Can Street Sex Workers and Residents Peacefully Coexist as a Community in Kingston upon Hull?

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Abstract

It is no secret that residents within communities often oppose the presence of street sex work in their community space. Kingston upon Hull is not exempt from this issue and over the last year the local newspaper has reported that street sex work is causing problems to the community around Hessle Road in Hull. With this in mind, this dissertation used focus groups with student participants from the University of Hull (who reside in Hull also), and a semi structured interview with a participant from the local police force, to determine whether it is possible for residents and street sex workers to peacefully coexist as a community in Hull. If so, a resolution could be provided for current issues in the city. Coexistence could take place by means of a tolerance zone as seen in Holbeck, Leeds. Additionally, alternative forms of coexistence are possible. Nevertheless, outcomes from focus groups and the interview were fatalistic regarding coexistence in Hull. Student participants held mainly negative moralistic assumptions of sex workers and street sex work in general (often informed by media sources). This clouded their judgement of coexistence meaning they were unwilling to coexist. Student participants believed all sex workers were drug users, who should be kept away from ‘respectable’ members of society. The police participant promoted abolition of the sex industry over coexistence as any potential for coexistence was rejected. Therefore, this dissertation concluded that although sex work can have positive impacts upon communities, no such positives were found here. Instead outcomes complied with other studies surrounding the topic and no potential for coexistence was found. As an alternative, worldwide negative media stereotypes of sex workers should be removed so focus can be supportive rather than punitive. Until a decriminalisation approach is considered, long term sustainable resolutions should be considered which consider all relevant stakeholders.
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Chapter One: Introduction:

This dissertation will question whether street sex workers and residents can peacefully coexist as a community in Kingston upon Hull. Within this dissertation, ‘coexist’ is defined as living alongside one another despite differences. With the intention of answering the question, focus groups were conducted with University of Hull students. Also, a semi-structured interview took place with a participant from the local police force.

Why study Hull?

Hull is a small city in the North of England located on the East coast around sixty miles from Leeds. The population of Hull is approximately 260,673 - a recent high (ONS, 2017 in Hull Data Observatory, 2019). Hull is largely an industrial city, historically recognised for the fishing trade. When compared to national averages, it is clear residents of Hull experience high levels of poverty and deprivation including poor housing and high unemployment (Hull City Council, 2017b). Of 326 local authorities located across England, Hull is the third most deprived, suggesting potential for considerable social problems (Hull City Council, 2017b). For example, eleven percent of working age adults in Hull have no qualifications, which is higher than the national average of seven percent (Hull Data Observatory, 2019). Data suggests Hull is struggling to provide employment opportunity for residents (Hull Data Observatory, 2019). Therefore, restricted opportunity within the city is likely to be influencing the number of people engaging in street sex work. Research has discovered that critical life events, need or desire for money and the personal appeals of sex work are factors influencing individuals when choosing sex work (Benoit et al., 2017b). Therefore, alike with other UK cities, Hull contains an area where women sell sexual services in public. Local media outlets suggest there are approximately forty street sex workers operating in Hull (Campbell, 2018a). Hessle Road is the area within Hull associated with street sex work (see Appendice A; Google Maps, 2019). Hessle Road has always been known as an unofficial red-light area (Campbell, 2018b). However, recently local newspapers have reported growing disapproval towards sex work in the city, which shows street sex work and the lack of coexistence as a contemporary issue in Hull.

Reports state sex workers are on Hessle Road every day, often in the day time and present a nuisance by soliciting parents on the school run (Campbell, 2018b). National newspapers have also observed the growing dissatisfaction and have reported that sex work has ‘rocketed’ in Hull, whilst labelling Hessle Road Britain’s ‘seediest street’ (Hawken & Lazarus, 2018). Additionally, the media have reported residents believe the problem is now ‘intolerable’ as discoveries of drug paraphernalia and litter pertaining to sex work appear in car parks (Hawken & Lazarus, 2018). For this reason, Hull has
been selected as the research area as a lack of coexistence between sex workers and residents is a contemporary issue. Additionally, current research focuses on larger cities such as Liverpool (Bellis et al., 2007). Therefore, upon completion of research, this dissertation aims to fill the gap in the literature concerning smaller cities such as Hull.

**Aims and Objectives:**

This dissertation hopes to find potential for peaceful coexistence between sex workers and residents in Hull. Currently, ineffective approaches towards street sex work in the UK are creating dissatisfaction (Van Doorninck & Campbell, 2006). Therefore, the frame of reference for this dissertation will be existing tolerance zones. At present, there are calls for authorities to ‘zone’ street sex work, an approach whereby sex work is ‘tolerated’ within a specific area; such as the ‘Tippelzone’ in the Netherlands (Van Doorninck & Campbell, 2006). Tolerance zones provide potential to actively manage street sex work by apportioning a non-residential area for sex workers to work within permitted times, alongside health and social care (Van Doorninck & Campbell, 2006). Holbeck, a sub-section of the city of Leeds is an example of an operational tolerance zone in the UK. Here, a zone was created as a twelve-month pilot scheme in 2014 with the zone operating 19:00-07:00 am daily (Save our Eyes, 2018). However, this is an example of where a zone has failed to achieve coexistence, given that residents are unhappy with issues pertaining to sex work such as litter and noise (Save our Eyes, 2018). Nevertheless, the local police and council believe the zone is a success, meaning the tolerance zone remains operational (Lazzeri, 2016). Considering responses to the Holbeck tolerance zone, participants in this dissertation will be asked their opinion regarding the prospect of a tolerance zone within Hull. The feasibility of other avenues for coexistence such as alterations to legislation will also be proposed. With acknowledgement of the concern’s residents express when community space is used for street sex work, this dissertation aims to meet a conclusion which considers sex worker safety and community concerns, to determine whether peaceful coexistence can occur in Hull.

**Current Legislation:**

In order to understand issues around coexistence, current legislation covering street sex work must be considered. At present, the sale and purchase of sexual services between consenting adults is legal in England and Wales (House of Commons, 2016). Transactions for sexual services are regarded in law as a private transaction between two consenting adults (Sanders et al., 2018). However, activities surrounding street sex work such as soliciting, kerb-crawling and brothel keeping are illegal (House of Commons, 2016). The relevant legislation which criminalises such activities includes the Street Offences Act 1959, Sexual Offences Act 1985 and the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (Sanders et al.,
Such legislation makes it extremely difficult for sex workers to conduct their work safely and legally. Ultimately, the impact street sex work has upon communities and the associated complaints is a key factor used by authorities when developing strategies which target street sex work (O’Neill & Campbell, 2006).
Chapter Two: Literature Review:

Currently, few studies exist which investigate whether sex workers and residents can peacefully coexist as a community. Sex work literature often excludes the experiences of those who live near where sex is bought and sold (Sanders, 2008). Additionally, impacts of sex work contained within research often derive from louder members of communities, with a particular agenda (Brooks-Gordon, 2006). Therefore, negative impacts are amplified as quieter community members are overlooked (Cooper, 2016). This chapter will consider current literature to support the dissertation in determining whether coexistence can occur in Hull.

Feminism:

Currently, two feminist perspectives dominate sex work literature (O’Neill, 2001). These must be considered when discussing coexistence. Radical feminism states all sex workers are exploited by those who manage the industry (men), therefore sex work is part of the patriarchal institution and a form of violence against women (O’Neill, 2001; Sanders & Laing, 2018). Secondly, there are feminists who see sex work as a freely chosen form of work, which should inherit the same rights as any other form of work (O’Neill, 2001). The radical approach constructs all sex workers as ‘powerless victims’, which is heavily criticised (Sanders et al., 2018). Bell (1994) discovered despite radical feminists attempting to ‘save’ sex workers, constructing them as ‘powerless victims’ silences their voices and fails to recognise their agency and circumstance. Whereas, the ‘sex as work’ discourse prioritises attention to skills and labour and has created positive improvements such as decriminalization in New Zealand (Sanders et al., 2018). The radical approach is dominant in the UK and until sex work is recognised as a form of work, it is unlikely any considerable improvement will be made to the lives of sex workers and affected communities.

The ‘Nuisance’ of Sex Work:

Research unanimously identifies street sex work as a ‘nuisance’ to communities given its visibility (Kingston, 2014). Therefore, activities pertaining to street sex work (e.g. soliciting and kerb-crawling) are prohibited, since they generate nuisance including noise, litter and the visibility of sex acts (O’Neill et al., 2008). The Wolfenden Report 1957 legislated against aspects of sex work, as it considered sex a ‘private matter’, until it generates a public nuisance (Kantola & Squires, 2004). Therefore, the Street Offences Act 1959 legislated against soliciting in a street or public place (Sanders et al., 2018). Visible features, such as soliciting are believed to oppose ‘moral’ and ‘decent’
behaviour (Hubbard, 1998). Therefore, introducing legislation indorsed that the regulation of sex work is necessary to allow the ‘normal, decent citizen to go about the streets without affront to their sense of decency’ (Hubbard, 1998:272). Consequently, O’Neill et al. (2008) discovered legislation creates a process of ‘othering’ and sex workers are subject to the consequences of this. Separating sex workers from the ‘decent’ population demonstrates British legislation is solely concerned with the visibility of sex work, rather than protecting sex workers.

McKeganey and Barnard (1996) studied two areas in Glasgow where sex was sold. One location operated in the east of Glasgow in daytime hours, which attracted opposition from local residents, businesses and forceful tactics from police (McKeganey & Barnard, 1996). The second location operated on a night-time in Glasgow’s business area, which was quiet after dark with few amenities open (McKeganey & Barnard, 1996). Researchers uncovered that policing the two areas differed from day to night (McKeganey & Barnard, 1996). Legislation concerning sex work is often enforced inconsistently, so long as public complaints remain low, sex work is spatially contained and informally tolerated (Sanders et al., 2018). Such policing methods relate to visibility, as in Glasgow, night time workers were tolerated, whereas day time workers were charged with soliciting (McKeganey & Barnard, 1996). Evidence around visibility displays a public nuisance rhetoric, as in Glasgow workers were only targeted in the day time when visible. Kantola and Squires (2004) claim this relates to nuisances pertaining to sex work such as litter, noise and fear of criminality. Meaning sex work is only policed when it offends the community. Consequences of this approach see sex workers excluded from community spaces. When police identify workers or clients causing persistent annoyance to the community, an Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) (now Engagement Support Order) or injunction can be served (Sanders et al., 2018). Such orders carry criminal consequences for sex workers if breached (Brooks-Gordon, 2006). Hubbard (2004) found such responses are a result of Capitalism as within the Capitalist society, public space is reclaimed for the ‘respectable’ meaning groups such as sex workers become excluded. Therefore, ASBOs can be interpreted as a method of spatial control to confine street sex workers to certain spaces (Matthews, 2005). A similar concept applies to other excluded groups such as the homeless. Controlling the movements and visibility of sex workers is not a sustainable example of peaceful coexistence. The result of this approach means sex workers are displaced to unknown areas, placing them in danger of violence (Sagar, 2007). In addition, an approach which criminalizes the customer over the buyer (Nordic Model) has gained popularity in the UK. On the face of it, this approach seems positive, however literature suggests the approach is problematic and imposes additional governance over women. Vuoljärvi (2018) found conditions under the approach difficult as services focused on exit strategies over harm reduction. The Republic of Ireland introduced the Nordic Model under the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017. Since then violent crime against sex workers increased by 77% in the year March 2017- March 2018 (Ugly Mugs (Ireland), 2018). Such statistics demonstrate the Nordic Model is placing Irish sex
workers more at risk of violence, therefore the Nordic Model does not create coexistence. Considering the current approach of UK legislation and the harmful consequences of a Nordic Model, the UK must consider alternatives to develop an approach which supports peaceful coexistence.

Positive Coexistence:

Some research identifies that sex work can have positive impacts within communities. Kingston (2014) discovered that sex work has economic benefits for communities as sex workers and clients frequently spend money in local shops. Evidence also states that sex workers can provide police with a wealth of information, as they are on the streets for long periods of time and witness crime (Kingston, 2014). Such information can be invaluable to police when investigating crime. Supporting this, Cooper (2016) found sex work increased lighting in otherwise dark places and provided entertainment for residents. Likewise, some residents stated they felt safer with sex work in the community as more people were around (Cooper, 2016). Cooper recognised feelings towards nuisance aspects of sex work fall within a moralistic view of the industry, rather than developed using tangible evidence (TEDx Talks, 2017). Therefore, O’Neill et al. (2008) suggested community conferencing may reduce ‘fears of difference’ allowing potential for coexistence. Ultimately, if communities look beyond stereotypes space for coexistence could be created.

Community Opposition:

Hubbard (1998) studied community opposition to street sex work in Balsall Heath; a deprived inner-city section of Birmingham. Matthews (2008) found nuisances including litter and increased traffic motivate residents when acting to remove sex work from communities. For example, the opposition group ‘Street Watch’ was formed by South Asian males in Balsall Heath in 1994, outraged that their mosque car park was becoming used for sexual activity (Hubbard, 1998). Motivation to protest was drawn from nuisances, however the scale of ‘Street Watch’ suggests residents were motivated by multiple factors (Hubbard, 1998). Residents expressed concern the presence of sex work contributed towards the degeneration of the area, emphasising Broken Windows Theory as residents believed sex work would impact community space (Wilson & Kelling, 1982; Hubbard, 1998). Hubbard (1998) concluded that ‘Street Watch’ displaced sex workers to alternative areas of Birmingham and the UK. Therefore, opposition solved the immediate issue in Balsall Heath but not nationally. Given the presence of Broken Windows Theory and strong opposition to sex work coexistence was highly unlikely. Therefore, Hubbard (1998) suggested multi-agency approaches and cooperation is required to achieve improvements for the lives of sex workers and residents.
Sharing Community Space:

Carline (2009) stated tolerance zones recognise the vulnerable lives of those who engage in street sex work. Therefore, Bellis et al. (2007) identified tolerance zones as a method to protect sex workers and satisfy communities. Zones provide space for sex workers to work without fear of arrest, remove sexual activity from residential streets, and provide security, healthcare, restricted drug use and set operational hours are applied to the zone (Bellis et al., 2007). Historically, Liverpool (a city in the North-West) had sex workers operating around the docks, nowadays workers have relocated to the inner city (Bellis et al., 2007). Healthcare providers (The Armistead Project) and policing strategies (Operational Angel which targeted kerb-crawlers) have been deployed within Liverpool to improve sex workers wellbeing, provide exit strategies, avoid violence and reduce impacts upon communities (Bellis et al., 2007). Despite investments street sex work remained prominent and communities have continued to be disturbed by associated anti-social behaviour (Bellis et al., 2007). Subsequently, Bellis et al. (2007) conducted a consultation with residents, sex workers and businesses in Liverpool to determine whether a tolerance zone could resolve pertinent issues. ‘Zoning’ removes the visible, ‘offensive’ features of street sex work which Kantola and Squires (2004) identified as public nuisance. Additionally, whilst considering a zone, Bellis et al. (2007) acknowledged drug use is a characteristic associated with street sex work and this must be considered when proposing tolerance zones.

Upon consultation, ninety six percent of sex workers stated they would work within a zone and all agreed to register with a health clinic if a zone were established (Bellis et al., 2007). However, more than half all stakeholders believed a zone should be located on an industrial estate away from residential areas (Bellis et al., 2007). This reflects ‘Not in my Backyard’ (NIMBY) opposition (Burningham, 2000). As stakeholders opposed the implementation of a tolerance zone in residential space, despite agreement over the benefits of tolerance zones in general (Bellis et al., 2007). NIMBY was entrenched into fears that business would worsen, and staff safety would be threatened if a zone were implemented (Bellis et al., 2007). Despite NIMBY, the study found support from all stakeholders for a tolerance zone in Liverpool (Van Doorninck & Campbell, 2006). However, stakeholders expressed concern regarding how drug use would be monitored within a zone (Bellis et al., 2007). Therefore, a pilot of the zone was suggested alongside harm minimisation approaches to determine a drug policy (Bellis et al., 2007).

Although seventy percent of respondents agreed a tolerance zone would be the best response to street sex work (Bellis et al., 2007). Zones condone the social marginalisation and stigmatisation of sex workers by confining them to a specific area (Van Doorninck & Campbell, 2006). Therefore, zoning is sometimes considered a method of control rather than coexistence, as sex workers are removed
from residential streets and targeted as ‘threatening others’ (Hubbard, 2004). Confining sex workers to a specific place also incorporates stigma. Therefore, labelling theory is present. Becker (1963) stated all social groups create rules which demonstrate what they consider appropriate behaviour. Any individual who opposes the appropriate behaviour and breaks these rules is labelled an outsider (Becker, 1963). That individual is then at risk of their label becoming their ‘master status’ (e.g. ‘prostitute’) and they are subject to the consequences of this. Labelling theory is present here as sex workers suffer stigma through selling sex, as this breaks down ‘appropriate behaviour’. Confining sex workers to tolerance zones reinforces their behaviour is wrong and condones the restrictions placed on their movements. Consequences of stigma and labelling must be measured when considering if coexistence is possible. The Home Office rejected plans for a tolerance zone in Liverpool, suggesting a zone would condone crime (Kingston, 2014). Governments remain reluctant to fund tolerance zones for this reason (Kingston, 2014). Moreover, in research Pitcher et al. (2006) found anxiety amongst respondents that introducing a tolerance zone would condone sex work. Nevertheless, Bellis et al. (2007) contributes to this field of literature by recognising a zone could be an effective way to generate improvements for sex workers and communities. However, without national permission and funding potential improvements will go unrecognised (Bellis et al., 2007).

Pitcher et al. (2006) investigated whether community spaces can be shared between residents and sex workers (who are often residents of these communities also). Five areas across the UK with opposing characteristics were studied to reflect the range of responses to street sex work, however each community possessed an established area for street sex work (Pitcher et al., 2006). The Westside possessed entertainment facilities and a population made up of retired professionals and those of working age (Pitcher et al., 2006). The Westside was fairly affluent with forty-five percent of residents in owner-occupied accommodation. In comparison, the Riverside had areas containing extreme deprivation with sixty percent of those of working age unemployed (Pitcher et al., 2006). Results of attitudes towards street sex work were placed on a continuum, which displayed that attitudes ranged from zero tolerance to proactive support and coexistence (Pitcher et al., 2006). Such views were informed by factors including personal friendships with sex workers, the extent to which sex workers were seen as part of the community, experience of impacts and images portrayed by media sources (Pitcher et al., 2006). Therefore, despite disagreement over levels of tolerance, residents demonstrated sex work becomes a problem within communities when poorly managed. Residents agreed sex work requires appropriate management strategies to coexist (Pitcher et al., 2006). The ‘idea of community’ was important to respondents when considering coexistence. Sex work was tolerated so long as it did not disrupt their idea of community (Pitcher et al., 2006).

Nuisances pertaining to sex work present a reoccurring problem for communities throughout the literature. Pitcher et al. (2006) found visibility of sex acts, noise, fears for safety and drugs were all nuisance concerns of residents. Such nuisances present a reason for why sex work is believed to
disrupt ideas of community. This reflects ideas of Broken Windows Theory, which demonstrates the visible signs of anti-social behaviour and crime within urban environments can encourage further crime and degeneration (Wilson & Kelling, 1982). Considering this and results from Pitcher et al. (2006), if nuisances pertaining to sex work were controlled or managed, coexistence may be achievable. Pitcher et al. (2006) concluded a national shift towards support services rather than penalties is required to manage sex work within communities. However, Matthews (2005) disputes this, stating sex workers suffer multifaceted economic and housing difficulties. Scoular and O’Neill (2007) expand to suggest such issues are complex for women attempting to exit the sex trade and policies targeting ‘inclusion’ are often more extensive methods of control.

Overall, literature surrounding this topic provides a good understanding of the complex issues pertaining to coexistence and sex work in the community. As discussed, the dominant Radical Feminist agenda in the UK is problematic for coexistence. Also, legislation and policing strategies which target public nuisance aspects of sex work undermine coexistence, leaving sex workers marginalised in unknown spaces and exposed to violence (Sagar, 2007). Ultimately, literature demonstrates so long as the UK is committed to this approach, coexistence is difficult. Therefore, studies within this area present methods to manage complications between sex workers and residents. These methods included multi-agency approaches and cooperation (Hubbard, 1998). Well-funded and appropriately managed tolerance zones (Bellis et al., 2007). Finally, Pitcher et al. (2006) suggested a national shift to support over penalties. Such recommendations all aim to reduce conflict between sex workers and community members. Sagar and Jones (2013) consulted residents affected by sex work in Cardiff. They found community opinion must be ethically incorporated into policy to help manage issues (Sagar & Jones, 2013). Therefore, if sex workers and residents are equally consulted greater potential is created of developing successful coexistence. Although, critical aspects of tolerance zones exist, a well-funded and managed zone may provide the best method of coexistence given the current political climate.
Chapter Three: Methodology:

This chapter will discuss the methodological approach taken within this dissertation. Each step was completed to determine whether street sex workers and residents can coexist in Hull.

Research Procedure:

Empirical research consisting of fieldwork with primary data collection was chosen as the research procedure to understand the participant’s true opinion towards the topic. Secondary data could have been used instead; however current research focuses on larger cities meaning data would be weak when used to study Hull. Therefore, focus groups were conducted with student participants from The University of Hull (who reside in Hull). Also, a semi-structured interview was conducted with a police participant from the local police force. Open-ended questions were used within both groups to extract opinion. Focus groups generate discussion amongst participants, which encourages a variety of responses, attitudes and understandings of the topic (Liamputtong, 2011). Therefore, focus groups were chosen given their less structured nature (Liamputtong, 2011). Given that sex work is a complex issue, especially when considered within the community, the execution of focus groups allowed participants to discuss topics often misunderstood, allowing participants to understand each other (Morgan, 1998). Individual interviews were considered as opposed to focus groups, however given ‘discussion’ aspects, focus groups would provide a deeper understanding of issues. However, this dissertation had to consider negative aspects of focus groups when considering a research approach. Focus groups are not private as information is shared amongst participants (Morgan, 1998). Nevertheless, focus groups provided the best method to determine whether coexistence is possible in Hull. Therefore, to mitigate negative features of focus groups, questions only targeted participants opinion rather than experience (see Appendice G).

A semi-structured interview was conducted with the police participant. Interviews differ from focus groups and possess a more defined agenda (Morgan, 1998). This method was selected as semi-structured interviews attempt to understand the topic from the participants perspective (Kvale, 2007). Therefore, the interview provided an opinion from the state and those directly affected by street sex work in Hull. However, given there was only one police participant interviewed the risk of identity exposure is prominent (Kvale, 2007). Also, morality is often attached to answers given their individual experience (Kvale, 2007). Therefore, to avoid bias questions targeted the participants perceptions given their professional experience (see Appendice H). Ultimately, the approaches used generated qualitative data. Qualitative data is useful here given the focus on experiences and meaning
individuals attribute to behaviours, this holds clues pertaining to true feelings (Skinner et al., 2000). However, qualitative data can hold researcher bias which influences interpretation (Skinner et al., 2000). Efforts were made to reduce potential for bias by refraining from asking leading questions and allowing participants to guide discussion.

**Data Analysis:**

Participants were recorded for the purposes of transcription and data analysis. Thematic analysis was then used to analyse the primary, qualitative data, this was chosen for the analysis method as thematic patterns often occur within qualitative data (Galletta & Cross, 2013). Therefore, transcripts were coded to attach key words to a theme (Kvale, 2007). Specific reoccurring themes were identified for each group of participants to represent coexistence potential in Hull. Ultimately, the data analysis uncovered a variety of views which are explored in chapters four and five.

**The Sample:**

Student participants were recruited via an advert posted to a University of Hull Facebook page (see Appendix I), the police participant was recruited via a recommendation. Guidelines state focus groups should have six to eight participants from similar backgrounds (Liamputtong, 2011). Therefore, twelve student participants were recruited and split evenly between two groups. One police participant was recruited as this was sufficient to engage a professional opinion and unique experience into research (Kvale, 2007). Ideally, more student participants would have been recruited, however this was not possible given recruitment was voluntary. Additionally, ten student participants were female and two male. Most community’s express anxiety towards sex work (Kingston, 2014). Therefore, data could be generalized here, however considering the small sample size generalization could be unfair.

**Ethical Considerations:**

Traditional ethical principles include consent, risk, privacy, anonymity, confidentiality and autonomy (Buchanan & Hvizdak, 2009). These principles were respected and incorporated into this dissertation, meaning ethical clearance was granted from the University of Hull Ethics Committee (see Appendix B). Each participant was asked to sign a consent form (see Appendices E and F). Moreover, each participant was provided with an information sheet, so they were aware of what the research entailed and what was expected of them (see Appendices C and D). Information sheets were clear that participation was voluntary and withdrawal from research was permitted until 2nd April 2019. Student participants were instructed the nature of focus groups are not private (Morgan, 1998). Also, the
police participant was told they were the only police participant. To ensure confidentiality throughout, pseudonyms were allocated to each participant as a mechanism to protect identity (Zheng, 2013). Additionally, informed consent to be tape recorded was taken from each participant (Zheng, 2013). Participants were instructed that recordings would be destroyed after transcription.

Overall, it could have been more beneficial to interview sex workers in Hull. However, considering that sex workers are marginalized and stigmatised, researching them poses moral and ethical issues (Zheng, 2013). Therefore, to ensure no harm was caused alternative participants were selected. The processes discussed within this chapter enabled the completion of this dissertation.
Chapter Four: Data Analysis with Student Participants:

Within this section of data analysis, the opinions of student participants will be discussed under three themes to determine the potential for coexistence. Initially, participants in both focus groups expressed some open-minded responses to questions. When asked their opinion on street sex work generally answers included;

Emma: “I do not think there is anything wrong with it”.

Laura: “It is the same as lap-dancing clubs but more extreme. Definitely more dangerous but it’s part of the same field”.

Despite polite responses, a confused rationale developed as the focus groups went on. When probed further about related issues participants began to speak negatively about street sex work.

Morality and Nuisance:

Many responses to questions within the focus groups were informed by moralistic assumptions. Despite attempts to portray open-minded opinions, gradually negative moralistic comments were made. Language choices of some participants suggest negative views towards sex workers. When asked if they would consider moving to a known red-light district responses included;

Amy; “You wouldn’t want your neighbour to be a bunch of prostitutes”.

Amy’s response is informed by morality as she implies living next to such individuals is undesirable. A ‘bunch of prostitutes’ possesses negative connotations which can be explained by ‘whore stigma’. Labels such as ‘prostitute’ or ‘whore’ are applied to women who sell sex, given society considers ‘prostitutes’ to ‘sell one’s honour for gain’ (Pheterson, 1993). Therefore, the word ‘prostitute’ carries negative connotations which attract stigma, as society believes it is immoral to sell one’s ‘honour’ (Pheterson, 1993). Ultimately, Amy is implying it is undesirable to have sex workers for a neighbour, due to pre-mediated assumptions that it is immoral to sell sex. Respondents demonstrated concern over the visibility of street sex work. This implies respondents perceive it immoral to bring sexual acts into public spaces. Street sex workers often suffer ‘double stigma’ as they are selling sex and doing it publicly (Armstrong, 2018). This is reflected in participants responses;
Hannah: “I don’t agree with street sex work. It is on the street and it is seen by others- I don’t agree with that”.

As Hannah stated ‘others’ should not have to witness sex work, this implies a moralistic assumption that ‘decent’ people should be able to go out without having their morals insulted (Hubbard, 1998). Hannah’s response also categorises street sex workers from alternative types of sex work. This implies working on the street is unacceptable as it visibly offends community morality; unlike other forms of sex work. Interestingly, sex workers themselves differentiate between themselves and other workers to avoid stigma. For example, escorts often disapprove of street sex workers (Morrison & Whitehead, 2005). Furthermore, participants expressed further concern towards visibility, in relation to the reluctance for certain groups to witness sex work.

Gemma: “My community is highly populated by children, the risk of bringing trouble into the area concerns me”.

Molly: “You don’t want children to see that”.

Each response possesses moralistic assumptions that children should not witness sex work. Gemma assumes that living within a red-light district and ‘trouble’ come hand in hand meaning she does not believe children should be exposed to this. Historically, children have been seen as ‘innocent’, Gemma responds to this stereotype through her comment. Additionally, participants stated;

Hannah: “I wouldn’t want my children to see it, it could influence them”.

Nina: “You don’t want to live there; you don’t want your children to grow up to sell sex”.

Assumptions that exposing children to sex work will influence them in becoming a sex worker presents opposition to living alongside sex workers. Such comments imply that sex work is unacceptable given they would not want their children to engage with it. As discussed, visibility of street sex work was a concern for participants within focus groups. However, when asked if they think sex work is an issue in Hull, they stated it is not.

John: “If it wasn’t for recent headlines, my attention wouldn’t have been drawn to it”.

Rosie: “The amount I’ve seen, I don’t think it is causing an issue”.

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When questioned if they would live where sex is sold, participants said no due to the visibility and potential consequences to children. However, here participants do not see sex work as an issue for Hull because they do not see it. Therefore, participants are only opposed to sex work when it offends their own morality.

**Perceptions of those who engage in Street Sex Work:**

Participants expressed concerns that sex workers participate in drug use. Drugs remained a concern when discussing sex work generally and when discussing coexistence methods. For example;

Ben: “Drugs are related to sex work. Even if a tolerance zone existed, it would be hard to manage drugs within it”.

Ben’s opinion suggests even with coexistence methods, drugs would still concern residents given negative associations. Bellis et al. (2007) suggested piloting would be the best way to determine a drugs policy for tolerance zones; this could apply in Hull too.

Laura: “Those that work on the streets do it purely for drugs”.

Laura’s opinion is highly problematic. No consideration is given to the complicated lives of sex workers, or that sex work may be the most favourable option for them at that time (Sanders & Laing, 2018). Consequently, a generalisation is made that all sex workers work for drugs. Given negative opinions, it is clear coexistence within Hull would prove difficult if residents associate all street sex workers with drug use. Negative labels applied to drug users such as ‘druggies’ mean these people become excluded from the community (Becker, 1963). For example, students claimed they would stay away from certain areas;

Molly: “They’re all druggies down there”.

Labels mean that people become marginalised and their welfare is ignored. As participants are associating sex workers and ‘druggies’, this suggests they have no intention to coexist. Moreover, participants referred to popular culture;

Ben: “They all do drugs on the BBC programme”.

Ben refers to the BBC Three documentary Sex, Drugs and Murder which focused on Holbeck (BBC Three, 2017). The series was highly problematic as it associated the women with extreme drug use.
Therefore, this source has informed Ben’s view, meaning he believes all sex workers are drug users. Although participants were obsessed with drugs, few participants referred to the rhetoric that all sex workers are coerced.

Hannah: “It has to be a choice”.

Here, Hannah implies that so long as women choose sex work, it is tolerable. However, Hannah demonstrates a simplistic opinion and does not expand on the multiple factors that contribute towards a choice. Ultimately, concerns pertaining to drugs suggest students would be unwilling to coexist as drugs were used to justify why they would not live near or in a red-light zone. Additionally, students expressed concerns regarding those who purchase sexual services. Concerns focused around clients entering the community;

Laura: “You don’t know who’s coming into the area”.

Here, the idea of the ‘unknown’ displays why participants fear the clients. Laura paints clients as a potential threat given their true intentions are unknown. Such fear may be drawn from representations of the client in popular culture. For example, the sex buyer is often portrayed as more ‘sexually aggressive’ than other men (Farley et al., 2017). This representation explains why participants may fear such people entering their community. When asked how they would feel if their area became used to sell street based sexual services response included;

Emma: “There is a range of people who buy sex but the potential for an old pervy man coming into the area bothers me”.

Emma’s response builds upon the negative representations of those who buy sexual services. Despite acknowledging the range of people who use sex workers, she focuses on the stereotype of ‘old pervy men’. Many men with learning difficulties buy sex (Jones, 2012). However, Emma clearly ignores the potentially harmless and solely emphasises the potential threat to her safety.

Emma: “If they’re capable of hurting a prostitute, then why aren’t they capable of hurting me?”

Emma recognises the violence sex workers often suffer but fails to suggest a way to prevent this. Instead she related it to herself, suggesting residents are more concerned with putting their own interests before that of sex workers, meaning they seem unwilling to coexist. Negative comments made regarding sex workers and sex buyers suggests participants are unwilling to share their community space with those they consider to be drug users and violent.
Potential for Coexistence?

When asked about coexistence with sex workers many responses reflected ‘Not in My Back Yard’ (NIMBY). Many participants implied they did not oppose sex work, so long as it did not occur in their community. This links to the reoccurring obsession with visibility.

Rosie: “Tolerance zones are good, but I wouldn’t live near one”.

Gemma: “I don’t want to live near sex work”.

NIMBY argues that residents often oppose local developments upon the argument that it is acceptable, just not within the vicinity of them (Burningham, 2000). Such attitude is demonstrated amongst participants given that they do not want to live near tolerance zones. This presents a selfish view informed by stigma. Such views provide no intentions to coexist as if participants do not want to live around sex work, they clearly would not coexist. Additionally, participants suggested if a tolerance zone were created it should be located away from the community;

Rosie: “It should be on an industrial estate, where no one lives”.

Rosie’s comment supports the marginalisation of sex workers. She implies sex workers should be separated from the rest of the community, as their actions are not accepted within community spaces.

Gemma: “People in Hull avoid places where sex workers work”.

Gemma’s comment reinforces Rosie’s as it shows participants and the wider community do not wish to mix with individuals who oppose the ‘norm’. Additionally, such views disregard sex worker safety. Street sex workers experience high levels of violence compared to indoor workers (Sanders & Campbell, 2007). Participants ignore this hazard and expose sex workers to violence so that they can live apart rather than coexist.

Furthermore, upon discussing coexistence avenues, no reference was given to decriminalisation as an option. Instead participants favoured an approach similar to the Nordic Model.

Hannah: “Criminalizing the customer is best, you cut down the number of people buying it”.
Hannah’s opinion disregards that regardless of the legal approach, sex workers must still earn money. If the client is removed the conditions of sex workers become increasingly difficult (Vuolajärvi, 2018). Therefore, participants demonstrate disregard for coexistence but support for the abolishment of the industry.

Furthermore, participants expressed concern that the presence of sex work would create negative impacts for Hull. Participants used this to justify why sex workers should not receive support;

Nina: “They don’t need supporting- it creates a negative image of Hull”.

Hannah: “It shouldn’t be promoted”.

This exchange establishes participants felt that by supporting sex workers, Hull would promote sex work, consequently creating a negative image. This implies coexistence is not possible as participants associated supporting sex workers with negativity.

Ben: “A tolerance zone would breed crime”.

Anna: “The presence of sex work reduces house prices”.

Moreover, both responses demonstrate Broken Windows Theory. Wilson and Kelling (1982) found the presence of crime contributes towards the degeneration of an area. Participants make this connection by implying the presence of sex work would create additional harmful consequences for Hull. Associating sex work with the degeneration of the area shows deterioration concerns participants. Therefore, coexistence would be unachievable given participants feel sex work would harm their community space.
Chapter Five: Data Analysis with Police Participant:

This section of data analysis will discuss the responses of the police participant under three themes. Firstly, it is clear the participant acknowledged the occurrence of sex work in Hull.

Officer Smith: “Predominantly they work on Hessle Road”.

It became apparent throughout the interview that Police have a dual role to protect sex workers and serve communities. Cooper (2016) acknowledged these roles are a ‘balancing act’ between law and order, meaning Police have a conflict of interests. This must be considered throughout the analysis.

**Victim Framework:**

Throughout the interview, reference was made to the ‘victim’ framework often associated with sex work;

Officer Smith: “We see them in this force as victims”.

Following this framework disempowers sex workers and portrays them as ‘helpless victims’ with no agency of their own (Phipps, 2017). For example;

Officer Smith: “This is not something they choose to do”.

Here, the Officer removes decision making abilities from sex workers and decides for them. This applies a simplistic, individualistic perception with no reference given to research that shows sex work provides economic stability to women that otherwise they would not have (Murphy, 2010). Ultimately, the victim framework justifies the police when imposing multi-agency penalties upon sex workers when caught breaching legislation;

Officer Smith: “We create a statement which shows the woman was out working, this is given to the Council who take it to Court. If the woman engages with recommended agencies, she will receive a caution over a custodial sentence. The agencies help their problems”.

This process implies that if women do not engage with the multi-agencies, they will receive additional punishment. Therefore, given sex workers are framed as victims who need help, women are
forced to engage with agencies to exit the industry. Comparatively, other authorities are following a similar approach. South Wales Police have recently stated that women who refuse to engage with support services will face action (BBC News, 2019). However, this response ignores that many sex workers do not wish to exit the industry due to factors such as the flexibility sex work offers around childcare (Benoit et al., 2017b). Likewise, forcing an exit may create further problems given that exiting is a complicated process (Baker et al., 2010). As the victim framework removes abilities for sex workers to make their own choices, it is possible this response to sex work is another method of social control rather than coexistence.

**Advocating for Sex Buyer Law:**

When questioned around coexistence methods, Officer Smith answered by referring to the Triple Two Injunction enforced on Hessle Road. This was created in 2014 and effectively created Britain’s first ‘prostitution free zone’ as under the order sex workers and kerb-crawlers can be arrested and forced to attend Court (European Regional Correspondent, 2014).

Officer Smith: “The Triple Two injunction of Section 222 of the Local Government Act 1972 is served on the area not individuals. It is enforced from Rawlings Way to Hawthorne Avenue”.

The creation of the injunction suggests authorities within Hull have no intention to develop strategies to coexist given the injunction generates criminal consequences. Motivations behind the injunction possibly lie within policy-makers asserting their power and reclaiming known red-light districts for ‘moral purification’ to accumulate capital within the city (Hubbard, 2004). This implies a ‘clean up’ has been initiated to make space for regeneration, therefore the removal of sex workers became a priority instead of coexistence. Furthermore, Officer Smith proceeded to speak of the consequences for ‘buyers’ under the injunction.

Officer Smith: “Those that are caught and admit it receive a conditional caution and must attend the Sex Trade and New Direction course (STAN). They get an input from previous sex workers; health risks and the police discuss the law. We make it clear that the conditional caution could affect their employment, travel and family”.

The STAN course creates punitive consequences for sex buyers and Officer Smith expanded to show how the buyer is publicly shamed if they choose not to admit the offence;
Officer Smith: “If they choose not to attend the course they are summoned to Court. If they choose to chance it, we do a piece in the paper about the person to say, ‘you are a sex trade user’, so everyone will know”.

Shaming the buyer disregards a range of factors for why people buy sex. These include emotional factors, the want of specific sexual acts and thrills from the illicit nature (Earle & Sharp, 2008). Therefore, this approach is forcing individuals to feel ashamed of their sexual behaviours. Ultimately, the injunction served on Hessle Road shows support for a Sex Buyer Law alike the Nordic Model. The Nordic Model imposes a ‘neo-abolitionist’ approach across Nordic countries as it believes prostitution is a result of men’s oppression over women (Kingston & Thomas, 2018). However, as recognised the Nordic approach is problematic meaning the Swedish Government are accused of not considering the lives of individuals (Kingston & Thomas, 2018). However, Officer Smith justified the criminalisation of sex buyers by stating;

Officer Smith: “If we reduce the market by removing buyers, women are more likely to engage with support services”.

Therefore, support for criminalisation of the sex buyer shows police within Hull support abolition methods over coexistence. Attempts to remove the customer demonstrate attempts to remove the industry.

**Alternative Avenues to Coexist?**

Throughout the interview questions were asked regarding potential coexistence methods. However, potential for decriminalization was thrown out;

Officer Smith: “If we decriminalized is it going to be stop it? What’s to say it won’t bring more people out if they know they won’t be prosecuted?”

This response implies the Officer’s interests do not lie with coexistence. Stating that decriminalization would not stop sex work suggests the Officer aims to abolish the industry. The belief that more people would engage in sex work if decriminalized is informed by moralistic views that even if it were legal, selling sex remains in opposition to community values. Officer Smith ignores that decriminalization could develop improved working relationships between sex workers and police. As seen in New Zealand, since decriminalisation, sex workers and police have a stronger relationship as sex workers now feel comfortable reporting violence against them (Armstrong, 2017). Ultimately, if relationships develop between police and sex workers, decriminalization could create potential for better
relationships between sex workers and communities also. However, the Officer ignores this as they are informed by previous referrals to sex workers as disadvantaged victims who do not choose sex work (Armstrong, 2017). Therefore, Officer Smith remains committed to an abolitionist approach. In addition, Officer Smith was asked about the potential for a tolerance zone in Hull.

Officer Smith: “Residents and retailers would kick off; the council wouldn’t go for it. I don’t think we would ever do one”.

Stating that residents and retailers would ‘kick off’ demonstrates a tolerance zone would be unwelcome in Hull. Officer Smith uses the disapproval of residents to justify why a zone would not happen in Hull;

Officer Smith: “We work closely with residents”.

Therefore, the Officer’s statement that residents would ‘kick off’ over a zone is constructed by evidence, as police have consulted those affected by sex work in communities. Still, Officer Smith does not indicate any intentions to try and improve relationships between sex workers and residents to consider the possibility of a zone. Instead any potential for a zone is rejected by stating the council would not do it- meaning there is little chance. Officer Smith also rejects potential for a tolerance zone with regards to location;

Officer Smith: “Where would we put it? Women need to work near CCTV, if we did it in an industrial area there is no CCTV, what if we found one dead?”

Unlike student participants, Officer Smith recognises we cannot place sex workers in isolated areas and risk their safety just to satisfy community concerns. Recognising the safety implications of tolerance zones shows police are considering the interests of every stakeholder, rather than just those considered ‘decent’. Although this is positive, confusion remains over a method to achieve coexistence.

Overall, it is clear police present sex workers as victims who require help. Therefore, Officer Smith supports penalties for those purchasing sex, with the hope to reduce the market meaning more women will engage with support services. The Officer recognises the industry will never be abolished completely but maintains an approach to reduce it as much as possible. Ultimately ignoring the agency of sex workers.
Chapter Six: Discussion and Conclusion:

This dissertation aimed to discover whether street sex workers and residents can coexist as a community in Hull. Existing literature surrounding the topic demonstrates sex work becomes problematic within communities due to visible aspects and associated nuisances (Kingston, 2014). Yet, some studies reveal that economic and entertainment aspects can benefit communities (Kingston, 2014; Cooper, 2016). Despite this apparent optimism, no reference was given to any potentially positive impacts within this study. Rather, focus was solidly based around the Public Nuisance discourse; particularly visibility and what this could result in. In addition, the perception of illicit drug use amongst sex workers became apparent, as participants implied, they would be unwilling to coexist due to concerns about drug use in the community. Therefore, attitudes focused around abolishment of the industry rather than coexistence.

Individualism is embedded amongst findings within this research. Participants demonstrated an individualistic response which disregarded the welfare of sex workers but satisfied their own concerns regarding coexistence. This implies coexistence was interpreted as something which the community must be satisfied with foremost, suggesting sex workers were considered as secondary citizens. Such views reflect the current Capitalist structure, which promotes individuality over interdependence (Pankonien, 2011). Within Capitalism individuals are subject to low wages and increased competition causing individuals to innovate, using survival strategies which may include working multiple jobs (Pankonien, 2011). Ultimately, those considered ‘poor’ are blamed for what they lack financially (Pankonien, 2011). Participants replicate this attitude throughout as no consideration was given to how some choose sex work due to it being the most intelligent financial option available to them (Benoit et al., 2017b). Such self-centred attitudes can be connected to the rise of Neo-Liberalism and so frame coexistence as currently unachievable in Hull as sex workers are considered unworthy of involvement within ‘respectable’ society.

Moreover, participants elicited an individualistic opinion regarding tolerance zones. Many stated to support a tolerance zone but only if it were located away from residential space. Despite portraying this as positive, sex workers become marginalised further and coexistence is not achieved. As seen in relevant literature, tolerance zones frequently condone the marginalisation and stigmatisation of sex workers by confining them to certain areas (Van Doorninck & Campbell, 2006). This is reflected here as participants demonstrated premeditated, stigmatised views and presented tolerance zones as a method to remove sex workers from their space. NIMBY (Not in MY Back Yard) was also present amongst participants individualistic comments. Claims that tolerance zones should be in non-
residential areas reflect the view with many local developments that residents oppose if the development affects their space (Burningham, 2000). Despite claiming, in theory, to support tolerance zones, participants must attach negative connotations if they want them located elsewhere, therefore they are protecting their ‘back yard’ (Burningham, 2000). Additionally, if a tolerance zone were created in Hull, another issue pertaining to location would be the potential for violence. Research confirms street sex workers face high levels of violence within their employment (Campbell & Kinnell, 2000; Connelly et al., 2018). Violence ranges from physical, robbery and offensive language (Sanders & Campbell, 2007). Therefore, placing sex workers in a tolerance zone (away from residential spaces) creates potential for additional violence as everybody knows where they are, and that the area is isolated. Routine Action Theory which pertains to crime opportunity and situation helps to understand this critical area of tolerance zones (Cohen & Felson, 1979). As, tolerance zones can increase the opportunity for crime by placing sex workers in situations which could expose them to violence. The police participant recognised this flaw and used it to object tolerance zones, meaning a consideration for sex worker safety was made. However, student participants ignored potential threats to safety in order to satisfy their own agenda. Therefore, a ‘discourse of disposal’ is apparent within this research. Lowman (2000) discussed this when considering the murder of sex workers in Vancouver. Here, sex workers were viewed as ‘throwaway people’, which caused police to not investigate the murders in the same way they would if victims were considered ‘decent’ (Lowman, 2000). Student participants reflected a ‘discourse of disposal’ given they ignored the potential threats that tolerance zones create if located away from residential space. Such findings mean coexistence is unachievable within Hull, as participants do not promote an approach which incorporates every stakeholder. If sex workers remain marginalised coexistence has not been achieved.

The data analysis clearly revealed the priorities of the police participant were invested in abolishing the industry rather than coexisting. The injunction Officer Smith discussed was introduced in 2014 and is unique to Hull, given it effectively bans sex work from the cities red-light area (Brewer, 2017). The injunction can result in criminal consequences for sex workers, clients and ‘PIMPS’ if breached (Brewer, 2017). Just the presence of the injunction displays that Hull is opposing sex work. Class interests are significant when determining when and where sex work will occur. As shown in the literature review, within capitalist societies space is often reclaimed for ‘respectable groups’ (Hubbard, 2004). Therefore, occasionally policy makers will introduce ‘zero tolerance’ approaches which aim to reclaim red light districts for purification, capitalisation and family orientated refurbishment (Hubbard, 2004). Hull was pronounced the UK City of Culture for 2017 at the same time the injunction was introduced. This title saw Hull begin a process of regeneration including new sporting venues, shopping centres and family orientated events (Hull City Council, 2017a). Such actions adhere to claims that sex workers are removed to create space for capitalisation and refurbishment (Hubbard, 2004). Hull utilised the zero-tolerance approach of the injunction to remove
sex workers from Hessle Road to redevelop for the City of Culture year. Therefore, the injunction demonstrates that Hull remains committed to an abolitionist approach.

In addition, data analysis revealed that Officer Smith constructed all sex workers as ‘helpless victims’ (Phipps, 2017). Therefore, it can be understood the Officer followed a radical feminist framework, given the construction of all sex workers as victims (O’Neill, 2001). Adopting this approach allows agencies such as the police to effectively force women into health and social support to exit sex work. However, forcing women into exit strategies ignores that exiting is a complicated process and some women choose sex work due to the flexibility and financial incentives (Baker et al., 2010; Benoit et al., 2017b). Therefore, as demonstrated within the literature review, adopting this radical approach means police in Hull are silencing the voices of sex workers and removing their agency (Bell, 1994). Additionally, the removal of agency through forced exit strategies suggests this approach is been used as a method of social control. Many sex workers enter through choice, are well organised, respect their health and exit when they choose (Spice, 2007). However, others may be driven into the industry through drug addiction (Spice, 2007). Nevertheless, the approach of the police forces all women to exit (ignoring these factors) suggesting their approach is controlling sex workers and their movements as opposed to creating coexistence.

The STAN course discussed by Officer Smith supports discussion in the literature review that the UK is moving towards a Nordic Model approach. The Home Office document Paying the Price set out options for future UK prostitution policy which included a Nordic Approach (Kinnell, 2006). However, the Nordic approach has been criticised given its focus on exit strategies over harm reduction and the exposure of sex workers to increased violence (Vuoljärvi, 2018). STAN focuses on removing sex buyers through a process of criminalization. Therefore, STAN incorporates the sweeping neo-abolitionist perspective as pioneered in the Nordic countries (Scoular & Carline, 2014). Approaches such as STAN tackle the ‘supply and demand’ features of sex work to abolish the industry (Scoular & Carline, 2014). Therefore, a neo-liberal framework is apparent given the focus on supply and demand. This approach used by police is problematic for this study as it implies there is no current intention to create coexistence. Movements towards tackling demand (buyers) shows that Hull is committed to abolishment. Officer Smith believed the STAN course would reduce markets allowing more women to engage with agencies and exit sex work. This approach generates additional problems as if authorities criminalise every aspect of sex work, stigma becomes entrenched at a structural level (Benoit et al., 2017a). Therefore, coexistence becomes more unachievable as if criminalised, the public believe that activity is wrong.

Research claims street sex work is strongly associated with drug use as many individuals enter this section of the industry to fund expensive drug habits (Spice, 2007). Therefore, sex work creates a
nuisance within communities due to litter pertaining to drug use such as needles (O’Neill et al., 2008). As discussed in the literature review, Bellis et al. (2007) suggested a pilot would be the best way to determine a drugs policy within tolerance zones, alongside harm minimisation approaches. However, participants within this research did not discuss litter pertaining to drug use but instead were concerned with the presence of drugs in general. The obsession with drug use demonstrated student participants saw all sex workers as drug users. Such generalisations suggest opinions were informed by stigma, meaning participants were unwilling to coexist. One participant mentioned seeing frequent drug use in a BBC documentary (BBC Three, 2017). However, media sources often portray sex workers as an abject and criminalized other (O’Neill et al., 2008). Such representations inform the minds of residents who then believe sex work is negative for communities (O’Neill et al., 2008). This is an example of macro (media) structures within society informing the micro (people) (Benoit et al., 2017a). This process has occurred within Hull as recent Hull Daily Mail articles have portrayed sex workers negatively (Campbell, 2018b; Kershaw, 2019). Media sources only show the worst cases of a controversial subject, this creates a negativity bias as readers are only informed of negative features such as abuse and trafficking (Weitzer, 2017). A negativity bias is clear within recent Hull Daily Mail articles. Evidently, this has influenced the minds of participants causing them to assume all street sex workers use drugs. Considering this, it is difficult to consider coexistence if local media outlets provide a biased report of sex work within Hull.

A police participant was involved in research to include a perception of somebody who deals with the issue first hand. Officer Smith made it clear that residents around Hessle Road are unhappy with the presence of sex work and would oppose a tolerance zone. Alongside opinions from student participants this undoubtedly shows relations between sex workers and residents are weak in Hull. Although tolerance zones are presented as a method to protect sex workers (Carline, 2009). Forming one in Hull would only worsen problems considering current attitudes amongst residents. When residents feel reduced to a state of helplessness as a result of local government enterprises, responses include community campaigns (Matthews, 2008). As understood in the literature review, Hubbard (1998) studied ‘Street Watch’ in Birmingham, however a more recent example is the Save our Eyes group in Holbeck, Leeds. This group was created by residents and aims to shut down the tolerance zone (Save our Eyes, 2018). Despite not achieving peaceful coexistence, positive outcomes of the zone include an improved relationship between sex workers and police (Sanders & Shembi, 2015). For example, since the implementation of the zone there has been an increase in National Ugly Mug reporting. From April 2014 to April 2015, seventy-three reports were taken by Basis Sex Work Project, which demonstrates reporting of crime is improving (Sanders & Shembi, 2015). Additionally, outreach workers from Basis believe the tolerance zone has resulted in more women engaging with social and healthcare interventions (Sanders & Shembi, 2015). This claim is supported by Bellis et al. (2007), who found women would be willing to use healthcare services if a tolerance zone were
created. Nevertheless, Save our Eyes suggest residents were never consulted when the tolerance zone was considered and major impacts lie within the community such as litter, visibility of sex acts and harassment (Save our Eyes, 2018). Despite some positive outcomes, this presents why residents oppose the zone. Pitcher et al. (2006) found if tolerance zones are managed effectively, well-funded, incorporate all stakeholder’s opinions and demonstrate outreach; coexistence can be achieved. Such recommendations have been made for Holbeck including more CCTV, bins and police presence (Sanders & Shembi, 2015). Ultimately, despite some positive outcomes and recommendations for the Holbeck zone, it is clear residents want it removed. Therefore, coexistence has not been achieved; this is a situation Hull must avoid. Considering current discontent towards sex work in Hull and negative examples in Leeds, it could be more detrimental to coexistence if a tolerance zone were created in Hull.

Throughout data analysis, negative moralistic assumptions towards sex workers became apparent. These assumptions were used to justify the underlying theme that participants did not want sex work in community space. Fear that sex work will breakdown the ‘sense of community’ may explain why participants opposed coexistence. Public space is constructed around ideas of appropriate sexual conduct, those who do not conform to monogamous, procreative and heterosexual sex are subject to spatial exclusion (Hubbard, 2001). Concern also arises from the visibility of street sex work which results in the exclusion of sex workers (Hubbard, 1998). Here, participants incorporate such feelings to suggest they would not coexist with those adopting alternative sexual behaviours. Moreover, participants demonstrated concern that if community space was shared with such people, their sense of community would be lost. This supports Pitcher et al. (2006) who found sex work becomes an issue when it threatens residents’ sense of community. The reluctance for children to view sex work demonstrates that participants were solely concerned with sharing space with the ‘decent’.

Communities only care when individuals who conform to shared values are removed from the community. Therefore, instead of setting their morals aside, participants here incorporated morality into responses and demonstrated reluctance to coexist. Communities cannot consider the health and safety of those excluded from the community. Consequently, sex workers face dangerous working conditions and significant health inequalities due to stereotyping (Putnis & Burr, 2019). This is occurring in the UK and worldwide as sex workers in South Africa report suffering discrimination (Oliveira, 2018). Considering this, coexistence remains unachievable as participants attitudes result in further exclusion of sex workers. Other studies present sex work within communities as a public nuisance (Kantola & Squires, 2004; Kingston, 2014). Here, associated nuisances were not central to participants reluctance to coexist. Instead participants echoed Broken Windows Theory by showing concern for the degeneration of community space if sex work happened there. Once again reluctance to coexist is clear as participants (particularly students) place the image of community space as more important than sex worker safety, demonstrating a negative view of the industry.
A confused rationale is clear amongst student participants, as all recognised something must be done but they remained committed to a stigmatised, negative perception of sex workers. Therefore, ambivalence was displayed towards coexistence, however constant negative comments show much work must be done before coexistence could be considered. Responses from the police participant reflect the conflict of interest police face. Police must balance law and order, yet protect sex workers and resident’s interests (Cooper, 2016). However, Officer Smith demonstrated reducing crime must be the main priority, which was demonstrated through the use of the STAN course. This study understands the difficult position of the police, however alternative approaches could be adopted which help protect sex workers. For example, police in Merseyside have adopted an approach which offers harm minimisation and views crime against sex workers as hate crime, which encourages reporting (Jacobs, 2014). Adopting this approach allows sex workers to trust police and feel safer. If police in Hull could move away from approaches such as STAN and adopt the Merseyside approach, potential for coexistence could develop.

**Conclusion:**

In conclusion, the findings of this study offer a rather fatalistic forecast regarding the potential for coexistence between sex workers and other community members in Hull. The use of focus groups and semi structured interview with participants revealed complex and sometimes contradictory issues around the subject. Student participants dismissed potential for coexistence with negative moralistic assumptions, associating drug use with sex work and incorporating stigma throughout. The police participant had developed an opinion using evidence and claimed residents currently living on Hessle Road are deeply unsatisfied. Regardless however, the participant was committed to abolishing the industry and did not believe coexistence to be a potential option. Given this is the current remit of the law, the officers stance is somewhat understandable.

Although various studies reveal sex work in the community is not always negative (Kingston, 2014; Cooper, 2016), this study does not reflect these results in any way. Even though such studies show potential for tolerance zones (Pitcher et al., 2006; Bellis et al., 2007). Outcomes from research here show tolerance zones as dangerous for sex worker safety and an additional method to marginalise sex workers. The presence of a confused rationale indicates student participants were attempting to incorporate coexistence, however the reoccurrence of responses informed by stigma implied they were not *really* willing to coexist. It is likely participants moralistic assumptions towards sex work clouded their opinion regarding coexistence, also the recent negativity bias within the Hull Daily Mail may have skewed perceptions.
This study took an optimistic approach, hoping to find a method that could create coexistence, so residents could remove associated nuisances and stress and sex workers could live without abuse and violence (O’Neill et al., 2008). However, given the results it seems unlikely that at the moment this will happen. The issue of sex work within communities is not exclusive to Hull. Globally examples are seen where residents oppose sharing their community space with sex workers. Therefore, an approach must be considered worldwide which removes media representations of sex workers as ‘others’, so that policy can be supportive rather than punitive (O’Neill et al., 2008). Until a decriminalisation approach is considered, long term sustainable solutions must be adopted so all priorities are considered instead of the priorities of the minority (Sagar & Jones, 2012). This way communities may be more open to alternative solutions of sharing their community space (Sagar & Jones, 2012).

There are limitations of this research. It may have been better to consult residents who reside on Hessle Road, however given time and ethical restrictions this was not possible. Also, only two males were participants in the study meaning the sample was mostly female. This may have reflected results given that the females held different opinions to males. The sample size was also small; therefore, a generalization cannot be made as attitudes may change across different people. If this research were considered again, a wide range of residents on Hessle Road should be consulted to develop the best solution for all.
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