen the same... we see it as something *normal* and not like something illegal [Teacher]

The police are walking around the [Central] plaza around 10 o'clock at night. That park is full of 16 year-old *chavalas*. They are sitting on one table with old men... They are being sold alcoholic drinks, the bar owners are there, but they don't say a thing! The police walks around and see it and *se hacen de la vista gorda* [turn the blind eye] who reports? Nobody, nobody has the courage. Let's say someone does report it, the police go and they apprehend, but they don't do anything to him because he is a foreigner and has money [Community leader]

Respondents' comments suggested a sense of intimidation caused by the presence of wealthy White men in Granada. Additionally, the fact that police officers and the judicial system do not perform their expected duties caused mistrust among the general population, resulting in a sense of powerlessness with regard to preventing CSEC in their city.

One focus group discussion involving NGO staff members and community advocates revealed the need for a more complex analysis of tolerance:

At the beginning of this [CSEC] you would be *asustados* [startled] to see a 50 or 60 year-old gringo with 13 or 14 years old a little *chavalas* ...Now, it has become the norm. Now we no longer get startled or stop to look or even think, ‘what is wrong with this?’ It is not that people don’t care about the situation, but... it is about the fact that you report and nothing is done. You report it, the men get away and you know that those men are friends with people in higher places... We know that people in power are also involved...you never know what may happen...

Another participant added:

Sometimes, I think that we are still *en la época de la colonia* [colonial times] where the White men came and gave mirrors and trinkets to the Indigenous people and before they realized they were slaves, raping their women and children...[tears] they... we were robbed of our culture...[sob] now they’re coming with their dollars or the Euros showing it to the people and our children, taking advantage of their...our poverty, and once again changing our culture to fit their needs...now it [CSEC] has become our way of life and children’s and their parents’ way out of poverty...We’re losing *nuestra querida Granada* [our dear Granada]...”

Systems of oppression seem to prevail over children’s protection and the upholding of their human rights. The presence of foreigners perceived as wealthy seems to undermine the responsibilities and obligations of government institutions and non-government organizations charged with the protection of children against local, national, and foreign predators.

Discussion

Our findings support those presented in internal reports of NGOs and government organizations (Covenant House, 2001 & 2004; ECPAT, 2000; Save the Children, 2007 & 2011). They confirm that CSEC is rooted in economic disparities and gender-based violence and help explain feelings of tolerance regarding CSEC. Together, the data reveal a nuanced process full of disparities and tensions. First, fear of reprisals from those involved in CSEC can result in a lack of reporting. Second, some respondents perceived reporting as a waste of time, because various authorities are involved in CSEC. Tolerance can be interpreted as a way of protecting survivors and their families, due to corruption in the system and how the system tends to re-victimize them; specifically, because the legal system focuses on the survivor’s character, rather than focusing on the perpetrator and others involved in breaking the law.

The findings of this study are significant because they clarify the intersection of globalization with the local realities: glocalization. The findings also clarify the dual forces of demand and supply: both bring about human rights violations, particularly among impoverished female children and adolescents. Consequently, despite the child protection and human right movements, sexual relations between men and children are being re-constructed as “normal” relations and as part of foreign men’s entitlements. These entitlements reinforce patterns of coloniality between White men and the “Other.” Quijano (2007) referred to these patterns as a coloniality of power: power relations

embedded in a contemporary global model of power-shaping relations of ethnicity, class, and gender.

The findings indicate that children in Granada are not perceived as having rights, such as the right to be recognized as human, and the right to be treated as developing children. In the context of globalization, the rights of the Other are grossly pushed aside by men soliciting sexual favours, while local business persons, taxi drivers, waiters, and government representatives such as the police and the judicial systems are coopted to once again serve the nation's wealthy resident and visiting tourists.

CSEC is a social phenomenon in which all sectors of society are implicated, either by omission or by direct participation. Government institutions, NGOs, and members of the general population enact a coloniality of power locally: the dynamics of domination and subordination are so embedded in their daily life that they have become mundane. In Granada, the human rights of local children remain elusive and imaginary. The colonial power dynamics between the global South and the global North are reformulated as White men exercise their dominance, not only over the local children, but over entire communities of the colonial subject (the inferior Other), by scorning their traditions, their laws, and the international human rights code.

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