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'It's like, we're in Blackpool innit': A discourse analysis of identities of young women living in a deprived seaside town in North West England

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Abstract

Blackpool is a town which has been identified has having some of the most
deprived wards in England, but also has areas of relative affluence which are often
not reported. According to Social Representation Theory, social representations
provide social knowledge that can influence the identities of individuals. Identity
Process Theory offers a theoretical framework that allows for the exploration of
identity and how threats are managed, including threats emerging from social
representations. To establish the nature of social representations available to
young women in Blackpool, a media analysis was conducted of a 5 ½ year period
of a range of newspapers. Critical Discourse Analysis was used to examine two
main themes. The analysis of newspaper articles indicated that many of the social
representations of Blackpool were hegemonic, in that they justified the
deprivation of people in Blackpool, depicted them as responsible for their own
misfortunes. Based on Critical Discourse Analysis, it was argued that social
representations could lead to identity threats that young women would need to
manage. Eighteen young women aged 14- 16 years old from two schools in the
Blackpool area were interviewed, using posters they had created as prompts.
Foucauldian Discourse Analysis was used to analyse interviews, which indicated
that young women engaged in discourses that reflected social representations
available to them to make sense of their lived experiences of Blackpool. They
engaged in strategies to distance themselves from negative social representations.
In terms of group membership in Blackpool they drew upon concepts of
meritocracy, morality, and authenticity as salient characteristics. Belongingness
and distinctiveness were identified as identity enhancement strategies. The
research showed the importance of discursive methodology for understanding
identity. Future research would include comparative groups to establish the
importance of social representations on identity and the strategies used to manage
them.

Contents

Acknowledgements

Chapter 1 - Introduction

In 2012, David Cameron announced that "It's not where you've come from that counts, it's where you're going" (Prince, 12/10/2012). The overall aim of this thesis is to refute this proclamation, in light of the lived experiences of young women in Blackpool. The choice of Blackpool is an important one as it highlights the decline of seaside towns in the UK, and arguably, as one of the larger seaside towns, can give an insight into the impact of this frequently discussed decline in terms of multiple deprivations. Young women in Blackpool face many challenges; in fact, Plan International UK (2020) reported that Blackpool is currently the worst place to grow up as a young woman in the UK. The report published qualitative data of young women in Blackpool, where participants expressed a sense of fear on a daily basis from a number of different potential threats. There is a reality to these threats, the most startling being that life expectancy in Blackpool is the lowest in England and Wales, and residents of Blackpool, in general, will have a less healthy life, with fewer years free of illness and disability (JSNA Blackpool, 2020a). Life expectancy and health in Blackpool relate directly to affluence and deprivation, with the small improvements in life expectancy and good health only benefiting the less deprived areas of Blackpool.

In 2019, Blackpool was listed as the most deprived town in England and Wales, with 6 of the Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs)[1] in Blackpool, ranking it as having the 10% most deprived LSOAs in England and Wales. Blackpool ranks in the top ten for the following measures of deprivation: income, employment, and crime, as well as being in the top 20 for deprivation in education and skills. Incidents of domestic abuse and crimes against the person in Blackpool are the highest in England and Wales (JSNA, 2020b), and those who are the most vulnerable include women and young people living in deprived areas. Blackpool also has the highest rates of adult drug abuse in Lancashire, at nearly three times the national average (Lancashire County Council, 2020); injecting drug use in Blackpool is over three times the national rate (NHS Blackpool, 2012). In 2012, 17% of secondary school children reported they had taken drugs and 28% stated they had been offered drugs. Overall, over half of all

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[1] [1] Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) are a geographic hierarchy generated to improve the reporting of statistics in smaller areas of England and Wales. They are generated based on postcodes and population size. Within a town there will be a number of LSOAs generated from 4 to 6 output areas. The LSOAs cover a minimum population of 1000, with mean populations of 1500.

secondary school children had tried smoking, consumed alcohol, and/or had taken drugs (Blackpool Council, 2014). It is argued that one way to improve life outcomes is through social mobility; however, parents' income and their children's social mobility stubbornly correlate (The Equality Trust, 2020). In other words, those who would benefit most from social mobility are the least likely to experience it. JSNA Blackpool (2020c) stated that social mobility is driven by skills and educational attainment, and that Blackpool GCSE results are among the poorest in England and Wales leaving young people in a potential cycle of poverty.

It is apparent there is an educational gap in Blackpool. In the academic year 2019/2020, the national average percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs grades C or above, including Maths and English was 49.9%; the national average percentage for young women was 53.1%; the percentage of young women achieving Grade C or above, including Maths and English was 44.3% (Explore Statistics, 2021). This is an important statistic, as it indicates that not only are young women underperforming in comparison to other young women in the UK, but they are also underperforming compared to the national average including young men, when one of the 'controversies' over the previous years has been that young women are outperforming young men academically (Ng, 2021). Low educational attainment is reflected in the residents of Blackpool as a whole; 13% of all Blackpool residents aged 16 to 64 have no formal qualifications, and only 61.9% have gained GCSEs (or equivalents) or higher (ONS, 2016). Wenham (2020) identified the correlation between seaside towns and limited opportunities, stating that young people from seaside towns tend to be disengaged and marginalized. This could be due to the lack of opportunities available to them. Reid and Westergaard (2015) found that young people from seaside towns tend to be at risk due to the lack of educational and employment opportunities.

This thesis proposes that demographics of young women in Blackpool, in terms of their material reality, and the social representations related to living in Blackpool will shape their sense of self: their identity. The assumption here that although the social and demographic categories that young women inhabit may be relatively static, their identity is dynamic in the sense that it is based on social interactions and lived experiences, that they actively negotiate through discourse and 'identity work'. Identity, which will be discussed in the literature review is a complex concept in psychology, therefore the argument will be put forward for a qualitative, subjective, and

discursive, understanding of identity. By examining identity as dynamic, this lends itself to understanding how these young women construct a sense of self and how (and if) they engage in considering their future selves and the aspirations associated with future selves. Taking this approach means that social psychological theories of identity will shape my analysis of participants' identities.

1. 1. Chapter 2 – Literature Review

The literature review will focus on the role of identity from a social psychological perspective. Identity is a complex concept within psychology and there are potentially a number of approaches which could be adopted (Stets & Burke, 2000). This thesis will incorporate the specific demographics of participants: young women, living in a town associated with high levels of multiple deprivation. By incorporating Moscovici's (1993) arguments, that there is a need to integrate principles of sociology with psychology, this thesis will attempt to 'make sense' of the sociological research from a psychological perspective. Therefore, the theoretical stance regarding identity, will be predominantly a social psychology one. Identity cannot however be understood, solely in terms of category membership. It is important to examine the complexity of category membership, in terms of their lived experiences of inhabiting those categories and how they are negotiated, alongside the social representations of these categories. Due to the issues in Blackpool stated above, it has featured heavily in the media, and due to the nature of social representations (Fairclough, 1992; 2001; 2003; Moscovici, 2000; 2001) it is fair to assume that social representations of Blackpool will contribute to young women's sense of identity. Moscovici (2000) gives a clear framework of social representation theory which will be discussed, alongside the scope and limitations of this in relation to these particular young women; Breakwell's (2012; 2014) understanding of the role of social representations will also be explored.

The argument is that young women in Blackpool occupy specific social groups, which lend themselves to examining identity in relation to social group membership, allowing for a social identity approach. However, it is argued in this chapter that Social Identity Theory (SIT; Tajfel, et al., 1979), although beneficial, has some limitations. Although SIT considers potential threats emerging from being a member of a low-status group (e.g., Brown, 1978), this is limited and based on the assumption that group

members can reconfigure salient features of the group in an attempt to raise esteem of group members (Ellemers et al., 1993).

As the focus of the thesis relates to young women, the temporal nature of their identity (the transition from girlhood to womanhood, leaving compulsory education) will be taken into account, considering the potentially dynamic nature of their identities. To explain the complex and dynamic nature of identity, Breakwell's Identity Process Theory (IPT; 1983, 1986, 2014) will be discussed, as a comprehensive theory that incorporates biological and cognitive processes, as well as the social. Breakwell's framework enables identity to be understood in terms of dimensions and as a continuous process. Given that the participants are negotiating their lived experiences and social representations of Blackpool, this will be argued as the most useful theory for this thesis.

One key feature of IPT is the attention to identity threats that can emerge situationally (Breakwell, 1986). As the young women in this study are managing lived experiences and social representations of Blackpool life, the research needs to be open to the potential for young women experiencing identity threats and any effort they make to manage these. As the research is qualitative in nature, using interviews, a social discursive approach to identity will be discussed (Coyle, 2007; Coyle & Murtagh, 2014).

1.2. Chapter 3 - Media analysis

Social representations form a theoretical perspective that interconnect the social and the psychological (Moscovici, 2001; 2005), and how they may affect the identity of young women in Blackpool is discussed. It can be assumed that due to the levels of multiple deprivation in Blackpool (JSNA, 2020a; 2020b; 2020c), that the media representations will reflect this. However, the true nature of social representations in the media, and how they are constructed, and possible consequences need to be identified. This chapter will establish the social representations of Blackpool that exist and to which the participants might be exposed, based on Moscovici's (1988) theory of social representations, and Breakwell's (2014) interpretation of the impact of social representations on identity. For this chapter the methodological approach will be

distinct from the analysis of the interviews of the young women. As social representations will be examined on their appearance in local and national (red top and broadsheet) newspapers as media sources, Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA; Fairclough, 2003; 2010) will be used which is socio-political in its nature, to explain the function of social representations in terms of power relations. As the thesis is concerned with young women living in a deprived area, the use of CDA is pertinent, as it is based on the idea that social representations are a way to maintain inequality. Therefore, by using CDA, it allows me to establish the nature of social representations through media outlets, and consider the consequences of these on their identity, and how these are another potential identity threat.

Coding and correlational analysis will be used to examine the newspapers that were published in the 5 ½ year period prior to data collection to ensure that the social representation would be relevant to the young women taking part in this study. From the correlational analysis, specific themes will be identified, and within these subgroups newspaper articles will be analysed using Fairclough's (2003; 2010) CDA. The chapter will argue the relevance for using this analysis in this context. This chapter will also identify key themes in the media and how these are constructed to form specific social representations of Blackpool. What will also be considered are the type of social representations and the purpose they serve, along with the consequences of these social representations in how they are interpreted by those who do not live in Blackpool, and the identity threats that may arise for those living in Blackpool.

1.3. Chapter 4 - Methodology

This chapter will focus on the methods and methodology employed for the research relating to the young women in Blackpool. The proposed method of data collection will be discussed, as well as the use of posters as prompts for the interviews. The proposed sample for this research will include potentially relatively disengaged young women, therefore the methodology will consider a number of key issues, and how the method and methodology aim to address these. Firstly, the recruitment strategy is discussed. This was a problematic process due to the political changes in relation to school recruitment at the time of data will be discussed. Participant

recruitment is also discussed, which ensured that full informed consent was gained from appropriate adults (schools and caregivers), and participants, who gave informed consent at each of the stages of the research process, which is explained in detail in this section. There were 18 participants in total, nine from each of the two schools that agreed to take part in the research. The procedure of generating images and poster creation will be described, as well as the interview process. For each participant there was one interview, which was audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim for analysis purposes.

For transparency, ethics are also discussed here, as well as ethical issues relating the method, which emerged during the research process. Each of the issues were discussed and how agreement was achieved with participants, and in accordance with Lancaster University and BPS guidelines. Issue around data analysis are also discussed here, as well as how these shaped the methodological decisions made. Prior to data collection, a discursive approach was seen as most relevant given the nature of the research.

In the analytic strategy, the theoretical underpinnings of the discursive approach are discussed, and it is argued that FDA (Willig, 2013) is the most appropriate, due to how language is treated in FDA (Burr, 2015; Coyle, 2007; Willig, 2013), the focus on power relations, as well as its suitability when examining identity (Burr, 2015; Coyle, 2007). FDA also allows for a material reality to be assumed, as well as discourses being internalised. Terminologies that will be used throughout the analysis are defined here. The stages of the analytic process are also included.

1.4. Chapter 5 – Drugs, alcohol & poverty: Interpreting and managing threats

As social representations and their potential impact on identities of young women were established in Chapter 3, this chapter focuses on how young women negotiate their identity in relation to the social representations of Blackpool, and the material reality of living in Blackpool. This analysis chapter examines the impact of their lived experiences and subjectivities relating to drug, alcohol, and poverty/benefit claimants. This is interesting as these were the themes that directly aligned to social representations identified in the media analysis. However, on the whole, the young

women did not explicitly engage in talk relating to social representations. One participant did, and others alluded to them; instead, the talk centred on their subjective understanding of these issues in Blackpool, through discourses reflected the social representations that emerged in Chapter 3. This could mean one of two things: there is a material reality to the social representations, or that the social representations are so deeply ingrained and become 'common sense' that the lived experiences of the young women are shaped by their social knowledge of these issues in Blackpool.

From the discourse, identity threats based on the social representations and lived experiences of drugs, alcohol and poverty emerged. One strategy which was adopted was distancing; some participants were able to physically distance through establishing where they lived, which was separate from 'problem' areas of Blackpool. Others developed other strategies, by redefining those engaging in activities relating to drugs and alcohol, allowing them to morally and psychologically distance themselves from members of the unfavourable group. Agency emerged with the young women expressing a lack of agency in relation to living in Blackpool and the issues in Blackpool. Discourses of agency of the subgroups (those partaking in drug usage and excessive alcohol consumption, and those in poverty) emerged. Those who partake in drugs and anti-social drinking were constructed as being responsible for the impact that they have on Blackpool, in terms of social representations and environment, with discourses of disgust being used. Whereas young women used discourses of fear and being 'trapped' in Blackpool; they wanted to escape these problems, but due to family relations were unable to do so.

In relation to poverty and benefit claimants, agency was more ambivalent. Some participants acknowledged what they constructed as 'genuine' hardship and showed sympathy, but many, even if unconsciously drew upon social representations of benefit claimants, especially in relation to life choices and the impact on the vulnerable (namely children). Participants accepted the subject position of responsibility and meritocracy, and by doing so were able to distance themselves through discourses. They did not deny the issues within Blackpool (although some challenged the extent of the problems), they constructed issues as not being applicable to them.

1.5. Chapter 6 - Group membership and identity within Blackpool

Previous chapters focused on the social representations and material reality of living in Blackpool and the identity threats that emerge from this. This chapter will explore how young women negotiate their identities in relation to groups within Blackpool which may be defined by the specific ward they live in. As mentioned earlier, Blackpool has wards of poverty, so not everyone living in Blackpool is socially and economically deprived. This means that in Blackpool, there are varying socio-economic statuses, family structures, and living situations (rental/ownership/multiple occupancy and so on). These factors, based on the area in which a young woman lives, shape personal and social identities. In this chapter, the analysis focused on how young women negotiate group membership within Blackpool. Three main themes emerged: managing high status group identity, managing low status group identity and maintaining group membership.

Those in high status groups managed their relative difference through drawing upon discourses of meritocracy and deservedness; some used their families as a frame of reference to justify their relative affluence, and how 'typical' they are of young women in Blackpool. Whereas those in lower status groups, attempted to make comparisons with those who of lower status groups, but also drew upon discourses of authenticity to raise self-esteem, in relation to those from higher socio-economic groups.

In terms of maintaining group membership, some expressed a need to partake in anti-social activities to maintain their place in the group. Some rejected this using denigrating discourses to elevate their esteem in relation to groups associated with anti-social behaviour; they depicted the groups as undesirable, so their exclusion had limited consequences. In fact, those who rejected the group, used discourses of escaping and future aspirations to justify what they constructed as choice. However, some group members focused on the 'typicality' of the social groups, even in relation to anti-social behaviour. Overall, the analysis explored the need for esteem based on group membership and the strategies used by the young women to gain a sense of self-esteem within their group, or from group exclusion.

1.6. Chapter 7 - Belongingness, distinctiveness and resources constructed for self-enhancement

The initial aim of this thesis was to explore how young women manage the material reality and social representations of living in Blackpool. The theoretical stances taken are of Social Representation Theory (Moscovici, 2000, 2001, 2005) and Identity Process Theory (Breakwell, 1983, 1986, 2014), therefore the assumption was that their material realities and associated social representations shape their identities. In turn, how they constructed a sense of identity will influence future aspirations in young women in Blackpool. Therefore, this final analysis chapter analysed the resources available to young women and the extent in which they can be adaptive or maladaptive in relation to their current identity and any considerations of future aspirations they might have. The two identity components explored were belongingness and distinctiveness. This chapter explored the importance of belonging, and the discourses centred on familial links or quasi-familial links. Family or family type connections gave participants a sense of esteem, and distinctiveness, and, for some, resources and support for future aspirations; however, for some, parents were a source of tension in terms of their parents' desires/perceptions of them and their 'true selves'.

Those who relied solely on distinctiveness without belongingness drew upon characteristics that explained undesirable behaviour and discussed tensions of external forces and how the young women negotiated these in terms of their identities. They relied heavily on medicalised discourses, and explained their maladaptive behaviour as based on characteristics over which they have no sense of agency. This chapter showed the importance of a sense of belongingness for young women in Blackpool. Distinctiveness was identified as an important factor. However, belongingness tended to be of more importance and more adaptive. However, both belongingness and distinctiveness were potentially maladaptive and constraining for some of the young women, in terms of their current identity, and in some cases, their future selves.

1.7. Chapter 8 – Discussion

This chapter firstly established the importance of place in relation to identity, in that social representations of Blackpool were interpreted discursively by the young women to make sense of their lived experiences of Blackpool. These in turn, served as comparisons, which the young women used to distance themselves from the social representations of Blackpool, using different categories dependent on the categories they belonged to. In terms of pressures they faced, the young women needed to negotiate a number of external forces, to construct an identity that would give them esteem. They used social group membership as a means to establish a positive identity in terms of content and value dimensions. Distancing, belonging, and authenticity were characteristics they used to maintain esteem in relation to group membership.

The research had contributions in terms of Identity Process Theory (Breakwell, 1983, 1986; Jaspal & Breakwell, 2012). Social representations were used discursively to make implicit social comparisons to maintain a positive identity. They did not challenge the negative social representations, which meant that they needed to use strategies to manage the undeniable. Belongingness and distinctiveness were two concepts that emerged. The young women used familial bonds, either actual or pseudo-familial links, to establish belongingness, and used these atypical familial links to discursively distinguish themselves from the 'typical' social representations of Blackpool. Also, the concept of threat was contested in terms of its usefulness and relevance here, instead arguing that functionality should be the key focus.

The thesis also contributed to the arguments that identity can be understood discursively, as the young women drew upon social representations which form the social knowledge by which they understand their lived experiences. As social representations are transmitted and reproduced discursively, allowing individuals to make sense of the abstract. Their discourses of identity were based on the resources culturally available to them, providing explicit and implicit comparison for a discursive interpretation of identity.

There were limitations in terms of sampling, which was limited in size, but also in terms of only including young women from Blackpool. Comparative research was suggested, and reflexivity was a crucial part of the research process, as issues of the role

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and preconceptions of the researcher, ethics and analysis emerged. However, overall, the research established the importance of social representations for the negotiation of identity for young women living in a town associated with multiple deprivations.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1. The Research Problem

Sociological research has examined the relationship between educational attainment, poverty, class, and gender (Haralambos & Holborn, 2013). Contemporary sociological research recognises a relationship between structural characteristics, such as gender, class, and geography and identity (Colombo & Rebughini, 2019). However, individual identity has not been the primary focus of research, the focus has been on the impact of these structural characteristics on the wider group and society, rather than the individual; the very nature of sociology is to examine social phenomena (Moscovici, 1993). Research by Skeggs (1997) and Archer et al., (2007) provide some explanation of the impact of these aforementioned factors from the 'social' perspective, in that it focuses on the structural characteristics of categories as a whole, rather than the individual. Archer et al. (2007) illustrated the impact of gender, class, and geography using qualitative research: young women's educational engagement was shaped by their characteristics and how they perceived their gender, class, and ethnicity influencing their relationships within the classroom, and how potentially this would affect achievement and aspiration. This is informative on how characteristics can shape individuals' engagement in school. The aim of this thesis, is to take into account the research of sociologists such as Archer and Skeggs, and adopt the arguments of Moscovici (1993) to bridge the gap between these sociological findings. These will be used to understand the complexity of the demographics of Blackpool and how these can be explained as social categories, which impact on the psychology, the social and personal identities, of young women. Blackpool may have some of the most deprived wards in the UK, but it also has wards of affluence. Therefore, examining the complexities of identity and intersectionality, in terms of gender and socio-economic status, from a psychological perspective offers a different perspective.

This thesis offers a way to understand the identity of young women in Blackpool, which threatens identity as, "always set within a social, cultural and economic context, which sets limits on the kinds of identities that are available to particular selves" (Allen & Mendick, 2013, p. 80). The aim is to understand identity,

by engaging with identities stemming from lived experiences and the predicated 'categories' that have the potential to shape young women's subjective identities. By doing so, the consequence of these identities, whether based on the material realities of living in Blackpool, and/or the social representations which affect individual identity. This can give insight into the challenges faced by young women who may be described as marginal due to their gender, geography, and in some cases, economic deprivation. This allows the research to identify the subjective challenges young women face in terms of their identities.

This review will examine influences on the individual which may shape their identity, such as social class, geography, and gender, how they interact, and shape the individual. Also, identity on a social and personal level will also impact on self-efficacy and self-esteem (Breakwell, 1983, 1986, 2014), which will govern educational success (Jackson et al., 2010), which will determine the likelihood of engaging in education as a source of self-improvement (Evans, 2009; Lucey, et al., 2003). To understand the link between the categories that the young women may belong to and their identity, Moscovici's (1988) Social Representation Theory will be used to provide a basis for examining how these categories are widely understood, in terms of 'social knowledge' of these categories, in other words, their associated social representations.

2.2. Social Representation Theory

Moscovici (1993) is pertinent here, not just in relation to Social Representation Theory (SRT), but in terms of what he was attempting to achieve more generally, which was bridging the gap between sociology and psychology. He described the social domain as objective and rational, due to predictable patterns, and the psychological as subjective and irrational, due to the influence of emotions and motivations (Moscovici, 1993). He also argued that psychology is flawed due to focusing on theory and the lack of engagement in social phenomena. This is arguably the case when considering classic theories, including the case of identity, which will be discussed later in this chapter. Identity is often understood using experimental methods, using arbitrary groups artificially created for research purposes, instead of exploring social groups that are formed based on the structural characteristics identified in sociology (Haralambos &

Holborn, 2013). This means that there is a lack of understanding of the complexity of the historical and cultural context of group membership, as well as the lived experiences of material realities and social representations of group membership.

Social Representation Theory (SRT; Moscovici, 1988) is a theory of the social construction of meaning, in other words, how society understands and explains specific categories, and in turn the meaning this gives to individuals in relation to these categories. Moscovici (2012) described this theory as the foundation of social psychology, and that even though it involves memory, perception, information processing, and dissonance, it is concerned with knowledge in the social context. SRT is arguably a meta-theory that encompasses social psychology and can serve as the basis for understanding theoretical constructs such as identity in a meaningful way. Hogg and Vaughan (2018, p. 4) described social psychology as 'social' because "it deals with how people are affected by other people who are physically present or who are imagined to be present, or even if their presence is implied," therefore the idea of a shared, social knowledge is at the core of social psychology.

Knowledge is at the heart of SRT. Moscovici (2012) identified two types of knowledge: direct social knowledge from social interactions, and the knowledge we share. Shared knowledge relies on trust, which is dependent on the source of knowledge, whether it be from personally known individuals, individuals who are esteemed or sources, such as media that are an accepted source of knowledge. In other words, social knowledge is socially constructed and individuals are active agents in the production and reproduction of social knowledge. Moscovivi is clear that social knowledge is not factual, it is the 'vernacular' ideas of the world. It enables us to transform the symbolic into something familiar (anchoring) and give concrete meaning to it (Moscovici, 1988; 2000).

This idea of 'common knowledge', and the process of anchoring and objectification are important for our understanding of social groups. For example, poverty can be measured objectively based on income and other socioeconomic factors (Haralambos & Holborn, 2013). However, how we understand poverty is based on social representations which "choose[s] and combine[s] our shared concepts, links together accepted assertions, decides which aspects from our categories are examples for classifying people and things" (Moscovici, 2012, p. 18). This can be taken even

further, Farr and Moscovici (1984) argue that social representations offer explanations of shared ascriptions, so for these circumstances, a social representation of poverty may be that the individual is responsible, and their poverty is caused by their own fecklessness.

According to SRT, society produces models and narratives of social categories (Moscovici, 1988). These are ubiquitous, so they are available to members of a culture, and can influence the identities of members of specific social categories. Individuals engage with these social representations which give meaning and structure to experience. For example, in the case of Blackpool, young people may have lived experiences of drug users, through social interaction or direct observations. However, how they understand these interactions and observations will be shaped by the social representations of drug users that are available to them.

Shared meaning is also dependent on social artefacts, norms, rituals and other cultural practices (Fairclough, 2003; Moscovici, 1988, 2000, 2012). They "combine a semantic knowledge and a belief that is rooted in the culture together in the practices that people live by" (Moscovici, 2012, p. 24). For example, 'chav' was originally a term used to describe adolescents from working-poor backgrounds; 'chavs' were seen as identifiable based on the clothing and anti-social behaviours (Hayward & Yar, 2006). The term 'chav' became synonymous with bad taste, and was an insult not constrained to class, conjuring images of youths with particular attire, behaviours, and musical tastes.

Moscovici (1988) argued that there are different sources of social representations: emancipatory, polemic, and hegemonic. The latter are shared by all members of a structured group, but not produced by the group. Such representations stem from social structures, including institutions of education, religion and government, political discourse, and media, and social media. This means that beliefs may be widely held by a society, but the production and reproduction of social representations are dependent on them making sense to the existing culture. An example may be the hegemonic social representation 'undeserving poor', where benefit claimants are depicted in the media as 'benefit scroungers' and feckless, therefore they have agency over their deprived position but choose to claim benefits and spend their benefits 'unwisely' (Wiggan, 2012). However, alternative social representations may

be available such as emancipatory social representations which are produced by group members of those categorised as poor, which focus on their hardship. Other alternative social representations, including polemic social representations, based on conflict, would challenge the system in which poverty exists.

Social representations not only inform us about others but are also the basis for a sense of self, our identity, based on shared representations that enable us to express identity beyond the physical (Moscovici, 2012). Brewer (2012) argued that social identities are based on emancipatory representations (representations that are generated from the subgroups), as they are based on shared knowledge which meet the esteem needs of the group. The social and psychological of social representations form commonalities that provide a collective consciousness and understanding. According to Breakwell (2012) social representations are generated through interaction, and shared social phenomena, and serve a social function for the group. Breakwell (2012) further argues that personal representations (the 'I') are manifestations of social representations at an individual level, so are integral to the 'total identity'. In other words, the social representations of the social group which an individual belongs to are internalised, therefore, the availability of emancipatory social representations is necessary for esteem needs of the group, as well as the individual.

Hegemonic representations are those that are formed in agreement of the wider society, they tend to be 'uniform and coercive' (Breakwell, 2012). These are the expectations that are governed by society as a whole. According to Fairclough (1995; 2003; 2010) these hegemonic representations serve a particular social and political purpose: to maintain the power structures of society by reproducing social representations that establish inequalities and power structures as justified. This means that for groups who are relatively powerless, social representations are socially constructed in a way to justify their hardship, and place responsibility on group members for their lack of power, to ensure that inequalities are accepted. The following subsections will consider social categories that might apply to young women of Blackpool, the material reality of these categories, and the social representations of these categories, and the potential impact these have on group members.

2.2.1. Socio-economic factors

It has been argued that social class is a cultural construct (Bourdieu, 2013); thus there is a need for psychology to understand how income, education, and occupation lead to psychological and educational outcomes (Salkind, 2008). Arguably, class and classism relate to social position and inequality, and, in turn, impact on group identity in terms of perceived status and how these are managed. Class can be conceptualised in two ways which are inter-related. Social class is rooted in individual economic and material conditions and is based on relative disadvantage or privilege (Biressi & Nunn, 2013). Historically, working-class culture was positive, influencing literature of the 1950s and popular culture of the 1960s (Evans & Tilley, 2015). There were elements of class-based solidarity and political activism, due to the closing down of mines and steel works, but ultimately the industries were closed and the working class were seen in a negative light through media depictions of the miners' strikes (Hanley, 2008).

The neoliberal narrative can be seen as becoming part of daily discourse, emphasising that success and failure are based on meritocracy, rather than external forces. When referring to neoliberalism in its widest sense, is a political ideology, based on class, power, and exploitation (Venugopal, 2015). It is identifiable as relating to free-market and competition, deregulation and privatization (Venugopal, 2015). The government approach is laissez faire, with the emphasis on individual responsibility, rather than the welfare state (Venugopal, 2015). The neoliberal narrative as described here, correlates with Fairclough's (2003, 2010) 'new Capitalism', that social representations are produced to maintain the status quo. This has led to the reproduction of social representations of an 'underclass', members of which have become the object of acceptable prejudice (Biressi, 2013; Jones, 2012). Due to these social representations of benefit claimants and the working poor, those who are equally disadvantaged have been critical of them, with 40% of the working class, compared with 20% of professionals, believing that those on benefits should not be helped (Evans & Tilley, 2015). This lateral discrimination, arguably, is in part due to media and political discourse and the social representations of the 'undeserving' underclass (Evans & Tilley, 2015), leading to a categorisation of the poor and workless as the 'underclass' and 'chavs'. Therefore, these hegemonic social representations have led to a form of intra-group conflict.

Hayward and Yar (2006) argue that the chav label is a reconfiguration of the underclass, which is culturally at odds with the rest of society. 'Chavs' being perceived as vulgar, as exemplifying "excessive participation in forms of market-orientated consumption which are deemed aesthetically impoverished" (p. 14). Based on these value judgements, they are pathologised, marginalised, and stigmatized, due to 'compulsive' practices of binge drinking and other risk-taking behaviours. 'Little Britain's' Vicky Pollard is an example of this, with Snell (2006) arguing that 'Vicky Pollard' is identifiable as a 'chav' by her appearance, risk-taking behaviour, and lack of educational engagement and taste. Her depiction is one of ridicule and mockery.

Such social representations can impact on group members. Research indicates that children and adolescents are aware of, and affected by, factors influencing class, and discriminate according to their perceived social position (Salkind, 2008), suggesting that certain individuals are not only disadvantaged on a material level by their position within society, but are also likely to be subjected to value judgements by others. Fairclough (2003) argues that social representations offer an opportunity for the observer to compare their own sense of morality to such social groups as a means of creating division. This type of representation of the poor youth, alongside the material reality they experience, are forms of identity threats that might affect the value component of identity, delegitimising the group, in light of social representations to which they may be exposed.

Liu et al. (2004) highlighted the need to understand social class from an intra-personal perspective, in terms of the stress and mental health issues that stem from both an objective class status, and the subjective experiences of class. As Blackpool has been identified as a town of high multiple deprivation, it is likely that young women living in Blackpool will experience identity threats accordingly. The individual's need for affiliation and consistency of identity may lead to tension between the need to belong to the group, and resisting the negative social representations of the group. The need for consistency may prevent young women from aspiring educationally, as this could mean distancing from friendship groups; this could be further deepened by the anticipation of prejudice based on social representations. In other words, identities and expected future selves are potentially threatened by the social representations of Blackpool and their material realities.

2.2.2. Seaside towns

Undoubtedly, many seaside towns in the UK are facing issues of multiple deprivation. According to the Centre for Social Justice (2013), seaside towns tend to be transient internally and externally, which is identified as one of the major factors contributing to multiple levels of deprivation. Agarwal and Brunt (2005) examined seaside towns' economic state, concluding that their continued decline was due to the complexity of multi-deprivation in some seaside towns, and local authorities' continued attempts to rejuvenate tourism, rather than taking a holistic approach to counteract levels of deprivation.

As the decline of seaside towns in the UK is a relatively new social phenomena, there is a lack of research examining the subsequent social representations and their consequences. However, there are social representations of groups that align with the demographics of Blackpool which offer insight into the social representations that could be potentially applied to seaside towns, including Blackpool. Notably, Moscovici (1988, 1993, 2000) theorised that social representations tend to be based on the familiar, and when not, this is problematic in the acceptance of social representations. As the decline of Blackpool is relatively new, existing social representations associated to the problems of Blackpool are likely to be used to make sense of the decline. For example, social representations of poverty (see previous section) are well established, therefore can be applied to Blackpool. This serves a wider purpose, as it is argued that social representations also need to serve the purpose of maintaining power differentials (Fairclough, 2003). Therefore, to gain a sense of the social representations available to make sense of the decline of Blackpool, the characteristics of those living in Blackpool become a reference point for this.

A commonality of seaside towns is the lack of ethnic diversity, being made up predominantly of a White working class (or working poor) population (Agarwal, 2002; Burdsley, 2011; CSJ, 2013). Research suggests that white working-class members tend to be racialized, in that they express a strong preference for White members of society (Weis & Hall, 2001). This is also reflected in seaside towns, which tend to be racialized spaces with racialized ideas of Englishness (Burdsley, 2011). Social representations of White working class tend to be poorly educated, Nationalistic and

anti-immigration; these social representations have intensified since Brexit (Adjogatse & Miedema, 2021). There are some commonly held social representations of alcohol, drugs, benefit claimants, and homelessness that can therefore be applied to Blackpool, to make sense of its decline. Negura and Plante (2021) examined how drug usage was socially constructed, leading to social representations of drug usage as a social problem. Trocki et al. (2013), using qualitative interviews examined how drug and alcohol use were socially represented in a way that led to interviewees identifying the point where it becomes a transgression, and wider problems. By drawing upon these established and accepted hegemonic social representations, it is possible to identify potential social representations of the decline of Blackpool.

According to Petrie, et al., (2006) young people in Blackpool were aware of the negative social representations of Blackpool, specifically in terms of alcohol, drugs, and sexual behaviour. Participants expressed concerns regarding their lack of resources that affected the consumption power, as well as feeling threatened for their personal safety, which may have a basis in the material realities of living in Blackpool, but how this is interpreted is likely to be shaped by the social representations available to them. It was apparent also from the research that the culture young women in Blackpool are exposed to, influences their behaviour, increasing risk-taking behaviour (Stanley, 2005). This creates a potential 'double-bind'. Stanley (2005) found that young people used their risk-taking behaviour as a means of escapism from the material reality of living in Blackpool, but in doing so reinforce negative social representations of young people living in Blackpool. Stanley (2005) found that the high prevalence of risking taking behaviour among adolescents in a North West seaside town was caused by a number of factors, including the transient nature of the town, easy access to alcohol and illicit drugs and a sense of hedonism coupled with a diminished sense of reality or consequence, due to the lack of a sense of community in comparison to the rural area.

Haslam, et al., (2009) argued that "community" provides an individual with a sense of belonging, ensuring a sense of wellbeing. This would go some way to explaining the risk-taking behaviour in young people, as Stanley (2005) highlighted that young people's risk-taking behaviour was left unmonitored owing to a lack of community. Furthermore Haslam, et al., (2009) argued that if individuals perceive themselves to be part of an impermeable low-status group, they are likely to define themselves in terms of their social identity and act in line with this status. Therefore, it

could be theorised that young people in Blackpool engage in such behaviours due to a lack of community and accountability (Stanley, 2005). It is also possible that risk-taking behaviour gives them a sense of belonging, as well as providing them with feelings of support and affiliation from their peers to negate negative stereotypes (Haslam, et al., 2009).

2.2.3. Womanhood

Both Moscovici (2012) and Fairclough (2003) are clear that women hold a relatively powerless position in society and are subjected to social representations that further reinforce this powerlessness. Smith (28/7/2016) argued that more than 20 years after writing 'Misogynies', societally we are at a point where issues that had previously been dismissed as only relevant historically are gaining momentum. Some of the contemporary crises include women receiving rape threats through Twitter, legalised rape in Syria, and political sexism, apparent with the recent media reports of female political leaders, and the murder of one female politician and death threats to others (Smith, 2016). This reflects that vulnerability and precariousness extends beyond class and employment, with assertions that gender is a contributing factor of the precariat (Standing, 2011). Standing (2011) defined precariats as specific groups whose social position, especially in relation to income, as uncertain and insecure. If this is taken in the wider sense of a lack of certainty societally, the recent misogynies Smith (2016) discussed, that symbolic violence and sexual violence towards women has become accepted, or at the very least unchallenged, can lead to precariousness. This acceptance can be seen in media representations of sexual sadism towards women as identified by Mantziari (2018). By accepting these types of imagery, especially as entertainment, they leave women particularly vulnerable due to societal perceptions of women as sexual beings, and place constraints on women, in terms of how they should behave, which are generated through social representations of womanhood. It is worth noting that since data collection, the #metoo movement gained momentum and has offered emancipatory social representations of sexual violence towards women (Nicholls, 2020).

One source of vulnerability for women is the threat of physical and/or sexual violence. Each year more than 85000 women are raped and 400,000 sexually assaulted in the UK (Bates, 14/2/2014). In Blackpool, over a 10-month period there were 66 reported cases of rape (Blackpool Council, 2016). Furthermore, attitudes towards sexual violence and women have transformed over recent years, particularly in respect of rape with the identification and development of what is commonly referred to as 'rape culture' (Nicholls, 2020). Ferreday (2015, p. 22) explains the impact of this on women's identity: "The very term 'rape culture' indicates the need to understand rape as culture; as a complex social phenomenon that is not limited to discrete criminal acts perpetrated by a few violent individuals but is the product of gendered, raced and classed social relations that are central to patriarchal and heterosexist culture." In other words, social representations of accepted sexual aggression are part of gendered relations.

The influence of 'rape culture' is apparent in the case of Brock Turner who received a six-month sentence for raping an unconscious woman (Hunt, 6/6/2016). Although he was found guilty of rape, the argument which was put forward (and accepted), was that because the young woman was unconscious, the impact of the rape would be limited, but a long prison sentence for Brock Turner would have a devastating impact on what was depicted as a bright future. The rape was constructed as a temporary act of stupidity of an otherwise pleasant young man with a promising future (Hunt, 6/6/2016). Such reports and arguments in the media serve to devalue women and their body autonomy, in effect having a delegitimising effect on the group as a whole, and individual members. Further to this, there is a tendency to attribute responsibility of sexual violence to the victim (Grubb & Turner, 2012; Nicholls, 2020). Grubb and Turner (2012) in their literature review examined the different ways in which women are held responsible for their victimization, such as the way they dress, their consumption of alcohol or drugs, or their perceived deviation from traditional social representations of femininity. They found that social representations of rape lead to victim blaming, and that there is a strong emphasis on gender role conformity for the victims, which influences the outcome. This suggests that hegemonic social representations of womanhood enforce the need for women to conform to traditional gender roles.

Further social representations of womanhood that young women may experience relate to feminine body ideals. Forbes et al., (2007) argue that body ideals of women are always unattainable; regardless, women spend time and money trying to reach these ideals. Young et al. (2012) explored the consequence of social representations of the 'skinny' ideal. This creates a situation where women are constantly dissatisfied with their appearance; Rodin et al. (1984) refer to this as "normative discontent." These social representations of feminine ideals (which tend to vary across time) are seen as means to oppress women by shifting their focus away from their abilities towards unobtainable superficial ideals, leading to lower self-confidence, and reducing them to sex objects (Jeffreys, 2005).

Arguably, sexism is the product of social representations of women as lower status, which makes it acceptable to behave in specific ways towards women that would not be acceptable towards men. Sexism takes different forms, but can be categories as two predominant types, either benevolent or hostile sexism (Glick & Fiske, 1996). According to Glick and Fiske (1997, p. 121), "Hostile sexism seeks to justify male power, traditional gender roles, and men's exploitation of women as sexual objects through derogatory characterizations of women. Benevolent sexism…relies on gentler justifications of male dominance and prescribed gender roles…feelings of protectiveness and affection toward women." Both types of sexism serve to commodify women as sexual objects, and to accord them a particular status, for example, women's sexual favours are worth more than men's (Symons, 1979). This places further emphasis on women to invest in their sexuality as a commodity that can be used for economic gain, such as 'marrying well' (Cott, 1978). This leads to the belief that women are a commodity and demeans them by reducing their value (Rudman & Fetterolf, 2014). The subjectivity that such representations provide, lead to young women focusing on their physical appearance as a means to socially construct an acceptable feminine identity. Therefore, young women need to negotiate the social representations and lived experiences of being commodified and sexualised, yet also as vulnerable, but nonetheless potentially culpable, victims if sexually assaulted. Managing these threats are likely to impact on the self-esteem and efficacy principles of identity, as well as the value component of identity. This indicates that young women in Blackpool need to negotiate their subjective understanding of their emerging womanhood. However, the threats identified here could apply to all women, so there is

a need to examine how their status as women living in a deprived seaside town leads to potential threats that emerge from their material reality and social representations of women that pertain to their economic status.

2.2.3.1. Womanhood and socio-economic factors

Sociological research has focused on the interaction between gender and class; although discussions of class and socio-economics are complex, they offer insight into the potential social representations that can emerge in relation to the interaction between womanhood and class (Allen et al., 2015; England, 2016; Lott & Bullock, 2010; Skeggs, 1997, 2010a, 2011; Skeggs & Wood, 2011). Skeggs (1997) argued that, historically, working-class women have been pathologised, due to the middle class 'archetype' of femininity. In the 19th Century, working-class (and lower -class) women were depicted as overtly sexual, over fecund, and tasteless. Patterns of pathologising women throughout the 20th Century have been documented with research suggesting that working-class women were constantly in a state of concern over how to behave and dress to be seen in a 'respectable' manner (Skeggs, 1997). The stereotypical view of lower class women is still prevalent, "the use of 'Welfare Mothers' and 'Crack Babies' in the US….in the UK edition of Marie Claire entitled 'Council Estate Slags' suggest a connection between low SES and sexual promiscuity, and deviance" (Skeggs, 1997, p. 3). Skeggs (1997) argued that through their lack of 'capital', and the constant devaluing of them as a group, means that they are unable to gain the capital to transition into the realms of 'respectability', though they may attempt to do so through housekeeping and child-rearing, with minimal resources. Rather than having the desired outcome, this leads to distancing and mockery of working-class women (Skeggs & Wood, 2011; Raisborough et al., 2012)

It could be argued that such pathologising is outdated and has no place in the 21st Century. However, the emergence of the 'ladette' in the late 1990s and early 21st Century could be seen as exemplifying how social representations are used to constrain women; despite their ability to have successful careers, due to their drinking and partying in a way, they were constructed as 'unfeminine' (Archer et al., 2007). Jackson and Tinkler (2007) examined media representations of 'ladettes' and the discourses

surrounding them, reporting that they were represented in the media as "hedonistic, driven largely by interests in partying and fun" (p. 253). They were "presented as occupying space outside the traditional feminine domestic sphere, and crucially, as taking space once regarded the principal or sole preserve of men" (p. 254). These social representations depicted young women as unhealthy, exhibiting anti-social behaviour, and transgressing the normative feminine norms and role. Initially the depictions were of working class women, but many of the archetypal 'ladettes' were middle class, working in the media with a university education (Archer, et al., 2007). However, the behaviours of drinking and partying are typically ascribed to working-class women.

The early 21st Century saw the emergence of reality television and the rise of 'celebrity' culture. The emergence of reality television re-established the need for respectability for 'working-class' women through television programmes such as 'What Not to Wear' and 'Ladette to Lady'. The focus was on self-improvement for women who did not meet the middle-class standard of 'respectable' femininity (Skeggs, 1999; Skeggs, 2010; Skeggs & Wood, 2011). To firmly establish the class element, the aforementioned shows were presented by upper middle-class women, experts in etiquette. The shows depicted the transformative power of self-improvement, not only as a means of helping non-middle-class women to dress 'right' and behave 'properly', but as a form of internal enlightenment, creating an outlook of positivity and increased self-worth (Skeggs, 1999; Skeggs, 2010; Skeggs & Wood, 2011). These reality shows reproduced social representations of feminine ideals that working class women should aspire to for a sense of fulfilment, further reinforcing the idea that working class women are in some way 'incomplete'.

The social representations that young women need to negotiate are multifaceted; they need to negotiate their sexuality, appearance and the normative behaviours of womanhood according to class and social position. Jackson (2010) highlighted this in relation to education, where young women faced the challenge of meeting expectations based on social representations. She found that young women tend to try to balance the academic and the social. As young women in Blackpool, there is a need for them to manage the social representations of working class women, as well as aspiring to middle-class feminine ideals. Simultaneously, they need to negotiate the material reality of academic success, future aspirations, while maintaining peer group

membership. This has implications in terms of their sense of self, their identities. The basis of this this is that social structures, and the consequence of marginalisation for certain groups, will shape identity and how individuals imagine their future selves. In other words, how these young women negotiate the material world and social representations of Blackpool in relation to their identity.

2.3. Identity

So far, this chapter has explored the social representations of categories that may be applied to the young women in this study. This has meant that the emphasis has mainly been on their socially constructed knowledge of what it is to be a young woman living in Blackpool. However, one recurring issue throughout has been the material reality of living in Blackpool. The difficulty is delineating between social knowledge (social representations) and material reality. This raises potential epistemological and ontological arguments; there is a material reality to living in Blackpool, but their knowledge and understanding of this material reality, will be based on direct experiences and interaction, but also the social knowledge gained from social representations. This mean that the young women are negotiating the reality of their social situations, and how they interpret them. Furthermore, they need to manage how they fit into the material reality of living in Blackpool, and their knowledge of the social categories that apply to them. In other words, who they are in relation to their material reality and their knowledge of it.

Based on power structures, they also need to negotiate social representations of categories that function to maintain power inequalities (Fairclough, 2003). There is the opportunity for members of 'subgroups' to produce their own social representations, giving them a distinct culture and set of values. In light of this and the arguments posited by Moscovici (2000), there needs to be a bridging between the social and the psychology, this thesis is concerned with the 'social' in terms of hegemonic representations, and their impact on the psychological: emancipatory representations and identity. I will argue that how these young women experience their world will directly influence their sense of self (their identity). This in turn will influence their perceived opportunities and limitations in terms of future selves. To explore the role of

identity in relation to the lived experiences of young women in Blackpool and future aspirations, it is necessary to clarify what is meant by 'identity' in social psychological terms. One of the main issues in psychology in relation to the 'self' or 'identity', is that this in itself has been difficult to define. Historically, the attempts to understand the 'self' has led to the differentiation between the 'individual' or 'personal' self and the 'collective' or 'social' self (Breakwell, 1983; Hogg & Vaughan, 2018). Definitions of identity by James (1890), and Mead and Morris (1934) illustrate the recurring conceptualisation and distinction between the personal and the social.

Tajfel and Turner (1986) resolved the distinction by conceiving them as not distinct but on a spectrum. Their focus being on social identity and how it shapes the individual. Arguably who we are stems from social interactions with others, but also from the culturally available discursive resources available, and how we define and interpret those interactions. Identity from a social psychological perspective is complex and can be traced back to social interactionism, and is based on the idea that who we are, is reflected in how others see us (Stets & Burke, 2014). One key concern of this research relates to identity, and the social interactions which are influenced by dynamic social structures. In terms of social structures, these refer to the factors that have been previously explored by sociologists: socio-economic status, gender, the media, education and geography. The idea that social structures influence social interactions, and, in turn, individual identity is useful when considering the current study.

2.4. Social Identity

In terms of social identity, the considerations are that the categories people are exposed to, and those that they are subjected to, through social interaction. Israel and Tajfel (1972, p. 31) argued this is key to social identity, stating that "the individual's knowledge that he/she belongs to certain social groups together with some emotional and value significance to him/her of the group membership". Tajfel conceptualised social identity as "self-conception as a group member" (Abrams & Hogg, 1990, p. 2). What this means, when considering the current area of interest, is that group membership can be defined by and for young women in Blackpool on many levels. On a micro-level, their status within social interaction; on a meso-level, their status within

setting in Blackpool, based on their geographic residence and the school they attend, and on a macro-level, in terms of class status, or as a resident of Blackpool, which has been much maligned in recent media coverage (Pemberton, 2015). All of which will in some way produce social representations of Blackpool that the young women need to manage. Therefore, to understand the identity of young women in Blackpool, it is useful to consider the multiple group membership of young women in Blackpool, as to how these influence individual senses of self.

Billig and Tajfel (1973) argue that group membership and social identity are central to the individual, as group membership gives the individual a sense of belonging, and coherence, through shared characteristics. The purpose of group membership stems from esteem needs, our psychological well-being is dependent on a positive self-concept, therefore our group membership or social identities, should serve to improve and maintain positive self-esteem. This is often evident in ethnocentrism, group membership leads to a preferential evaluation of the in-group, as well as in-group bias, whereby group members behave in a way that benefits their own group. Therefore, young women should be actively involved in the process of intergroup comparisons as a means of ensuring well-being and self-esteem.

The process of accentuating difference enables the group to make comparisons between groups, with the in-group having a favourable outcome. Scheepers et al., (2006) identified the importance of in-group biases to facilitate a positive identity. Aberson et al. (2000) in their meta-analysis, found that group members show in-group biases to maintain self-esteem. Branscombe and Wann (1994) showed the role of out-group derogation on group esteem, with the emphasis on relevant groups, to ensure positive group esteem. However, Houston and Andreopoulou (2003) found that the relevance of the out-groups was less important, as long as in-group biases could be used to maintain esteem. This definition assumes involvement and pride in shared category membership, which can be problematic when part of a marginalised group. Brown and Haeger (1999) showed that when asking individuals to make social comparisons, there is a tendency to choose lower status groups to make those comparisons to maintain the status of the in-group. One way that individuals could manage lower group status is by redefining the group, for example the adoption of 'urban' identity projected by adolescents (Archer et al., 2007). Furthermore group members may focus on specific characteristics to ensure group esteem (Leach et al., 2007). This suggests that social

comparison, through group membership is important for self-esteem and identity, and that group members will engage in in-group bias to maintain group and individual esteem.

When it is not possible to identify a lower status group to make comparisons, compensatory biases can be used to accentuate favourable characteristics (Cadinu & Cerchioni, 2001). Research by Ellemers (Ellemers et al., 1993; Leach et al., 2007) suggest that a number of strategies can be used to manage lower status group membership, for example, focusing on positive characteristics of the group, which will allow for positive evaluations, or by challenging the legitimacy of their lower status. Baumeister and Jones (1978) found that participants who were members of groups that received negative feedback enhanced favourable self-descriptions unrelated to the negative feedback. This was supported by Tajfel and Turner (1979) who posited that when an out-group compares unfavourably with an in-group in one dimension, they look for other dimensions where they will compare more favourably. One way is to change the salience of the characteristics which lead to a group being defined as lower status (Leach et al., 2007). An example of this can be found in research by Kay and Jost (2003) who found that lower status groups were more inclined to favour group descriptions such as "poor but happy" or "poor but honest" as a means of maintain esteem as lower status group members. Cadinu and Cerchioni (2001) illustrated this, when participants received negative feedback, they would choose alternative characteristics to maintain a sense of esteem, showing how the salience of characteristics is managed to maintain a positive identity. Therefore dimension switching serves a clear purpose in terms of group esteem, and in turn the social identity of individual group members.

Through social comparisons between in-groups and out-groups, there is a need for positive self-evaluation through differentiation between social groups, based on social value that is of importance to the group. These dimensions of comparison are based on groups' positive characteristics. When considering the negative image of Blackpool, the pathologising of working and underclass women (Skeggs, 1997), along with the demonization of working/underclass youths through the usage and depiction of 'chavs' (Hayward & Yar, 2006), it is difficult to see how this would be achieved. Hudson (2015), using autoethnography, explored how negative comparisons led to social comparisons that affected esteem, along with the effects of a stigmatized identity.

Therefore, there is a need to protect against negative social comparisons. Two ways this can be achieved is to:

1. Identify the dimensions on which positive in-group evaluations are made and the relevant comparator out-groups, or

2. The processes of creativity that groups may take to negate comparisons which may lower esteem of individuals within the group.

Positive intergroup evaluations are one way to maintain esteem, but other individual strategies may be used to maintain self-esteem, not related to group membership. According to Barreto and Ellemers (2000), the level of identification with the group will influence how status is enhanced: high identifiers are concerned with group status and low identifiers with individual status. Boen and Vanbeselaere (2001) argued that it was the academic ability of the individual, which would determine whether group or individual status was a priority for the individual, with low-ability members focusing on group status, whereas high-ability individuals were concerned with individual status. This suggests that individuals within the group can place less emphasis on group membership as part of their identity if group membership does not meet esteem needs.

However other strategies can be implemented as a way of managing lower status, and in turn, low group esteem. The Black Sheep Phenomenon (Hutchison et al., 2008; Marques, et al., 1998, Marques et al., 2001) offers an explanation as to how this is possible. By identifying 'marginalised members' (those members of the group who deviate from the group norms) of the 'social group' the 'central' members could define themselves positively. However, it does not sufficiently explain the impact of group members on individuals within the social group, or the social group as a whole. If we take Blackpool as an example, residents could be described as a social group, and some members of this social group may have characteristics that impact on the group as a whole, such as those with multiple deprivations (e.g. unemployed, benefit claimants, homeless, and substance users). The use of intragroup comparisons based on such dimensions can be a means to protect individual self-esteem. However, it is the availability and use of these categories and dimensions of comparison, combined with the material realities that configure the identities and subjectivities of Blackpool residents.

Another factor which is crucial is that identity should be a source of certainty. Uncertainty reduction is a key feature of social identity as group membership reduces uncertainty, helping us define our roles within a group, directing our behaviour within the group and in relation to other groups (Hogg, 2007). According to Hogg (2007) certainty offers coherence and stability to identity, and individuals will engage in uncertainty reduction strategies to manage this. Uncertainty and its management is pertinent in this thesis for two reasons: as young women, they are at a point of major change in their lives; as young women living in Blackpool, how they relate to social representations in terms of their own identity, could lead to identity-uncertainty.

Erikson (1968) identified that between adolescence and early adulthood, individuals experience major changes in relation to their identity. Erikson (1968) postulated that the purpose of this stage of development is to account for the historical and sociocultural context of the individual to form a unique identity, allowing the individual to move forward with a clear direction. Marcia (1966) defined identity formation in terms of personality, subjective experience, and interpersonal interaction, defining four stages: Identity Achieved, Foreclosure, Moratorium and Identity Diffused. In terms of Identity Achieved and Foreclosed, clear goals were identified, but these were based on external forces, such as parents; Moratorium and Diffusion are identifiable by omissions of clear goals. This suggests that this is potentially a period of uncertainty that can be affected by a number of factors, including parents, peers, and their social environment. According to Erikson (1968), a lack of identity achievement would lead to 'role confusion', which would lead to uncertainty regarding their place in society. Research indicates that the majority of individuals do not reach 'identity achieved' until the third year of university (Waterman & Waterman, 1971; Fitch & Adams, 1983). This suggests that up until this time in their lives, young people lack autonomy and agency. This further suggests that the young women in this study face identity-uncertainty.

As seen previously in this chapter, there are a number of potential social representations which may relate to young women in Blackpool. It is argued that social identity should give value and meaning to the individual (Hogg, 2007). Hogg (2000) argued that uncertainty-reduction is based on an epistemic motive to have a sense of meaning, knowledge, and self within the social world. They may base some of their knowledge on social representations, which could be a source of disagreement between

group members. Ultimately group membership suggests a need for positive distinctiveness, without this group membership would be questioned. Individuals may manage this through further identification with the group (Reid & Hogg, 2005). Other strategies may be based on how they describe the group, so by challenging the content of social representations could give a sense of certainty. For others, they will focus on individual strategies, such as self-enhancement. To understand the identities of young women in Blackpool in terms of social representations, their potential uncertainties, and their developmental stage, one approach would be to use a multiple theory approach, drawing on Social Identity Theory, Uncertainty Reduction and Psychosocial Development. Alternatively, using a comprehensive theory which explains the social and individual identity, uncertainty or 'threats' to identity and developmental processes would be more beneficial.

Although SIT is useful and gives a depth of understanding to the importance of social identity, a more integrated approach such as Identity Processes Theory (IPT: Breakwell, 1986; Jaspal & Breakwell, 2012) needs to be considered as it deals with the interaction between personal and social identity. This theory was conceived to specifically explain sources of threats to identity and potential coping strategies that individuals could be used to mitigate identity threats and maintain self-esteem (Breakwell, 1986; Jaspal & Breakwell, 2012). This is important as these are young women dealing with life changes (adolescence on biological and social levels, as well as the prospect of leaving mainstream education and considering future prospects), while managing the complexity of the material and socially constructed realities of living in Blackpool. Developments such as those made by Breakwell (1983, 1986, 2012) deserve consideration in terms of the material realities and social representations of young women living in Blackpool and how these shape their identities.

2.5. Identity processes theory

Identity Processes Theory (IPT; Breakwell, 1986; Jaspal & Breakwell, 2012) is a theory that is relevant to understanding the identities of young women in Blackpool, as it accounts for their developmental stage, and offers explanations as to how individuals cope with lived experiences they find threatening to their identities

(Breakwell, 1983; Jaspal & Cinnirella, 2012; Murtargh et al., 2012; Spini & Jopp, 2012). Furthermore, it allows for exploration of the material realities of participants, in that events and situational factors can lead to identity threats, as well as positing that social representations are a potential source of identity and identity threat.

In short, IPT as a theory explains identity, identity threats, and coping strategies used to manage threats. IPT encapsulates:

1. Individual identity.
2. Interpersonal relationships - allows for the exploration of potential tensions that emerge from direct social interaction.
3. Social structures – these include the norms imposed on individuals and group members from a range of social structures, including the media, family structures, and the education system. The norms imposed will be determined by gender, ethnicity, and SES.

Breakwell (2014) defines IPT as a theory of 'total identity' (p. 24). Jaspal and Cinnirella (2012) in their research in relation to ethnic identity highlight the usefulness of IPT when examining the personal and interpersonal with social structures (what they describe as a socio-psychological approach). Also as the theory focuses on the heuristics of identity, this is pertinent here due to young women's emerging identities. IPT theorises that identity is a social product that 'resides' in psychological processes. It can be described as a socio-psychological theory as it successfully deals with identity on macro (societal), meso (interpersonal) and micro (the individual) levels. Like Moscovici's (1993) social representation theory, bridges the gap between the social (or sociological) and the psychological. It allows for the context of identity, in terms of the material reality and social knowledge of the individual and their identities within these. In terms of heuristics, the theory takes an integrated approach, explaining the relationship between dimensions, processes and principles, which offers an understanding of inter-relations and self-concept, and the processes related to these.

As a comprehensive theory, there are many features of IPT to consider. Firstly, the content and value components of identity. The content component is the social and personal characteristics of the individual, which are arranged in terms of centrality, and are hierarchically arranged according to the salience of those components (Breakwell, 1983; 1986; 2014). How the characteristics are arranged is influenced by the value

component, where values are reappraised in relation to the content (Breakwell, 1983; 1986; 2014). This is a dynamic and ongoing process that responds to the social context and related constraints. The theory also explains that new characteristics are added through a process of accommodation and assimilation (content) and evaluation (value) (Breakwell, 1983; 1986; 2014).

The theory focuses on cognitive structures and processes that require neurological capacities to explain the evolution of identity. In other words, experiences are internally processed and assimilated relative to the individual's identity. Cognitive processes are a key feature of this theory, where social interactions experienced by the individual rely on memory and shape personal identity, as well as drawing on affect (Breakwell, 1983, 1986, 2014). For example, an individual describing themselves as 'shy' as a characteristic of their personal identity would base this on earlier memories of social interaction where they have behaved in a way indicative of their shyness. Furthermore the principles of identity, i.e., what needs to be maintained to ensure a positive identity, are internalised. The key principles according to Breakwell (1986) were continuity, distinctiveness, and self-esteem; however self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997) has since been added, as well as belonging (Jaspal & Breakwell, 2012).

Within IPT, the processes accommodation, assimilation, and evaluation are key components in identity production and maintenance. The disruption of at least one of these can impact on identity principles which can lead to a state of identity threat (Breakwell, 1983; 1986; 2014). Threats can be from internal or external sources; internal threats can come from a change in social position, group membership or social network, whereas external sources can be a change in group size, power relations, or ideologies on a social level. The threats affect the content and/or value dimensions of identity, either through a change in circumstances or derision of the group. Jaspal and Siraj (2011) identified the challenge faced by British Muslim gay men in coming out and the shame which would directly affect the content and value dimensions of identity.

Breakwell (1983; 1986; 2014) differentiates between residing in a threating position and the experience of threat; she is clear that IPT only offers an explanation of threat experience, and cannot fully account for a continuous threatened position. However, she acknowledges that experiences of threat can emerge continuously and individuals manage these accordingly. This makes the theory particularly relevant here,

as although the emergence of threat and the coping strategies may be short-term, the position of threat may be enduring (Breakwell, 1983; 1986; 2014). Based on these arguments, the relationship between identity and threats is appropriate to understand the lived experiences of young women in Blackpool and how this shapes their identity. This is due to the potential negotiation of their material reality, and the power relations that emerge from these, as well as managing social representations based on their gender, age, and residence in Blackpool. It must be remembered that experiences of threat may emerge through lived experiences or observations of everyday life, or through social representations which affect them (Jaspal, 2014; 2015; Jaspal & Siraj, 2011).

Threats can occur at the intrapsychic, interpersonal, and/or intergroup level, in one or more of the following three forms:

1. Legitimacy of the group – this is an extension of SIT in effect, in that it relates to group membership and group status. However, Breakwell (1983) defines this in situational terms as threats that occur when "they berate and decry the group" (p. 14).

2. Legitimacy of the individual as a member of the group – Breakwell (1983) describes this as an attack on the identity's content in relation to group membership. The definition here can be related to SCT (Turner, 1981), and the idea of peripheral group membership.

3. Legitimacy of personal identity – This is an attack on what Breakwell (1983) describes as the perceived "personal qualities" (p. 14) of the individual.

Further, Breakwell (1983) identifies three sources of threat:

1. The individual – Breakwell (1983) uses the example of an accident or illness, but adolescence and puberty could be a sources of such threat where the individual's sense of self is challenged, in terms of content and/or values.

2. Other people – Breakwell (1983) is rightly vague on this source as there are numerous others who could lead to a threatened identity. She stipulates that for the 'other person' to threaten the identity of an individual, they must be perceived as having a "legitimate right to make comments and pass judgment" (p. 15). When considering young people in Blackpool there are many potential

sources: friends, peers, teachers, parents, and media representations are a few examples.

3. The material world – young women living in Blackpool may have situational threats relating to the multiple deprivations associated with Blackpool, whether it be the embarrassment of being relatively deprived, or environmental factors, such as interactions with the homeless.

The coping strategies used tend to be on the intrapsychic, intergroup, and/or interpersonal level. Intrapsychic coping tends to focus on modifying the assimilation-accommodation process, either through acceptance or deflection. Alternatively it relies on the modification of the process of evaluation, which means re-evaluating identity content; these processes are reliant on cognition, emotions, and values to cope with the threat (Breakwell, 1983). Interpersonal coping strategies focus on negotiation with others, including isolation (inaction), negativism (conflict), passing (removing themselves from the threatening situation) and compliance (Breakwell related this to Goffman's (1959) playing of a role). Intergroup coping strategies include multiple group membership, group support or group action (Breakwell, 1983).

As the theory states a need to maintain the principles of identity, this means that motivational processes are integral in identity maintenance. As Jaspal and Cinnirella (2012) state, although Breakwell (1983; 1986) gives a comprehensive summary of a range of strategies to manage identity threats, how individuals manage threats are fluid and dynamic. One such example would be in educational settings when young people have to negotiate their subjective 'failure' and how to manage the identity threat that this could lead to. Educational research has focused on how young people manage the possibility of relative failure through self-handicapping. The concept of self-handicapping is based on the notion that individuals who anticipate failure, whether it be related to an immediate event such as an exam, or more long-term outcomes, such as a course of study, will pre-empt this by choosing behaviours or explanations for failure as a means to protect self-esteem (Pyszczynski & Greenberg, 1983). The fear of failure could be seen as an intrapsychic threat, and the individual is the source of threat. As this potentially affects the content dimension of their identity, they need to consider the salience of academic success in an attempt to maintain the value dimension, to manage potential identity threats.

Different types of self-handicapping have been identified, some of these low-level and short term, such as withdrawing effort or socialising prior to a test, which on an intrapsychic level would be making a fundamental change to their content and value dimensions (Breakwell, 1986). Others have more serious consequences, such as drug-taking as a means to inhibit performance to explain perceived certain failure (Berglas & Jones, 1978). This could be described as a deflection strategy (Breakwell, 1983). Other strategies relate more directly to identity, for example, DeGree and Snyder (1985), using experimental research, found that individuals use traumatic life events as a self-handicapping mechanism. Therefore, rather than ascribing to their social identity, they focus on factors that make them distinct to explain their anticipated failure, which would be a form of redefining the position they find themselves in (Breakwell, 1986). Kim et al. (2012), using an experimental design, found that female participants were more likely to ascribe to negative female stereotypes of women being less capable at Maths tests compared to men, in anticipation of a test that they were led to believe was difficult.

Research pertaining to self-handicapping behaviour illustrates the strategies used, such as procrastination, challenging behaviour, risk-taking behaviour, and negative gender stereotyping, according to subject specific tests. However, the research has been predominantly experimental in nature, with limited examination of the type of self-handicapping; also the research has tended to manipulate the variables by explicitly stating the difficulty of a test. Therefore how this is managed in terms of the young person's identity is not clear, only as strategies to manage their failure. There is a need to understand how potential educational failure affects young people on intrapsychic, interpersonal, and intergroup levels. Based on IPT I would argue that these strategies are not just strategies to manage their prospective 'failure', but also as a way to manage identity threats which would be a consequence of the failure.

One strategy that they could adopt to cope with academic failure is through multiple group membership (Breakwell, 1986), by choosing to identify with a specific group to manage the threat. This could be through risk-taking behaviour; Stanley (2005) identified that young people engage in risk-taking behaviour because it meets their esteem needs and gives them a sense of belonging; the participants in Stanley's research (2005) seemed to get little satisfaction from the risk-taking acts, so I would argue that they involved in such practices to meet some other need, predominantly

identity maintenance and manage. Therefore risk-taking behaviour, like self-handicapping strategies, could be means to manage identity threats.

For those young women from deprived areas who engage in education and have educational aspirations, there are still identity threats to negotiate. Despite the identity threats experienced by working-class women, a sense of authenticity is crucial to lower-class women; it is also inextricably linked to the sense of loyalty they have to their class positioning. There have often been constraints regarding the social movement of women in the working classes, since grammar schools were introduced as a way of increasing social mobility for working-class boys (Walkerdine, 2003).

Research shows that lower class women often feel tied to their local community and family, preventing them from applying to university (Evans, 2009). There seems to be a sense of obligation felt by these women in that by attending university they are in some way betraying their roots; this is reinforced by the local community and family, with predominantly lower -class women being disparaged for their desire to progress educationally (Lucey et al., 2003). Those who do decide to attend university justify this as a form of community and family progression in that the career they can gain from university education will enable them to support their family, 'to give back'; this sense of obligation is not seen in their male counterparts, who also do not suffer the guilt of 'betraying' their 'class' (Evans, 2009). Those lower-class women who decide to attend university also feel constrained by their lack of perceived ability or cultural capital, choosing nearby universities, but also universities of lower status (Evans, 2009). The decision to attend university by lower-class women is therefore a difficult one, where they need to negotiate their self-worth, sense of cultural capital, guilt, and obligation (Evans, 2009). Rather than dealing with the identity threat of attending university and the implications in terms of their working class identity. Instead they use a form of passing, removing the threatening situation, by non-attendance to university.

Breakwell (1983; 1986) argues that regardless of the level of coping, it will have consequences for the other two levels, theorising that, although various coping strategies can be implemented, their efficacy can be questioned. For example, denial as a coping strategy for a gay man in the workplace may be effective in that, homosexuality may be described as a 'hidden stigma' and may be effective in ensuring that work colleagues are unaware of the sexuality of the individual. However, on an

intrapsychic level, this could affect the principles and value component of identity, by a sense of not being true to oneself. Also, Breakwell emphasised that coping strategies were short-term measures that would vary in efficacy, and that with threatened positions, different strategies such as passing, would be applied continuously dependent on the nature and situation of the perceived threat.

ITP as a theory is context driven and comprehensive, this means that for this thesis it allows for the potential to understand the content and value dimensions of identities of young women in Blackpool, within the context of the material realities of living in Blackpool, and the social representations that relate to Blackpool. Furthermore, as research shows, the theory is flexible in that it can be used to explain identity, identity threats, and maintenance across a range of identities (including the intersectionality of group membership) in relation to situations and events. Research by Jaspal (2011; Jaspal & Cinnirella, 2012) illustrates this in relation to ethnicity, as ethnicity, faith and sexuality are potentially competing categories. Therefore the theory has the flexibility to manage intersectionality in relation to identity. The negotiation between content and value dimensions to meet the principles of identity, allows for the examination of how young women understand their identity and its salient feature. From this it is possible to identify identity threats that emerge and how the young women manage these. This flexibility, alongside the lifespan approach which Breakwell loosely incorporates (reference is made to biological change which explains identity in the context of illness and disability, but also life events such as adolescence, pregnancy and childbirth and ageing), indicates that this is the most appropriate theory when understanding the dynamic nature of identity and the personal, situational and material circumstances of young women living in Blackpool.

However, the emphasis on cognitive processes in this theory can be problematic when taking a discursive approach, as qualitative research tends to be discourse and text-driven. Taking such an approach raises issues of how using external forms of data can be used to make assumptions about implicit processes (Coyle & Murtagh, 2014). However there is an argument that a discursive approach to identity is not only possible using the ITP framework, but is also beneficial in understanding the subjective realities and identities of young women in Blackpool.

2.6. Discursive arguments

This thesis will take an approach advanced by Gergen (2011), by examining the social construction of identity, which allows for the study of identity as a form of discursive action, and discourse as performative. By taking this approach, that identity is embedded in the subjective and relational, it is possible to gain insight into how young women are involved in identity 'work', and how they manage their sense of 'self' through discourse. Gergen (1987) argued that social psychology should be 'situated', arguing that a more social constructionist approach is needed in social psychology. This was further supported by Potter and Wetherell (1987) who exemplified the need to understand social psychology discursively, arguing against attitudes as a cognitive phenomenon.

IPT offers a robust theoretical framework for examining identity and identity threats in young women in Blackpool, both in terms of the material world in which they inhabit, and the social representations related to group membership. This requires a qualitative approach to understand identities and how they relate to intergroup relations. However one of the main challenges is that the theory focuses heavily on internal and cognitive processes. This can be problematic when embarking on qualitative research using IPT. However, the theory also focuses on context and social practices, as well as narratives as a means of maintaining identity. This means that there is a need to gain an understanding of contextualised accounts of principles of identity (Coyle & Murtagh, 2012). Furthermore, the role of social representations as a source of information is relevant to identity, highlights the role of language in identity formation and maintenance. Also, Burr (2015) argued that 'discourses' are based on understanding. This is supported by Billig (1982) who argued that a purely cognitivist approach underestimates the social origin of internal processes and psychological states and discourse can allow for these to be examined. Breakwell (1983; 1986) argued that identity is managed through cognitive processes, but in this thesis I argue that the evidence of these processes can be examined through discourse.

By taking a Foucauldian approach to discourse, which is "concerned with language and its role in the constitution of social and psychological life" (Willig, 2013, p. 130) it allows for internal processes to be accounted for in the analysis, and as Coyle

(2007) states, this form of discourse analysis lends itself to understanding identity. Positioning is a key component to this approach as it assumes that individuals, when engaged in identity talk, draw upon images and metaphors, which can give an insight into the internal processes involved in the negotiation of the social and psychological. Burr (2015) argued that the concept of the self is complex for social constructionism, but it can be argued that in terms of subjectivity, our understanding of the self is situated in narratives and discourses; the discourses available to us to structure our experiences. They go beyond the social location of the speaker, reflecting the beliefs the speaker has about the interaction and their part in that interaction. The concept of positioning was developed by Davies and Harré (1990, p. 48), arguing that positioning "is the discursive process whereby selves are located in conversations as observably and subjectively coherent participants in jointly produced story lines". Harré et al. (2009, p. 9) suggests the cognitive role of positions,

> Positions are clusters of beliefs about how rights and duties are distributed in the course of an episode of personal interaction and taken-for-granted practices in which most of these beliefs are correctly realized.

This suggests that even though on the surface, traditional forms of discursive psychology may not be appropriate when using IPT as a framework, Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA) allows for the complexity that the comprehensive approach IPT of identity offers.

Breakwell (2014) argued for the role of social representations in the subjective understanding of identity. As social representations are socially constructed, they lend themselves to examination through a discursive approach in order to understand their relationship to the individual identity, in this case, of a potentially marginalised group. Social representations exist as both internal (cognitive) and external (discourse) structures (Moscivici, 1988, 2012), meaning a discursive approach is relevant when examining the relationships between social representations and individual identity. By taking a discursive approach, it is possible to analyse whether the social representations, which relate to the participants, are accepted or challenged in the course of social interaction.

Coyle and Murtagh (2012) argue that interpretative approaches are suitable as means of gaining access to subjective self-evaluation. Also, as Breakwell (2012) stated,

there are many sources and resources, used by the individual in terms of their identity, making a legitimate argument that some resources will be discursive. Also, as identity threats emerge situationally, the idea of examining the cognitive processes by which individuals respond to identity threats as a discursive phenomenon, is valid. Moreover, Discourse Analysis (Parker, 1992; Willig, 2013) gives an understanding of the discursive practices and power relations that come into play in terms of social categories and situations. As IPT is a comprehensive and multifaceted theory, it leads to questions regarding epistemology. As the theory is based on cognitive processes, a realist approach would seem logical. However the emphasis of social representations and how the individual's world is shaped by the social practices of others, including discourse, lends itself to a social constructionist approach (Burr, 2003). Moscovici (2000, 2012) argued the link between the social and psychological of social representations, and that the production and reproduction of social representations is dependent on discourse.

Breakwell (1986) highlighted the contextual nature of identity and the inability to generalise, suggesting the adoption of a qualitative approach. By taking an open-ended approach to the research means that it also allows for further development of the original theory. For example, Markowe (1996) identified authenticity as an identity principle as a motivator in lesbians coming out. Research by Murtagh (2009), using phenomenological analysis, found that there were a lack of positive motivators in the original theory. Her research found that identity threats led to positive career changes, which were not accounted for in the original IPT theory, due to the focus being on situational threats. In other words, using qualitative research may offer an alternative approach to the theory, arguably, the focus on identity threats is focusing on defensive and protective motivations. Instead, there is the potential to examine how identity processes can be a process of self-enhancement as well as threat, allowing for a proactive and constructive model. This is supported by research by Jaspal and Cinnirella (2012) who found identity enhancing strategies, rather than threat coping strategies were used by participants. They examined the hybridization of ethnic identities and argued that even though prejudice is a prevalent theme in relation to ethnicities, individuals are involved in identity work, based on the resources available, choosing social representations that lead to a positive sense of distinctiveness and continuity, and a positive ethnic identity. Rather than assuming that young women in

Blackpool will be prone to identity threats, it must also be considered that they will be involved in self-enhancement strategies for a positive sense of self.

2.6.1. Aims

Based on previous statistics and research, it is clear that young women in Blackpool face many challenges. The aim of this research is to take a new perspective; instead of solely focusing on the demographics of Blackpool to explain patterns relating to young women, the research will analyse the impact of their lived experiences of Blackpool and the social representations associated with these. This will enable the examination of their identities and potential future aspirations, based on the resources available to them. It is argued that their material world and the social representations they are exposed to will impact on their identity. The use of IPT is seen as the most relevant theory as this will enable the analysis of the content component as someone living in Blackpool will shape their value component, and how they manage the material realities and social representations of Blackpool to negotiate a positive identity, in terms of continuity, distinctiveness, self-efficacy and self-esteem. Due to the categories to which they belong (based on age, gender and place of residence), and the social representations of Blackpool, alongside the material realities of living in Blackpool, there is the potential that they will use discourses of identity threat, in an intrapsychic, interpersonal and intergroup level. The aim here is to examine how they manage any identity threats, and discourses of self-enhancement, in terms of their current identity and aspiration identity (future self). By taking a qualitative approach, the open-ended nature will give participants agency, and will generate open-ended data that can be analysed using the IPT framework, alongside FDA, which allows for a social constructionist epistemic approach, while allowing for their material realities to be considered. In other words, it is clear that there will be certain realities to living in Blackpool, but their understanding of these will be socially constructed. These in turn will shape their understanding of their identities, and through the resources available, the discursive practices they engage in, to make sense of who they are and possibly who they could be.

2.6.2. Research questions

1.   How do young women from a deprived seaside town conceptualise and explain their own sense of identity?

2.   How do media portrayals of Blackpool affect young women's social identities and constructions of intra- and inter-group relations/dynamics?

3.   How do young women from a deprived seaside town negotiate identity threats relating to their material reality and social representations associated with where they live?

4.   How do young women conceptualise future identities in light of their sense of identity and threats they mediate?

Chapter 3: Media Analysis

3.1. Introduction

When considering the identities of young women in Blackpool, there are two aspects to deliberate in relation to young women in Blackpool. The first relates their lived experiences of residing there - how interactions within the town and social group membership will shape their identity. The second relates to the social knowledge of Blackpool - how they interpret the understanding of Blackpool in a wider context. To establish the 'social knowledge' available to the young women, social representations relating to Blackpool need to be examined, to consider the potential impact on their identities. When taking a social constructionist approach, there is this idea of the 'archaeology of knowledge', this shared, formally and informally produced understanding that we use as a basis for understanding the world (Burr, 2015; Willig, 2013). This is relevant here because there is a material reality to living in Blackpool, however how they make sense of this reality will be based on the resources available to them.

To understand such shared knowledge, which can be generated within and outside of the 'object' (in this case Blackpool), there is a need to understand the nature of social representations as a theoretical construct. Moscovici (2000) identified three types of social representations:

1. Hegemonic – these are described as overarching social representations that are produced and reproduced by power constructs to maintain power.

2. Emancipatory – these are social representations from subgroups which may be powerless, they are produced and reproduced within the subgroup.

3. Polemic – these are social reprresentations that come from subgroups due to social conflict. These will not be accepted by society as a whole.

Social representations are produced and reproduced to a point where they can become accepted as 'general knowledge' (Fairclough, 2003; Moscovici, 2000). However, as these social representations serve a specific purpose and are often based on

generalisations, they may not represent the lived experiences of individuals to which social representations broadly refer. This does not mean that they will not have an impact on these individuals. In fact, on the contrary, they give them another source of information relating to their identity that they need to mediate (Breakwell, 2014).

Based on this premise, that an individual's identity involves a negotiation of their lived experiences and the social representations that are applied to them, it is important to understand the nature of social representations. To understand social representations we need to understand the sources themselves, and the motivations of the sources that produce and reproduce them, as this process can provide insights into how individuals interpret them and their impact on them, and any potential identity threats that might arise. Media are sources of social representations, and we cannot underestimate the power and scope of these. Theories of social representations clearly state that their power comes from their interdependency, generation and reproduction (Fairclough, 2003; Moscovici, 2000). So, an individual does not need to have directly interacted with a media source to feel the impact of the social representations that it conveys.

Moscovici (2000) developed the theory of social representations initially, in terms of their source and the influence they can have. Moscovivi (2000) was concerned with locating the 'social' in social psychology. For him, the issue with social psychology was the lack of context in social psychology, in that it did not engage with categories that sociologists had often been concerned with, such as gender and class. Moscovici saw these as fundamental in understanding the psychology of the individual within society. Breakwell (2014) in IPT understood that identity does not just come from direct social interaction, but the wider social knowledge that individuals have of categories in society. Breakwell (2014) argued that as individuals, we are constantly constructing our identities, and social representations serve to directly and indirectly affect the construction and maintenance of identity.   Fairclough (2003) is useful here as he offers a framework to analyse the nature of social representations, as his Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a form of analysis that takes a sociopolitical approach. This is useful as it means that it is possible to understand the motivations of the construction of social representations, and the effect on wider society's interpretation of these social representations of the group in question (in this case Blackpool).

According to Fairclough (2003) there are implication of social representations, specifically those produced and reproduced in the media, which are based on 'new Capitalist' principles which can provide us with an insight into how social representations are formed for a political purpose. Fairclough (2003) argued that social representations tend to be produced and reproduced to maintain power constructs, by creating a sense that inequality is justified and fair. By using CDA, the aim is to examine different media sources, to gain an understanding of the types of social representations constructed in relation to Blackpool. In turn, this can give a framework of the social representations that young women need to manage in terms of their identity on intrapsychic, interpersonal and intergroup levels. This allows for an understanding of how they use talk of identity, in relation to social representations, to maintain a postive identity and manage any threats that might arise from social representations of Blackpool and its residents.

Living in Blackpool can impact on the identities of young women in terms of their experience of managing multiple deprivation and its effects on environmental and social interaction. When considering multiple deprivation in Blackpool, it is worth remembering that the level of deprivation is measured according to wards and that not all wards in Blackpool are deprived (JSNA Blackpool, 2020d). However, the reporting of these economic circumstances can be misleading, due to areas of multiple deprivation being in close proximity to tourist attractions, which makes them highly visible, due to their central location. This could lead to an overemphasis on the perceived decline of Blackpool, which is actually only located in specific wards of Blackpool (JSNA Blackpool, 2020d). Although social representations can be produced and reproduced through social interaction, the media can play a key role in the saturation of social representations, for example, by reproducing the same story across different media outlets (Fairclough, 2003).

How the media report Blackpool is important as this means that local and national social representations contribute to the social representations of Blackpool that participants may experience directly or indirectly. Marková (2007) argued that social representations are based on the interactions and interdependencies between groups, individuals, and institutions. In the case of Blackpool it is the interaction of national and local depictions and how these are interpreted and reproduced on a local level. For her, social representations are shaped by current events and memories. This is pertinent

to Blackpool, as a town currently rated as one of the most deprived areas in the UK (JSNA Blackpool, 2020d), but with a history as a thriving seaside town, popular with families, and the epitome of British coastal holidays until its decline in the 1990s (CSJ, 2013). This means that nostalgic representations of Blackpool sharply contrast with representations of the decline that has affected parts of Blackpool, making it newsworthy. Also, Fairclough (2003) argues that individuals from other social groups use social representations to draw comparisons, which serve the purpose of raising the esteem of their group and themselves.

Social representations are complex in that they are 'common sense' which are unconsciously transmitted across generations (Fairclough, 2003). According to Moscovici (2000) social representations are generated through language and repetition, and these social representations are shaped by group members' 'theories' of others, based on their own beliefs, norms, and actions. Through national media, these social representations are generated by the 'out-group', and according to Lewin and Lewin (1950), differences between groups are often overemphasised. This amplification may affect people that the social representations refer to in two ways: firstly, they will in some way negotiate these social representations and their lived experiences, considering their relevance of social representations; secondly, they will interpret how others will perceive them based on these social representations. What Lewin et al., (1935) described as the psycho-sociological 'background' of the group based on its social position, morality, and practices and how these are interpreted by members of other groups, need to be considered.

The strength of social representations is dependent on how individuals understand the social representations, and media sources play a role in this. According to Appadurai (1996) the 1990s led to a shift in media representations ('mediascapes') whereby, due to technological advances, media became more readily distributed. The growth of internet usage and the development of social media has meant that 25 years later, this is even more the case. Appadurai argued that how news is reported has also shifted, leading to more image-centred and narrative-based accounts of events, allowing individuals to draw upon situational factors. Based on Fairclough's (2003) argument regarding the transmission of social representations, character and narrative-based reporting potentially led to more salient social representations. Therefore, the aim of this media analysis is to identify the nature of social representations in relation to

Blackpool, and how these might shape interpretations of Blackpool residents, by the in-group (Blackpool residents) and out-group (non-residents of Blackpool).

According to Moscovici (2000) social representations produce a framework to explain and evaluate, which are formed and maintained through processes of objectification and anchoring. Objectification is the process of giving meaning, through imagery and metaphors to abstract concepts, to give a reality to the object. An example of this would be the decline of seaside towns in the latter part of the 20th Century, continuing in the 21st Century, with depictions in the media of narratives that can create a concrete image of this decline. This is followed by 'anchoring' whereby the new concrete 'objects' are merged into the already existing framework of the social group (in this case multiple deprivation and the individuals who live in Blackpool). Such social representations can lead to social and ideological tensions and conflict between groups, which are brought into language and communication. The contents of social representations generate further discourses surrounding the social representations, which in turn shape common thinking, language, and behaviour, leading to commonly held social representations.

Arguably, social representations and social identities define each other (Wagner & Hayes, 2005). According to Wagner and Hayes, social identity and representations are based on the mutual exchange between the two, in other words, how we understand a category we belong to, such as gender will be based on social representations of gender. We interpret this social knowledge and behave accordingly. Duveen (2001) used an example to make the point, by arguing that as babies, we are not aware of our gender, but are socialised according to our gender in terms of how we are treated and the expectations in terms of our behaviour. This leads the individual to further reproduce social representations of gender. Marková (2007) argued that it is difficult to determine which comes first, social identity or social representations, however Duveen (2001) makes the case that social representations of gender precede identity, but this is a very specific example which does not account for complex social, economic, and political factors. From Marková's analysis, social identity is concerned with how the group defines itself and the social representations are based on how others perceive the group, which lends itself to examining social representations and their impact from a social identity perspective. These points are pertinent, as the focus of the thesis and this

chapter is to establish the nature of the social representations of Blackpool and the young women's understanding of these in relation to their identities.

Individuals have a desire to identify with others and this is based on patterns of intersubjectivity, in that social identity is shaped by a shared perception of what it is to be part of a specific group (Coelho & Figueiredo, 2003). This leads to a symbolic merging of the self and others. Historically, social identity has been based on the shared content of identity (Brown, 2000). More recently, interaction between what Marková (2007) describes as the 'Ego' and the 'Alter' has come to be seen as a more crucial aspect of social identity, which is based on several social phenomena: justice/injustice, equality/inequality, and morality/immorality. In terms of social representations, understanding and interpretation of other groups lead to comparisons which raise the esteem of the in-group. Even though Breakwell (2014) does not use these terms, her identity theory identifies a value dimension, as well as internal processes used to manage identity, whereby the drive of the individual is to have a positive, meaningful identity. One way this could be achieved is through positive social representations of the groups, in comparison to other groups. Fairclough (2003) identifies the role of social representations, in the social comparison between groups that result in moral judgements. In effect, they serve to give the in-group a sense of 'others', to which their own morality and justice is compared.

When examining social representations and social identity, Reicher (2004) identifies two key features of social identity: social categorisation and self-categorisation. Categories are discrete entities characterised by the properties shared by group members. These tend to be mutually exclusive, clearly defined, and collectively exhaustive. In other words, the group defines itself by shared categories which differentiate them from others. However, Reicher argues that these categories are flexible and only fixed to a specific time. Breakwell (2014) takes this further by utilising Identity Processes Theory (IPT) to explain the impact of social representations on individual identities. According to IPT, individuals engage in the dynamic process of constructing their identity. This process is continual, with the individual constantly interpreting new situations, leading them to repeatedly question the legitimacy of existing identity structures.

One important factor when examining the impact of social representations is that awareness can be direct or indirect (Fairclough, 2003). This means that individuals need to manage and select social representations, drawing upon processes of resistance, social change, relating to the extent social representations characterise them personally (Breakwell, 2014). Therefore, how social representations are processed is mediated by the individual and how they interpret whether and how the social representations relate to them. In this thesis, participants could draw upon different social groups and wards as a means of distancing themselves from unfavourable social representations. The salience of social representations relies on creativity of the individual to manage any emerging threat.

The source and nature of the social representation is crucial here. For example, hegemonic social representations that are shared by society as a whole, based on established social structure, practices and interactions (Moscovici, 2000) which serve the purpose of maintaining the highly structured society, justifying inequality. Fairclough (2003) refers to this as 'new capitalism', how socially constructed norms serve the purpose of ensuring that power structures are maintained. This is achieved through an archaeology of knowledge (Burr, 2015; Willig, 2013) which is used to ensure that differences and inequalities are accepted as just. Emancipatory forms of social representations are produced by subgroups who share their own version of events based on information relevant to them (Fairclough, 2003). By examining local newspapers, it creates the opportunity for an 'inside story' of events, these potentially give a different interpretation of stories. Arguably, when considering Reicher (2004), individuals would select social representations that will maintain self-esteem through group membership. However, this is dependent on the degree to which they can relate to both of these.

The extent to which individuals accept social representations as part of their social identity is also dependent on how they will affect individual self-efficacy and self-esteem, distinctiveness and continuity. Social Representation Theory (Moscovici, 2000) stipulates that the influence of social representations are dependent on how group identity is manifested and, whether the social representation meets the needs of the group. To accept the hegemonic social representations individuals would need to engage in creativity to identify with a social group that is distinct from these social

representations. This could serve the purpose of meeting esteem and efficacy needs by creating an opportunity for between group comparisons.

However, it is possible to accept the social representations of the group as a whole, but refute the relevance to individuals within the group (i.e., the individual may accept that the social representations are relevant to some group members but not them as individuals). This in turn can lead to what Lewin and Stern (1941) referred to as 'hostile sentiment' to one's own group, blaming specific members for the mistreatment of the whole group. Lewin uses the example of Jews in the 1930s and 1940s. He argued that certain Jews would show disdain for specific Jews, based on particular political affiliation, which was labelled by the group (Jews) as a form of 'self-hatred', leading to these members being either peripheral group members or an out-groups within the wider category of Jews. This could also potentially amplify the negative social representations of those who are perceived as in-group members, accepting these representations but question their relevance to them individually. A more recent explanation for this behaviour would be the Black Sheep Effect (Marques & Paez, 1994), where specific group members are identified in a negative light and not reflecting the group characteristics as a whole. According to Lewin and Stern (1941) 'self-hatred' can be influenced by education, class, and geography. Distancing oneself from the social representations would come from social group membership and the rejection of group members who are seen as deviating from the in-group norms (Marques & Paez, 1994).

Fairclough (2003) argues that identity and self-identification are not purely textual, but that discourse and identity are inter-related. In terms of social representations, Fairclough asserts that individuals are social agents and involuntarily positioned according to social group membership. This means individuals need to negotiate their social identities in relation to the social representations associated with their group membership. He argues that in terms of culture and group membership, there is a high level of abstraction and generalisation, meaning that some of the characteristics ascribed to the group may not apply to individual members' identity. There are a number of potential consequences of these generalisations and abstractions:

1. With marginalised groups, they will be held responsible for any hardships they face, rather than these being seen as caused by power structures and inequalities.

2. Group members will need to manage their identities in light of social representations of the group.

3. Group members will imagine or anticipate interpersonal communication between themselves and non-group members based on the assumed social representations they will hold.

4. Intergroup relations will be affected by the generalisations and abstractions which could reinforce the differences between the groups and group members.

Fairclough's (2003) Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) offers a way to analyse discourses in terms of social representations and their implications.

3.1.1. Critical Discourse Analysis

As Fairclough (1992, 1995, 2003, 2010) stated, discourse and culture have the potential for social change, acknowledging that this is determined by hegemony, and the resources and practices available to the social group. As Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) takes into account what is present (and what is absent) from mass media, and how it can influence social practices and representations, it is appropriate for this analysis. CDA accounts for the impact of discourse and media on the individual, which means it has the potential to interpret not only the newspaper articles, but also their potential impact on participants, and how they negotiate their identity and manage identity threats that stem from social presentations in the media.

Fairclough's (2003) argument was that text is a force for social change, having the power to influence beliefs, attitudes and values, as well as social relations. Fairclough used 'influence' cautiously and was reticent when considering causation, as this suggests that social representations have a direct and immediate, measurable consequence. Fairclough (2003) acknowledged that social representations and their consequences are complex. CDA is not only concerned with discourse as dialogue in the strictest sense, as interpersonal interaction, but also published texts which can

produce and reproduce social representations. Fairclough (1995) posited that mass media in particular is a powerful source of social representations and can be a force for social change, arguing that it has

> "The power to influence knowledge, beliefs, values, social relations, social identities. A signifying power (the power to represent things in particular ways) which is largely a matter of how language is used" (Fairclough, 1995, p. 2)

Based on this, Fairclough (1993, 1995) argued that discourse analysis needs to be 'critical' as it is crucial for social justice, to understand the impact of power on texts; CDA takes into account hegemony and power relations, which lends itself to interpreting the impact of social representations in different media sources on individuals who are members of social groups. Texts are given meaning which can have ideological effects, and how individuals interpret the texts will be in relation to social structures, social practices, morality, and social relations (Fairclough, 2003). In the case of Blackpool, national media outlets could produce and reproduce hegemonic social representations that have the potential to shape the social representations of Blackpool and its residents. In turn, these social representations could impact on identity, and serve as limiters in terms of aspirations of young women in Blackpool, due to expectations of how they will be perceived by others.

CDA also takes an ethnographic approach, and as newspaper articles are naturally occurring events, outside of the research setting, this approach is relevant here. According to Fairclough (2003), texts represent aspects of the world and enact social relations between participants and social events, which are structurally connected. Fairclough argued that representations of others in text relate to knowledge, connecting concrete events with abstract social practices. This idea of social practices and socialisation means that texts have the potential to create a sense of 'otherness', that by the reader interpreting the text, this will mediate the perceptions of the 'characters' in the texts, making judgements relating to their morality and attitudes, based on their own morality and attitudes. Fairclough (2003) argued that how texts are dialectically related to the person in the events, the power relations (their relations with others) and the moral subjects (the text producer and the interpreter) are integral for the reproduction of social representations. This means that the events and subjects are not interpreted objectively, but subjectively from the socially available power structures.

By establishing the social representations of Blackpool, this can be used to examine how identity and threats potentially emerge in light of these representations. Amer and Howarth (2018) used CDA to examine representations of White British Muslims in national UK and Muslim UK newspapers. They established a difference between national and Muslim newspapers, identifying that White British Muslims were deemed a threat due to their position as 'White British'. The nature of the newspaper, in terms of their political leanings, is also considered in CDA, as it acknowledges that newspapers use a range of sources and readers respond differently to the stories.

In relation to mass media, CDA takes into account the mediation process and the 'movement of meaning' (Fairclough, 2003), which create a chain of texts. This mediation process can be seen as 'action at a distance' (Fairclough, 2003), in that it is temporal and spatial in nature; in other words there are shifts according to the historical and geographical context of the production of social representations through the media. This is crucial as it allows for social representations to be formed without direct experience. As CDA takes a stance of social justice, in that the 'critical' element is to highlight how social representations are used to maintain power constructs, mass media are a form of governance, which relate power and 'new capitalism' (Fairclough, 2003). Media have the power to re-contextualise and transform social practices, how we live our lives, and how we give meaning to it. This is important as it suggests that mass media can influence how young women in Blackpool make sense of their material realities living in Blackpool, and how they manage their identities in relation to social representations.

Marková (2007) argued that social representations and identity are inter-related, so it is important to establish qualitatively, the nature of social representations in the media relating to Blackpool. By examining a range of media sources, this will allow me to identify the nature of social representations of Blackpool that are available. The content and nature of these will identify potential tensions, and sources of identity threats. These threats could be anticipatory in terms of how they understand how they will be perceived by those who do not live in Blackpool. Also, they could identify how their understanding of their material realities are understood based on the social knowledge that social representations provide, and how this could lead to a source of identity threat.

3.1.2. Research Questions

1. How can we distinguish between hegemonic and emancipatory representations in different media sources?
2. How do the different sources of media construct social representations of Blackpool?
    a. How is language used to construct the social representations?
    b. How are stories and narratives structures to construct the social representations?
    c. What stories and narratives are reproduced to construct the social representations?
3. What are the potential impacts of these representations in terms of identity threats for people living in Blackpool?

3.2. Method

The purpose of this section is to explain the method and analytic strategy of a media analysis of national and local newspaper articles that relate to Blackpool. The media analysis is presented here to provide an understanding of the social representations associated with Blackpool. This will establish the nature of social representations that would be a resource to interpret and understand the participants' material realities living in Blackpool. The media analysis will identify the nature of social representations concerning Blackpool and its residents; these could be potential identity threats to young women. However, the purpose here is to determine the sources of social knowledge or social representations they will be exposed to, which could shape how they construct their identities, in light of these social representations.

3.2.1.Procedure

Initially keywords were selected based on the issues that were discussed in the interviews. These were grouped together according to how the issues emerged in the interview. The keyword groups identified were as follows:

1. Blackpool, deprivation and homelessness.
2. Blackpool, drugs and alcohol.
3. Blackpool, family and poverty.

The time period was determined as a reasonable period of time where participants would be aware of media discussions of Blackpool. The period of time chosen was January 1st 2012 until the commencement of interviews – June 30th 2017. Initially the whole 5 ½ year period was used, but this generated too many articles, therefore searches were conducted year by year. These started from the 1st January up until the 31st December for each year. However, as the interviews of participants commenced on the 10th July 2017, it was decided that they potentially would be exposed to media reports up until this date, so in 2017, a search was carried out from the 1st January 2017 to the 30th June 2017. As the media analysis was to provide data which pertained to social representations the young women had potentially already been exposed to, it was appropriate that the media search was only conducted to the point of interview commencement. Lexus Nexus was selected as the most appropriate method of conducting an initial search of media sources as it is a dedicated media search engine, containing UK national and local newspapers. This was used as it was accessible via Lancaster University online library and was advised by academics and library staff at Lancaster University, as a robust search engine for UK newspaper articles.

The exclusion criterion used was 'advertisements', and the initial media sources generated were as follows:

Table 1: Number of discrete newspaper articles according to year and categories

Year	Deprivation & Homelessness	Drugs & Alcohol	Family & Poverty
2012	27	83	33
2013	22	83	33

2014	23	87	43
2015	22	73	40
2016	22	106	31
2017	8	86	23

Once this initial search was generated, the articles were screened using the following additional exclusion criteria: repetition of articles (the search generated on occasion the same article more than once), articles from local newspapers not available in the Blackpool area, and TV and radio media. TV and radio media sources were originally included in the search; however, the decision was made to restrict the data to written text, and exclude all other media sources. This was because TV media that was included relied on talk-to-text which meant it would not be possible to conduct a meaningful analysis of the data. Also, the TV and radio media tended to be based on reviews of other media relating to Blackpool, which would not be relevant for this study. Articles were also removed where Blackpool was not an integral or meaningful part of the story in relation to the issues. For example, there were a series of newspaper articles relating to criminal behaviour. The criminals had travelled through Blackpool, but the crimes and the criminals were not located in Blackpool. The use of Blackpool was to give a complete story of events by journalists.

This led to a reduced sample described in Table 2:

Table 2: Sample of newspaper articles according to year and categories

Year	Deprivation & Homelessness	Drugs & Alcohol	Family & Poverty
2012	15	37	12
2013	18	37	23
2014	5	46	22
2015	5	43	23
2016	10	51	19
2017	4	44	6
Total	57	258	105

The remaining sample newspaper articles were then organised into folders in NVivo 12 that corresponded with their years and then further organised according to the publication type:

- Local newspaper (Blackpool Gazette, Fleetwood Weekly News, Lytham St Annes Express).
- Tabloids (The Mirror, Daily Mail, Daily Express, The Sun, The Star).
- Broadsheets (The Observer, The Times, The Guardian, and The Independent).

Prior to coding, all newspaper articles were read and notes made, including the tone of the article, based on language used, the structure of the article and the use of other 'voices' (quotes used and the sources of the quotes). These then helped to shape the coding, based on the patterns that emerged from the initial reading and memos. The articles were coded according to the writing style of the article:

- Factual – these were accounts of events which were based on statistics or reporting on events which focused solely on conveying events. For example, local newspaper reports of local court proceedings.
- Story-driven – these were based on narratives where there were clear 'main characters' that could be identified in the article.
- Interpretative – these were discussion based focusing on issues rather than characters (for example, poverty as a social/local issue), where some factual information was given but discussed within a social context.

The articles were then coded according to the extent that Blackpool played a role in the article:

- Direct – articles which focused solely on Blackpool.
- Highlighted case – articles where Blackpool was given as an extreme or specific case, relating to the topic under discussion.
- Indirect – articles where Blackpool was referred to as part of a wider issue. These were articles where Blackpool was only referred to once, and where other towns/cities were the primary focus.

For each of these codes, articles could only be coded according to one category. These were coded hierarchically according to the emphasis on Blackpool. Articles that only reported on Blackpool were ordered highest (Direct), those where Blackpool was

discussed in detail alongside other towns in relation to the article subject matter were coded as 'indirect', and Blackpool was reported as a 'worst case' (highlighted case), followed by indirect where Blackpool was merely mentioned, usually in the form of statistics at the end of articles.

The articles were then coded according to the presence of the following categories, developed from the notes and coding processes; note that each article could include more than one category in the article:

- Alcohol –alcohol was the primary focus of the article or if alcohol played an integral role in the article.
- Benefits – this refers to any reference to benefits and the welfare system, as an issue or an integral part of the article.
- Children – if children were seen as part of the issue discussed or were in some way the focus of the article.
- Criminality – the article related to reports of crimes or criminal proceedings.
- Drugs - this code was used if drugs were the primary issue of the article or if alcohol played an integral role in the article.
- Environment – this refers to any environmental impacts, whether it be physical or a more abstract reference to this. For example, reference to litter or language that alluded to a sense of 'dirtiness' surrounding Blackpool.
- Family – when families were the primary issue or related to the issue in the article.
- Homelessness – if the issue or main 'characters' in the article were homeless.
- Housing – this refers to issues relating to housing or where housing problems were a consequence in the article.
- Poverty – this was any reference to living in poverty, the 'working poor', or indications of financial hardship.
- Sex – this is where sex was a key focus of the article. Where sex was a criminal act, this would be co-coded with criminality.
- Women – articles were only coded according to gender when the nature of the article made reference to woman and/or womanhood which either contradicted the social expectations of women (e.g., predatory behaviour or reference to any deviation from the 'good mother' role), or if the article referred to the

individual's gender as an integral part of the article as victims (e.g., cases of sex abuse).

- Youths – the article was primarily focused on youths or issues relating to youths.

3.2.2.Intra-coder reliability

The coding was checked, confirmed, and agreed. However, due to time constraints, formal inter-rater reliability was not possible. Instead, a process of intra-coder reliability was conducted. As there was only one coder of the data, in order to ensure intra-coder reliability and lack of drift, data were coded at two distinct periods, which were 12 weeks apart. For sampling purposes, 66 articles (20% of the original sample of 330 articles) were randomly selected and six codes were selected (drugs, alcohol, criminality, women, poverty, youths). The coding of each article was checked in terms of presence/absence of the codes in each coding period. The results are as follows:

Table 3: Table of intra-coder reliability of coding of Drugs

		Time 2	
		Present	Absent
Time 1	Present	41	2
	Absent	7	6

The observed Kappa was 0.68

Table 4: Table of intra-coder reliability of coding of Alcohol

		Time 2	
		Present	Absent

Time 1	Present	56	1
	Absent	4	5

The observed Kappa was 0.63

Table 5: Table of intra-coder reliability of coding of Criminality

		Time 2	
		Present	Absent
Time 1	Present	48	3
	Absent	10	5

The observed Kappa was 0.74

Table 6: Table of intra-coder reliability of coding of Women

		Time 2	
		Present	Absent
Time 1	Present	7	3
	Absent	5	55

The observed Kappa was 0.74

Table 7: Table of intra-coder reliability of coding of Poverty

		Time 2	
		Present	Absent
	Present	17	1

Time 1	Absent	4	44

The observed Kappa was 0.82

Table 8: Table of intra-coder reliability of coding of Youths

		Time 2	
		Present	Absent
	Present	7	0
Time 1	Absent	6	53

The observed Kappa was 0.63

The range of observed Kappa values was 0.63 to 0.82 and the mean observed Kappa value was 0.71. This shows that there was reliability between the two coding periods as the results show consistency between the two periods. However, even though this approach is robust and can reduce the likelihood of bias, as there was only one coder, some caution must be taken when considering the reliability of the coding process. The first supervisor checked the coding but this was informally, a more formal checking would have led to inter-rater reliability.

3.2.3. Quantitative Results

Once coded, correlations were conducted in order to highlight correlations between the above coded categories. As the analysis was categorical, searching for the presence or absence of the themes identified above, a correlation matrix of all these was constructed using the nonparametric test of association, phi (Becker & Thorndike, 1988). Once the correlations were conducted and the significant correlations identified (+ve and –ve), I examined which factors grouped together into sets of related topics. Tables 1 and 2 display these associations. There were far more than would be expected by statistical chance.

Table 9: Significant Positive Correlations between the Categories

	Alcohol	Benefits	Children	Criminality	Drugs	Environment	Family	Homelessness	Housing	Poverty	Sex	Women	Youths
Alcohol				0.561 $P<.001$	0.826 $P<.001$						0.267 $P<.001$	0.259 $P<.001$	0.117 $P=.036$
Benefits							0.196 $P<.001$		0.118 $P=0.035$	0.199 $P<.001$			
Children							0.263 $P<.001$			0.213 $P<.001$		0.127 $P=0.023$	
Criminality	0.561 $P<.001$				0.523 $P<.001$						0.359 $P<.001$	0.356 $P<0.01$	
Drugs	0.826 $P<.001$			0.523 $P<.001$							0.236 $P<.001$	0.247 $P<.001$	0.197 $P<.001$
Environment										0.114 $P=.043$			
Family		0.196 $P<.001$	0.263 $P<.001$						0.129 $P=.021$	0.628 $P<.001$			
Homelessness									0.283 $P<.001$				
Housing		0.118 $P=0.035$					0.129 $P=.021$	0.283 $P<.001$		0.227 $P<.001$			

	Alcohol	Benefits	Children	Criminality	Drugs	Environment	Family	Homelessness	Housing	Poverty	Sex	Women	Youths
Poverty		0.199 P<.001	0.213 P<.001			0.114 P=.043	0.628 P<.001		0.227 P<.001				
Sex	0.267 P<.001			0.359 P<.001	0.236 P<.001							0.433 P<.001	
Women	0.259 P<.001		0.127 P=0.023	0.356 P<0.01	0.247 P<.001						0.433 P<.001		0.155 P=.006
Youths	0.117 P=.036				0.197 P<.001							0.155 P=.006	

Table 10: Significant Negative Correlations between the Categories

	Alcohol	Benefits	Children	Criminality	Drugs	Environment	Family	Homelessness	Housing	Poverty	Sex	Women	Youths
Alcohol		-.164 p. 003	-.168 p. 003				-.524 P<.001	-.220 P<.001		-.579 <.001			
Benefits	-.164 p. 003			-.130 P .021	-.137 P .014								
Children	-.168 p. 003				-.187 P<.001			-.152 P .007					
Criminality		-.130					-.337	-.182	-.155	-.503			

		P .021					P<.001	P .001	P .006	P <.001			
Drugs		-.137 P .014	-.187 P<.001			-.119 P .034	-.530 P <.001	-.253 P <.001		-.592 P <.001			
Environment					-.119 P .034								
Family	-.524 P<.001			-.337 P<.001	-.530 P <.001						-.176 P .002	-.151 P .007	-.154 P .006
Home-lessness	-.220 P<.001		-.152 P .007	-.182 P .001	-.253 P <.001						-.120 P .33	-.119 P .037	
Housing				-.155 P .006									
Poverty	-.579 <.001			-.503 P <.001	-.592 P <.001						-.206 P <.001	-.253 P <.001	
Sex							-.176 P .002	-.120 P .33		-.206 P <.001			
Women							-.151 P .007	-.119 P .037		-.253 P <.001			
Youths							-.154 P .006						

Figure 1: Pictorial representations were used to determine the positive relationships between the categories (the black lines indicate positive correlations between categories):
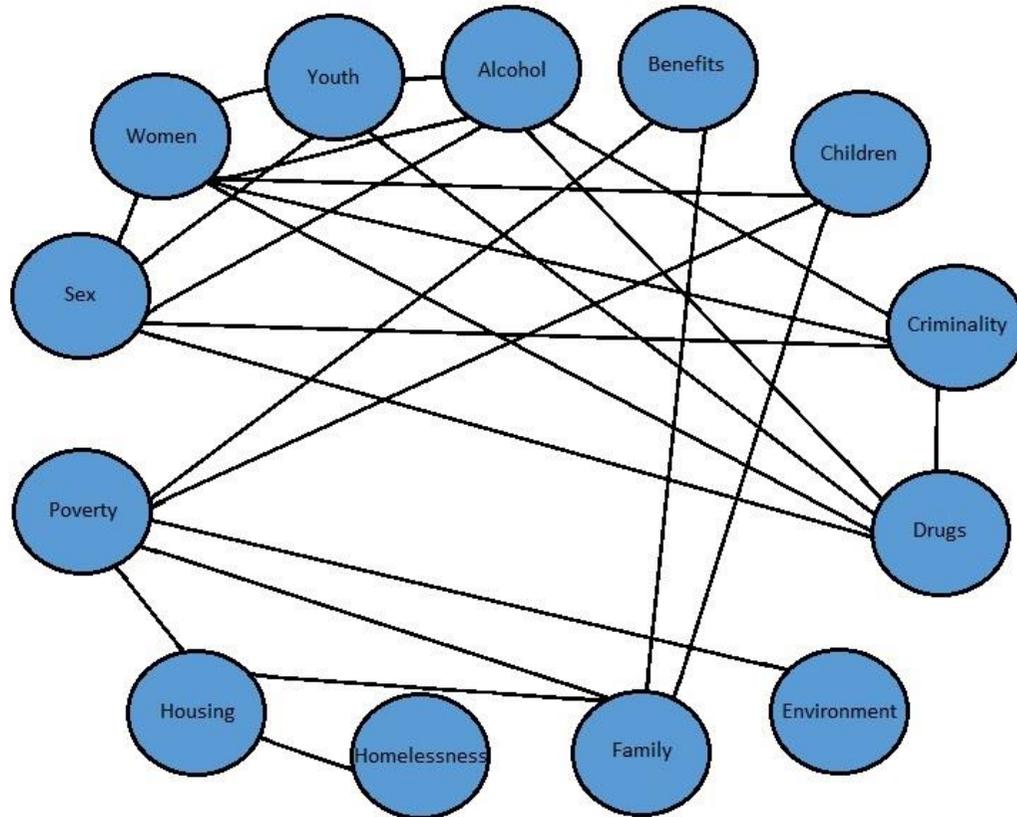
Figure 2: Pictorial representation of negative association between categories:
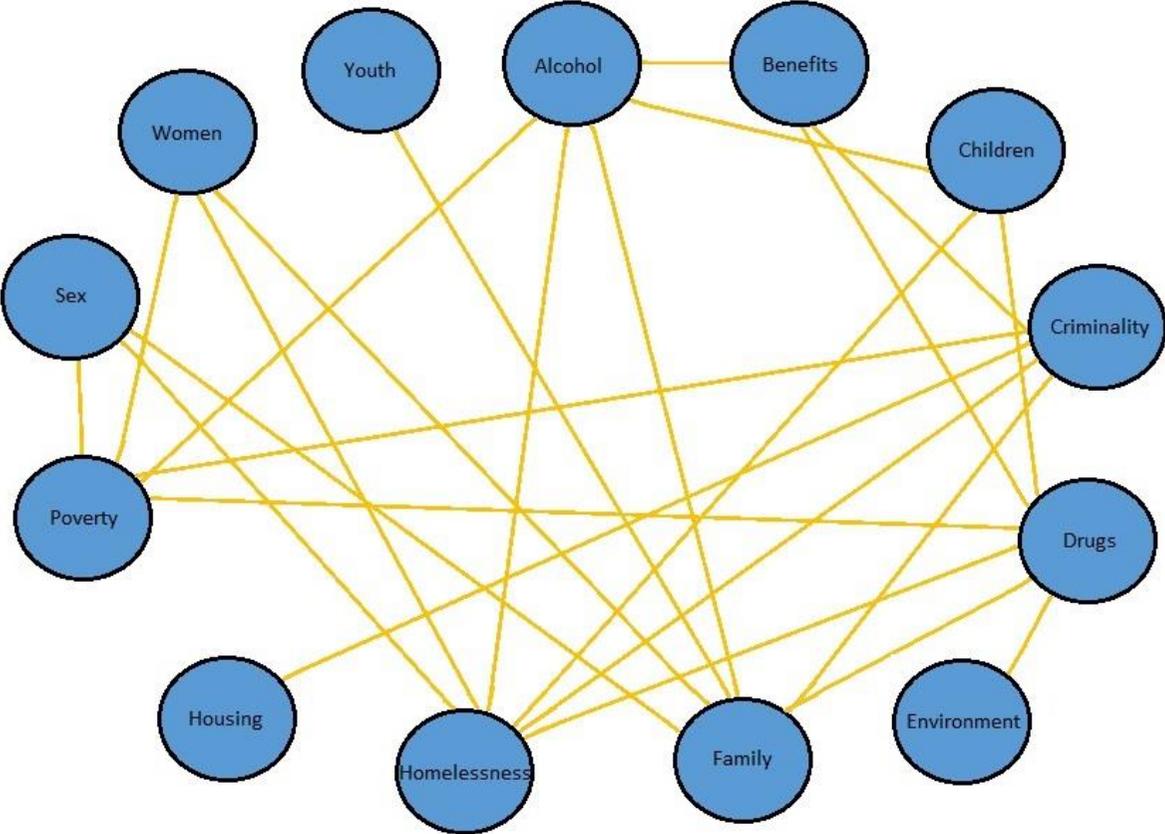
It was important to determine the negative associations to ensure that the analysis was focused on discrete categories which were inter-related. The Phi analysis and pictorial representations identified two main clusters. These clusters were based on the significance of the correlation and the strength of the correlation. These identified two clusters with three codes each. These led to two clear themes:

1. Family, children and poverty.
2. Alcohol, drugs and criminality.

3.2.4. Analytic strategy for the texts

As previously stated, Fairclough's (2003) Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) was deemed the most appropriate method of analysis due to the theoretical underpinnings that relate to media, relating to his dialectical-relational approach to CDA (Fairclough, 2010). This approach is based on discourse as an element of social processes, where language is associated with social practice (in this case the media), as a way of interpreting the world from a particular social perspective (Fairclough, 2010). According to Fairclough (1995), media have the power to shape many facets of social life, including government, entertainment, and popular culture. Media output plays a role in three main ways:

1. How the world (events, relationships, social groups) are represented.
2. How identities are formed.
3. The relationships between the reporter and the audience.

Fairclough (1995) identified that media are integral in the production and reproduction of representations, which in turn influence the construal of identities and social relations. Fairclough (2010) identified semiosis as an element of social process, and how it is dialectically related to other social elements, and the role of CDA to examine the relationship between semiosis and other social elements. Fairclough (2010) was clear that these are dialectical in that they are different but not discrete. The approach is critical in that Fairclough (2010) argued that CDA is 'critical' in the sense that it addresses the social 'wrongs' of discourse, by examining their sources, causes,

opportunities for resistance of social 'wrongs' and possibilities to overcome them. When addressing the social 'wrongs', Fairclough (2003) referred to 'new Capitalism' and more recently neoliberalism (Fairclough, 2010) as the power structure which inequality and social 'wrongs' benefit. Fairclough (2010) identified semiosis figures that establish, reproduce, and change unequal power relations, based on the domination, marginalisation, and exclusion of some people by others, stating that semiotic figures are not transparent and can be misleading.

Fairclough (2010) used this approach to examine shifts in political discourse and identify the social 'wrongs' of the changes in democracies, which he argued are "oligarchies in which government is exercised by the minority over the majority" (p. 240) and that the role of political discourse is to "calm and control the irreducible conflict between the rich and the poor" (p. 240). This may seem to lack relevance here, but the role of discourse to justify socio-economic deprivation as a form of calming and controlling of the poor. Previous research has been conducted which has used newspapers which relate to the specific social group and national newspapers (Amer & Howarth, 2018), which is of specific relevance here as it highlights how different media sources reproduce social representations to maintain the power relations based on faith. Furthermore, by including newspapers produced for and by members of the community, they examined how the social 'wrongs' of marginalising specific groups can be resisted through emancipatory social representations. This is in line with the research here, which includes a sample of local and national (red top and broadsheet) newspapers. The following is a description of the procedure for analysis:

3.2.4.1. Stage 1: Identifying the social wrong

Fairclough (2010) identified the first stage of CDA as identifying the social 'wrong', this was achieved by quantitatively analysing the coding to establish the content of media in relation to Blackpool. Quantitative analysis was used to identify patterns of frequency of codes based on the idea that social 'wrongs' are reproduced to justify the marginalisation of groups; therefore those that were most commonly featured arguably are those that serve the purpose of reproducing the social 'wrong', through their representations of Blackpool, and how these are potentially detrimental to human

'well-being'. Following the correlations, articles which included the three codes for each theme (Theme 1: poverty, family and children; Theme 2: alcohol, drugs and criminality), were identified, to allow for the analysis of newspaper articles that included these three codes. To ensure that the articles related to Blackpool, only articles where Blackpool was the primary focus (direct) or as an extreme case and a major focus of the article (highlighted case) were selected. The newspaper articles were then re-read and key features were identified. This initial process allowed for the social 'wrongs' to be identified in how media reproduce social representations of people in Blackpool as a means to justify its decline, through social groups depicted in the newspaper articles.

3.2.4.2. Stage 2: Obstacles to addressing the social wrong

According to Fairclough (2010), Stage 2 of CDA is concerned with identifying obstacles to addressing the social wrong. There was an initial 'count' of newspaper articles to identify the prevalence of the themes across the time period. The nature of the newspaper was identified in terms of local or national, red top or broadsheet, politically left or right-leaning as this pertained to the nature of the social representations (hegemonic or emancipatory), to establish the dialectical relations between semiosis and other social elements. Texts were selected, based on the focuses and categories. To carry out the analysis of texts, linguistic and semiotic analysis was conducted. A number of processes were involved in this. The structure of articles were examined, in terms of the order of presentation of events and 'characters'. The headline was analysed first, in terms of how it related to Blackpool and the language used. The structure of the article was seen as important as this lent itself to primary and recency effect (Murdoch, 1962), and allowed for a scan of how the argument was structured in terms of focus, i.e., where certain arguments were put forward first and whether these presented in a way to ensure that the audience was engaged in the story.

The stylistics were then analysed, identifying whether the article relied on a narrative relating to the issues, specific characters, or broader social issues. From this, patterns of language and semiotics were identified and these were analysed in terms of how they were used to socially construct the object in relation to specific social

representations. At this stage, it was determined whether these were hegemonic, or emancipatory social representations. In other words, whether the language and semiotics used were doing so to maintain the power structures, or whether they challenged the power structures and were sympathetic to the characters and issues in the article.

Characters and how they were presented were then analysed, as these were used as 'signs' of social representations. Also, the use of direct quotes and the authority of the individual was considered and how this was presented in light of the 'story' or narrative of the article and how it related to the themes. Combined, these allowed for an analysis of the relationships and social practices used to mediate the relationship between the abstract understanding of the social issue and the concrete social events. Some news stories were repeated over a specific time period in a number of newspapers, so comparisons were drawn between the presentation of the story, and the implications of the repetition of the story in relation to social representations of Blackpool, and how these produce obstacles in terms of overcoming the social wrong.

Once this was completed, any potential omissions were considered, for example, in relation to crimes involving a family, whether the father was omitted, with the focus being on the mother, to justify the social wrong of motherhood ideals (Burman, 1994). Another point of omission was whether a male character alongside a mother character was not identified as a father in newspaper articles (but identified as the father in others) and the significance of this in relation to the reproduction of newspaper articles.

3.2.4.3.Stage 3: Whether social order needs the wrong

Fairclough (2010) identified the third stage of analysis as examining whether the social representations that reproduce the social wrong are inherent to social order. In other words, their role in maintaining power, and justifying inequality. This was achieved by analysing the potential implication of the social representations and how these would impact on the understanding of Blackpool by media representations that are hegemonic in nature. By establishing the implications for Blackpool, this is informative in terms of how semiosis figures maintain inequality by justifying the hardship of those in Blackpool through media discourses.

3.2.4.4.Stage 4: Can the obstacles be overcome?

The final stage identified by Fairclough (2010) was the analysis of whether obstacles could be challenged through contesting discourses. Newspapers that used emancipatory social representations were identified and analysed in terms of how they differed in terms of structure, use of narrative and authoritative information as a means to challenge the social inequalities. The analysis of these articles reflected that in Stage 2 (see above) to examine how discourses were used to challenge the power relations and hegemonic social representations. The potential implications on the individual were also analysed. If emancipatory representations were not identified, how the individual would manage these social representations was considered, in terms of potential identity threats and how they could be managed.

3.3. Results

3.3.1.*Theme 1: Poverty, family & children*

One cluster of newspaper articles that was identified related to stories of poverty, family, and children, in relation to Blackpool. How poverty in Blackpool is depicted is complex and varies according to the nature of the newspaper and the context in which poverty is discussed. There were significant correlations between these themes (see Table 9). To identify the different discourses which generate social representations, the themes will be divided into newspaper articles which were identified as reproducing social representations that reproduce the 'social wrong' (hegemonic) and those that challenge and resist the 'social wrong' (emancipatory).

3.3.1.1.Hegemonic social representations

There are a number of patterns which can be identified in the media sources that include these three core themes: children as primary victims of poverty; the responsibility of families and parents, and their poverty status; and the political arguments, and political climate around poverty. Regardless of the responsibility of

parents or political argument, children were depicted as the main victims of poverty. The impact on children was seen as far-reaching and affecting all areas of their lives, including education. According to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Blackpool (2020), children living in conditions of poverty are on average 9 months behind other children developmentally by 3 years, 3 terms (one academic year) behind by the end of primary school, and received 1.7 grades lower, adding validity to media representations of these issues in Blackpool.

To understand and interpret the role of the media in the social representations of Blackpool and the potential impact on young women's identity, it is important to consider the different social representations presented in the media. As the media sources are mainstream and readily available to residents in Blackpool, the representations tend to fall into two categories: hegemonic and emancipatory. Hegemonic representations are identified as those that construct social representations to maintain existing power structures, while maintaining inequality through anchoring the individuals who are poor as active agents in their poverty, personal choice and individualism as root causes. This enables the objectification of poverty in terms of undeserving and amoral individuals.

In right-leaning national papers, this was most prevalent, with a headline from The Sun (22/8/2013), 'By The Seaslide' using this pun to construct a sense of shame by using a play on words of 'mudslide', as well as a sense of decline. The Mail Online (16/10/2013) used a more descriptive mechanism to identify responsibility in relation to poverty and children, "Bad parents are to blame for society's ills, says Ofsted chief: Sir Michael Wilshaw attacks 'hollowed out and fragmented families'" The following extract is taken from The Mail Online (16/10/2013):

Extract 1

Sir Michael warned that the problems exposed in child abuse scandals were being deepened by an apparent national obsession with 'pussyfooting around' and 'making excuses' for bad parents.

He said many children were 'alienated' from their natural father and that this lay at the root of the wider problems.

'Some people will tell you that social breakdown is the result of material poverty - it's more than this,' he said.

'These children lack more than money: They lack parents who take responsibility for seeing them raised well. It is this poverty of accountability which costs them.

'These children suffer because they are not given clear rules or boundaries, have few secure or safe attachments at home, and little understanding of the difference between right and wrong behaviour."

The use of "Sir Michael" gives a sense of gravitas to what is being stated, and using phrases like 'pussyfooting around' and 'making excuses', gives a sense that the 'issue' needs to be identified and managed. By doing this, the article negates societal responsibility and in the direct quotes, material poverty is diminished as the main cause of educational failure, and instead the lack of 'family values', a trope commonly associated with right-leaning attitudes, is identified as the cause of hardship. The responsibility is placed upon the parents, their poverty of morality, which encourages the reader to take a moral stance against the depicted 'feckless parenting'. According to Fairclough (2003), discussions of social groups in moral terms enable the readers to engage in social comparisons that allow them to construct social representations based on commonly accepted social norms and practices.

The social representations of 'Blackpool on the slide' are also reported in less right-leaning publications, focusing on the lower educational attainment of children living in deprived areas. The Independent discusses Blackpool, as well as other deprived areas. The town is represented as an area where there is a lack of basic arithmetic and reading skills. This recreates the social representation that family poverty is the responsibility of families and communities, and that the victims are the children, creating a cycle of poverty. For the reader this creates a comparison between the morality of parenting in the area and a 'moral tale' about the 'undeserving poor'.

The Mail Online focused on Employment and Support Allowance claimants as responsible for their own ill health (including obesity and addiction), constructing a sense of a double bind in the article; as they are undeserving of support, but also they are morally inept, making poor and damaging life choices. For example, The Mail Online (18/6/2015) used the headline, "The town where a QUARTER of pregnant

women light up: Blackpool has highest rates of smoking mothers, while London has the lowest", which serves the purpose of marginalising women, and by using London as an example, inviting readers to make social comparisons. A similar article in a left-leaning red top ran a similar article the same day, "Which UK town has the most pregnant smokers? Stats show where expectant mums are still lighting up; Latest figures reveal that in one town, more than a quarter of babies are born to mothers who smoke" (The Mirror, 18/6/2015). Although Blackpool is not identified in the headline, it is in the second line of the article, followed by the contrast of Central London:

Extract 2

More than a quarter of babies are born to mothers who smoke in one seaside town, figures show.

In Blackpool, 27.2% of women were recorded as smoking at the time of birth in 2014/15, the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) said.

This contrasted with central London at the other end of the spectrum, where just 2.1% of women did.

Claimants are depicted as the 'undeserving poor', a commonly used trope in right-wing national newspapers "handed the benefit abusing alcohol, while one in 20 have drug addiction problems" (Mail Online, 22/3/2015). The use of 'handed' here is pertinent, as it suggests the claimants are undeserving. There is a further sense of (im)morality, with staff making decisions regarding ESA claims reported to receive 'death threats', to a point where the contractors reputedly ending the contract. This point of the aggression of unsuccessful claimants lends itself to their depiction as undeserving, suggests a level of anti-social behaviour and aggression, and the idea that poor can be equated to a lack of morality. This again engages the social practices of morality, concerning what is acceptable, producing a sense that those living in poverty are behaving outside the accepted moral standards of society; thereby their lower status in society is justified.

Local newspapers also offered hegemonic social representations of poverty. This sense of shame was reflected in one local newspaper article, ('We're South Shore

and proud of it ...', Blackpool Gazette, 23/5/2012), where responses of locals were collated following an announcement that they lived in an area in Blackpool that was the most deprived area in the UK. These included that they were 'shocked' at 'claims they are the hardest hit by poverty in the country'. The use of 'claims' suggests that this is open to interpretation, and one which locals expressed. Not only does the headline demonstrate the general representation of Blackpool from people as proud, but it also gives an initial sense that the article resists hegemonic social representations. There are two clear representations, the threat to identity and local resistance to that threat. Locals were quoted as resisting the claim of being poverty stricken. While they admitted that 'certain streets are bad', in general the residents were described as 'lovely people'. Nevertheless, there is an overtone that poverty is shameful. Although it is not specified in the article, the identification of specific 'lovely people' indicates an omission of those who do not fit into this category being present in the neighbourhood. Poverty seemed to identify the character of the individual; South Shore is known locally as an area of high poverty. They are not challenging the social representation, instead they accept the validity of this social representation, and reproduce it by identifying different social groups in the area; the social representation just does not apply to them. This recreates social practices relating to morality; poverty is reinforced not only in material terms, but a poverty of morality, aligning with the trope of the 'underserving poor', through the distinction of 'lovely people' within the area which is characterised as only referring to specific members of the community.

Articles from local newspapers give an interesting insight into the tension between hegemonic and emancipatory social representations of poverty, children, and families. In such newspapers, there is a dichotomy between these, which depends on which councillors and MPs are quoted on the issue. Blackpool has two constituencies, Blackpool North (historically a Conservative constituency) and Blackpool South (Labour constituency since the 1990s up until the most recent general election). The Labour MP for Blackpool South (at the time of publication was Gordon Marsden) focused on the wider issue of cuts in spending and a need for a holistic approach to regenerating Blackpool, highlighting a lack of employment and housing (Blackpool Gazette, 17/1/2017; Lytham St Annes Express, 10/1/2017; . The Conservative MP for Blackpool North (at the time and still representing Blackpool North is Paul Maynard) depicts the issue differently and these are expressed nationally as well as locally. In

The Independent (3/10/2012), he reproduces the representation of personal responsibility in relation to poverty:

Extract 3

> He told the audience: "I value personal responsibility. My main concern for the immediate future is that people have the most money in their pockets as possible," reported the Manchester Evening News.
>
> The MP for Blackpool North and Cleveleys went on: "I do not believe that immediate food relief should be the role of the government. We can't make food banks part of the welfare state.
>
> "What I don't want to do is normalise food poverty.

In the same article, an opposing view was offered by a Trussell Trust representative who challenged this political view by explaining in depth the process of being able to access food banks. This should lead to a balanced between the two perspectives. However, the article could lead to a primacy effect as the views of the MP are reported first and in clearer, simplified terms. Also, when considering how the article is structured, the comments by the MP are short and simple, based on established social representations. According to Fairclough (2003), social representations are more likely to be accepted if they align with already established cultural norms and social practices. The long and detailed description by the Trussell Trust is near the end of the article and is reported as one large quotation, rather than smaller 'sound bites'. This leads to a structure that, although is presented as balanced, due to how quotes are used, audiences are more likely to engage with the quotes of the MP.

The MP, Paul Maynard was also given the opportunity to write an article reflecting on food banks (Blackpool Gazette, 10/10/2012). He constructs a sense of togetherness, 'we live in tough times', where struggles are shared by all. When discussing the experiences from some of his constituents he lists administrative and familial problems as the causes of hardship. He also dismisses the severity of the struggles of some families by referring to a culture of dependency, to produce a sense of opportunity rather than need. The idea of a culture of dependency contradicts the ideals of meritocracy and independence. This reinforces his earlier statements relating

to food banks by advocating limiting food bank parcels, restricting the number of food parcels to avoid any dependency. The use of the word dependency lends itself to discourses used in relation to drug and alcohol usage in Blackpool, producing a sense of shame. Even though alcohol and drugs are not explicitly stated, the sense of those using food banks as responsible for their deprivation and undeserving of support is clear. The sense of personal responsibility is also prevalent in the causation of poverty, with the main victims being children who have a lack of agency over their social position, which although not explicitly stated, places responsibility on the individual, namely the parents. The fact that the hegemonic social representations of Blackpool's 'undeserving poor' receive national and local exposure, illustrates the purpose of such discourses to serve the political function that individuals are responsible for their own hardship. There is also the social function of recreating shame around state dependency. These combined serve the overarching purpose of maintaining power structures and inequality by holding individuals, specifically parents as accountable for their own hardship, and in turn, the hardship that it causes their children.

3.3.1.2. Emancipatory social representations

Emancipatory social representations could be found in left-leaning tabloids and broadsheets and local papers. In terms of family, these focus on parents' sense of agency in the face of financial constraint. For example, local newspapers (Blackpool Gazette, 18/2/2012, 10/7/2012, 19/12/2013, 20/10/2014, 23/2/2015, 29/11/2016, 10/1/2017) depicted families living in poverty as having 'hit rock bottom', 'struggling', failing to 'make ends meet', 'hard-up', 'desperate' and as 'JAMs' ('just about managing'). Over the 5 ½ year period sampled, of those newspaper articles remaining, 26 described a lack of agency relating to their situation; six broadsheets took the same approach; four tabloid articles identified a lack of agency relating to family poverty, two of these articles made reference to 'survival shop-lifting' where parents were forced into crime to manage their poverty (e.g., The Mirror, December 20th 2014; The People, 21/12/2014). These represent families in poverty as possessing the ability and motivation to escape or improve their situations, with a lack of social capital, still possessing a sense of agency; they however are unable to consider the recourse of their criminality, due to their financial hardship. Such social representations resist the hegemonic representations of personal responsibility and meritocracy.

Broadsheets and left-leaning tabloid newspaper articles tend to use Blackpool as an extreme case or 'prime example' of the town's deeper social and economic issues. One approach is to focus on the working poor, but another is to use depictions of the nostalgia of seaside towns to highlight the downward mobility of specific English towns across the UK, identified as 'working class' or 'impoverished.' This creates and recreates a social representation of the continuous nature of decline. Many journalists attribute this to the transience of seaside towns and how, not only do they attract the most vulnerable members of society, but also how councils use seaside towns as a 'dumping ground' (The Independent, 5/8/2013, 11/8/2013, 17/3/2017, 18/3/2017; London Evening Standard, 5/8/2013; The Times, 5/8/2013, 6/8/2013, 26/8/2013). These articles tend to be concentrated around specific time periods, which coincide with the publication of the government produced CSJ (2013) report and the election of Theresa May as Prime Minister, who promised to help the 'JAMs' (Just About Managing; Parkinson, 2016). Therefore, these serve the purpose of reproducing social representations of Blackpool a place for the unwanted (hence the 'dumping ground' notion), as lacking a sense of agency or control over this. This suggests that although they appear to be emancipatory in that they address the wider issues, thus serving a hegemonic political agenda. These were also depicted in tabloids, both left and right leaning, during the same time period (Daily Mirror, 23/8/2013; The Express, 5/8/2013) and local newspapers (5/8/2013). This shows the representation of poverty and lack of agency being reproduced across a range of sources, all using language to highlight the 'plight of seaside towns', using headlines referring to 'poverty-on-sea', 'The last resort', and 'The Battle *for* Hastings'.

One broadsheet specifically made reference to Blackpool in its headlines, drawing upon imagery of nostalgia, 'Blackpool needs its tiddly-om-pom-pom back; We are dumping society's most vulnerable people in seaside towns and ruining Britain's once proud resorts' (The Times, 26/8/2013). Beyond the headline, rather than depicting a town that is in crisis, responsibility in placed on the residents of Blackpool. The reason for decline is described as 'natural' due to the nature of package holidays, but attributes the 'sharp' decline of those in categorised as 'poor' to the social group ('poverty attracts poverty'). Further agency is placed on Blackpool residents by the article contrasting successful seaside towns such as Lytham St Annes (which is in close proximity to Blackpool), which has 'bucked the trend' through 'luck or judgment'. The

media focuses on class difference, making reference to middle class seaside resorts, but including descriptions of Blackpool and similarly declining seaside towns as 'In some decayed seaside resorts it is obvious at a glance that peeling Edwardian family hotels are crowded with asylum-seekers in "temporary" accommodation' (The Times, 26/8/2013). There is a clear tension within the social representations where the decline of seaside towns is both inevitable, in light of global economic forces, and a consequence of the nature of the attributes of their population. The use of nostalgia here is to highlight the decline of Blackpool. By using nostalgia, the decline of Blackpool is amplified, which alongside the seaside towns which have not declined, raising questions as to how the decline could occur. This may seem emancipatory, as the article is sympathetic to the plight of Blackpool. However, during this time period a number of articles emerged that focussed on seaside town decline and the struggles of the working class. Superficially, this suggest emancipatory representations. However, as these articles were published at specific times relating to the government's agenda, it is worth noting that semiosis figures are not transparent and can be misleading (Fairclough, 2010). These seemingly emancipatory social representations establish and justify power relations by supporting the idea of a sympathetic government. Simultaneously, the articles focus on Blackpool, its nostalgic, affluent past, and its decline that sets it apart from other seaside towns, creating a sense of responsibility and marginalisation.

However the article below offers an emancipatory representation of Blackpool residents, where the writer focuses on the hardship that has been imposed on residents of Blackpool. Here the Local newspaper uses markers of poverty (Blackpool Gazette, 21/12/2012):

3.3.1.2.1 Extract 4

"Rickets used to get rated in the same league as scurvy, one of those conditions caused by poor nutrition, lack of fruit, lack of sunshine, common in the industrialised north of old - or the London of Mary Poppins lore. Poverty stricken times."

[…]

"I was one of the council taxpayers who came over all Scrooge and bah humbugged it. Why should I subsidise poor parenting? But it's not about poor parenting is it, really?"

[...]

"falling out of work and into poverty".

[…]

"I once met a young addict mum in just such a queue who couldn't understand why her toddler was crying while eating her favourite salted crisps treat. It was clear her child had impetigo - a highly contagious bacterial infection which causes the skin around the mouth to blister. Salt in an open wound..."

By making reference to fictitious works such as Dickens and Mary Poppins, and the use of the word 'lore', the author is attempting to engage the reader in an analysis of moral social practices as a means of resisting the hegemonic social representations of poverty. This is further invoked with the confessional tone, of their own concerns relating to agency, responsibility, and poverty. The aim is to negotiate the ambivalent position on the matter of individual responsibility. Instead the author denies those in poverty, the agency to take control of the situation, but also challenges the idea of meritocracy, which is used to maintain power constructs. The allegory of the young mother is as an exemplar of a social group, who cannot understand the apparent causes of the child in pain (the vulnerable poor), crying out for help, and understanding. Instead rather than improve the situation, society 'puts salt into the wounds'. In other words by denying the actual causes of poverty, social representations of poor parenting, worsen an already dire situation.

Although there are instances of poverty in Blackpool being discussed in a wider social context, with the responsibility being reported as societal, the majority of articles tend to take a different approach. Although some broadsheets discuss the political and social implications of poverty, children, and the family, they tend to refer to Blackpool as an example of the cycle of poverty, as a specific case, leading to the marginalisation of Blackpool residents as a social group. National tabloids when making the same references, tend to do so by highlighting the undeserving nature of those living in

poverty, demonising the poor, and use Blackpool as a form of 'folk devil', a cautionary tale.

3.3.2. Theme 2: Alcohol, drugs and crime

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Blackpool (2020a) identified that the alcohol problem in the UK makes up 10% of health related problems and deaths. The North West of England has been identified as the worst area in the country for alcohol misuse, while Blackpool has the highest rates of alcohol related risks in the area (including health related problems and crime) (JSNA Blackpool, 2020a). JSNA (2020a) identifies that alcohol related problems in Blackpool as dating back to the Victorian era, so this is attributed to the nature of the locality as a seaside town. This theme will establish whether social representations of Blackpool, is of a place associated with high drug misuse, when in fact, the rates of opiate use is 4.4%, compared to the national average of 6%; non-opiate drug use rate in England is 34.2%, but 28.6% in Blackpool (Lancashire County Council, 2021). However, crime rates in Blackpool are the highest in Lancashire (Lancashire County Council, 2020). From a critical realist perspective, the relationship between alcohol, drugs, and crime is complex and potentially does not correlate with social representations of Blackpool. According to the correlations relating to social representations of Blackpool in the media, drugs, alcohol, and crime were positively significantly correlated.

On the whole the social representations of crime, drugs, and alcohol are hegemonic in nature because the social representations of these factors are well established in social practices, social morals, and social interactions (Fairclough, 2003). According to Fairclough (2003) social representations allow those outside the social group discussed to make comparisons in terms of social structure and social practice.

An example of how Blackpool is represented in national tabloids is evident in the following headline:

Extract 5

The last resort; POVERTY, DRUGS, BOOZE. HOW BLACKPOOL HAS HIT ROCK BOTTOM (The Mirror, 23/8/2013)

The first sentence of the article juxtaposes the headline by drawing on the nostalgia of the thriving seaside town:

Extract 6

BLACKPOOL at its finest sees the Golden Mile shimmering as families flock from across the North to hit the beach.

Children pay £2 to ride on a donkey as their parents snap pictures to put on Facebook.

(The Mirror, 23/8/2013).

By focusing on its 'finest', the 'flocking' of families, and the cost of a donkey ride, this creates an image of a town that could be thriving. The article focuses on the investments in Blackpool, which contrast with the reported high unemployment and houses of multiple occupancy (bedsits). This article creates a complex image of a town where there is potential, yet there is deprivation. This hegemonic representation serves the purpose of maintaining inequality as Blackpool is depicted as a town that is not taking the obvious opportunities, which opposes the idea of meritocracy.

1.3.2.1.Drugs

Drug abuse and misuse were common themes in all media sources. One example of drug usage related to the rise in synthetic, and at the time legal, drugs, with 11 newspaper articles focusing on this issue. The reporting of synthetic drug use in national newspapers tended to be in broadsheets and the emphasis was on Blackpool. For example, The Independent's (8/11/2015) headline was as follows:

Extract 7

Synthetic drug 'ravaging Blackpool and turning people's empathy off'; A charity worker warns people become 'aggressive' and have 'their empathy turned off' while on the drug

The language used to describe the effect of the synthetic drug constructs imagery of drugs that reproduces the hegemonic representation of drug users as immoral. The article continues constructing the impact of Spice on Blackpool:

Extract 8

A charity has warned Blackpool's homeless population is being ravaged by the synthetic cannabis drug called Spice (The Independent, 8/11/2015).

This not only draws upon the impact of drugs on Blackpool's environment, but the link between drug usage, deprivation and homelessness, reproducing the social representation of drug misusers as responsible for their situation, but also the impact on the wider community.

This imagery is reproduced in The Observer (7/11/2015), using a similar headline:

Extract 9

Plague of cheap 'spice' strengthens its grip on homeless and jobless in northern towns; Use of the synthetic cannabinoid is soaring in Blackpool, but the town is far from alone

These headlines and the reporting is one of devastation. The language relating to 'its grip' gives a sense of responsibility of the homeless and the poor for their situation. The article further relates this lack of agency by emphasising and repeatedly referring to deprivation throughout the article. The article serves to reproduce the social representation of 'the poor' as agents of their own failures, by making poor choices. This serves the power structures by reinforcing the idea that those who are poor and homeless are underserving. A lack of agency is seen in The Guardian (11/5/2016):

Extract 10

Legal highs brought low as councils employ banning orders to curb use; Critics say antisocial behaviour laws used by local authorities ahead of an all-out ban on legal highs have already criminalised vulnerable people 'by the back door'

The article takes the form of a narrative, reporting the use of the drug as a story of vulnerability. This is superficial and could be seen as 'emancipatory'. However, by focusing on law, they are serving power constructs as necessary. Residents of Blackpool are depicted as a social group who are already disadvantaged, as passive in the decline due to drug usage. This acts as a way of reproducing a relationship of need, where 'the poor' of Blackpool need the authority of power constructs to protect them from themselves.

This approach is also seen in local reporting of this type of drug usage, The Blackpool Evening Gazette (13/11/2015) used the headline 'Legal highs targeting less well off', depicting the drug users as victims. This is repeated at the end of the article, using a quote from a local councillor, someone knowledgeable of Blackpool:

Extract 11

Gillian Campbell, deputy leader of Blackpool Council, said: "Legal highs are a scourge and, in my opinion, selling them is no better than drug dealing.

"Those selling them are capitalising on the vulnerability of people with pre-existing addictions."

Here the guilty party are those selling the 'legal highs' and by comparing them to drug dealers, reproducing the need for power structures as a form of protection through the legal system, as a way of justifying the existing power constructs. Some responsibility is placed on the 'victims' or 'vulnerable people', in that they are identified as having 'pre-existing addictions', again reproducing the social representation that inequalities are justified, serving the power structures in place. However, this is contrasted by a local article which constructs drug users in Blackpool as part of everyday life, 'People have dealers on speed dial' (Blackpool Gazette, 30/1/2014). This local article focuses on the prevalence and normative nature of drug usage in Blackpool, '"My 91-year-old granddad could tell you where to get drugs from in this town," one told me.' The character in the newspaper (a drug dealer) further elaborated on their perception of drug availability:

And, he claimed, it is available "everywhere".

He said: "Most people have their dealer on speed dial these days to keep things simple but to be honest you can walk into pretty much any pub or club and score

The article presents drug users as agentic, and the social representation of drug usage in Blackpool as normalised. This serves to marginalise Blackpool, in that the problems associated with Blackpool are the responsibility of its residents. Over the period sampled, there were 269 articles that related Blackpool to drug usage. These articles took a number of forms, centring around narratives which highlighted that drug usage starts at a young age in Blackpool ('Drug users are as young as 13', Blackpool Evening Gazette, 2/10/2012), reproducing the representation of children as lacking in agency and the victims. The prevalence of reporting of drug usage in Blackpool can lead to 'saturation' of these images of Blackpool and its association with drug usage in local and national newspapers. This serves to reinforce Blackpool and its decline as to some degree agentic, thus justifying its decline. In doing so, it maintains the social order, which are inherent to maintain the power structures.

1.3.2.2. Alcohol

Another issue that emerged in the media, which often correlated with drug usage, was alcohol abuse in the town. Alcohol appeared in 261 articles relating to Blackpool across the sampled period. It was referred to in a number of ways: binge drinking and tourism; the impact of changing alcohol licensing laws; co-occurrence with drugs; co-occurrence with crime; co-occurrence with drugs and crime. The 'cost' of alcohol use/misuse/addiction was also a recurring theme in national and local newspapers. One example of this can be seen in The Guardian (27/7/2013):

Extract 13

Why Blackpool is the most deadly place in England: Life expectancy in the seaside town is the worst in England. Patrick Collinson examines the reasons

As this article appears in the 'Money' subsection of the newspaper, it sets the tone that finances are the main concern. The first paragraph rapidly states the major issues of Blackpool:

Extract 14

Bloomfield is the unhealthiest district in England's unhealthiest town, Blackpool. More than half of the local population smokes, the highest rate in the country. One in three pregnant women, even up to the point they go into hospital to give birth, are still smoking. Alcoholism is rife, while deaths from drug abuse rival those of the worst estates in London or Glasgow.

The repetition of unhealthiest, alongside the habits of residents, sets the scene that the health problems are 'self-inflicted'. Linguistics of sickness and disease are used to construct Blackpool as the sickest town in Blackpool. This maintains the social order, justifying the social wrong of Blackpool's social representation as 'sick'. It serves as a 'cautionary tale', whereby those who are not residents can make social comparisons to those who are 'out of control' in terms of lifestyle 'choices'. By including major cities as comparisons, the decline and alcohol misuse and poor lifestyle choices are amplified, extrematisation and agency are used ('even to the point they go into hospital to give birth they are still smoking'), they are choosing to harming their own children. There is the implication that children are victims of these habits by making reference to smoking while pregnant, and that the effects of Blackpool's 'sickness' are generational. The responsibility of the individual is restated:

Extract 15

In Bloomfield alone there is an off-licence for every 250 people, each trying to undercut the other. In the town centre, all-night drinking is legendary, with some clubs not closing their doors until 7am. […]

Catastrophic levels of liver cirrhosis and digestive problems in Blackpool alone account for up to one year of the town's five-year longevity gap with the rest of England. Another whole year is put down to violence, self-harm, overdose and poisoning.

Much of the violence is a result of heavy drinking

The article here conflates the town and its people ('the town's five-year longevity gap') further emphasises the responsibility of the poorest members of Blackpool by drawing upon statistics relating to the availability of alcohol. The article connects alcohol with other social ills, further marginalising residents of Blackpool, as agentic in their decline. The article further reinforces the 'fecklessness' of residents of Blackpool which are homogenised in this depiction:

Extract 16

One solution is to cut the levels of housing benefit. Blackpool says it is the "polar opposite" to parts of the country such as London, where housing benefit may be insufficient. In Blackpool it is too much, and produces perverse outcomes.

This directly links alcohol abuse and its consequences to an overly generous welfare policy. The 'perverse outcomes' pathologises residents of Blackpool, but also holds them responsible for the town's deprivation. This maintains the social wrong by constructing the power structures as overly generous, justifying inequality, as generosity is wasted on the feckless poor. This focus on finances can be seen locally ('True cost of drinks crisis', Blackpool Evening Gazette, 15/10/2012):

Extract 17

THE STAGGERING cost of treating booze-related illnesses and injuries in Blackpool has today been laid bare.

More than 30,000 people in the resort were admitted to hospital due to drink last year - and NHS Blackpool says medical treatment for health problems caused by alcohol is draining £100m from the resort annually.

The language in the above extract ('staggering', 'laid bare', 'draining') depicts the town as the 'victim' by distancing the problem from residents by referring to the 'resort'. By using an ex-alcoholic, this reinforces the agency of individuals who drink excessively, but also resists the social representation of residents as 'sick':

Extract 18

Blackpool has always been a party town, but now people are just coming here to get absolutely steaming drunk. They bring their own problems here.

This quote is problematic as when considered with the previous extract from the same article, there are two version of Blackpool, the town and the resort. This has implications for social representations of Blackpool, because without this being differentiated, the two become conflated. Therefore, this could be seen as a form of emancipatory representation, in that Blackpool is a destination for the sick and the deprived. This representation of those with alcohol-related problems being a cost to others is reproduced in The Express (26/4/2017):

Extract 19

These are the areas with the highest number of people unable to work because of alcoholism

The article here makes the connection between joblessness and alcoholism, further justifying the overly generous welfare policy, which 'enables' the 'feckless' to misuse alcohol. They are agents of their own decline who are not participating members of society. Blackpool is being used as an exemplar of a number of social problems. It is the referent for downward comparisons that serve the purpose of maintaining inequality in society. A further article in the Express (3/5/2017) again emphasises the cost on others:

Extract 20

DRINKING alcohol was linked to 1.1 million estimated hospital admissions last year - a four per cent increase on the previous year, figures by the NHS revealed. The statistics have also revealed where in the UK has the highest rate of hospital admissions.

Figures revealed by NHS Digital have revealed Blackpool had the highest rate at 3,540 admissions per 100,000 people.

Alcohol is often related to crime and drug usage where Blackpool serves as the exemplar of social problems. National and local reporting depersonalises those with alcohol related problems. They are depicted as having agency over their situation, and that those who conform to the social practices of society (not drinking to excess) are the victims of their alcohol problems. The issue of alcoholism is not depicted as an illness, but as a self-inflicted condition which costs others, and society as a whole. These hegemonic representations maintain the status quo wherein people are the architects of their own disadvantage, a burden on others for whom the state should not assume any responsibility.

3.3.2.1. Crime, drugs, and alcohol

The inter-relationship between crime, drugs, and alcohol is depicted across all media sources. The instances are often reported in a way that produces a sense of otherness, to justify inequality through downward social comparisons. One such case was reported in two red top newspapers, with the following headline:

Extract 21

Man 'zapped dying friend with mains'; INQUEST (Daily Mirror, 11/09/2013)

Another headline relating to the same case read:

Extract 22

Mate's wiring shock (Daily Star, 11/9/2013)

Both headlines take an irreverent approach to the case, suggesting that even though a man had died that this was to be treated with humour. There is a sense of mockery in the headlines, and the article in the Daily Star (11/9/2013) further trivialised the events:

Extract 23

A MAN was so desperate to save his dying friend he plugged him into the mains.

Briece Ogilvie ripped a live cable from a fridge a put the wires on Kevin Green's chest as a makeshift defribillator [sic].

But he failed to save Mr Green, 43, an inquest has heard.

Mr Green died as a result of pneumonia, alcohol and drug abuse after collapsing at a flat in Blackpool.

Pc Claire Van Deurs Goss told the Blackpool hearing: "He told me it was plugged in and he put it to the left side of Kevin's chest. He genuinely thought he had saved his life."

An autopsy verdict gave pneumonia, drugs use, and alcohol as the cause of death. The detailed description of the incident serves the purpose of highlighting the 'stupidity' of Briece. The police officer's comments relating to the fact that he thought he had saved his friend's life could be seen as a form of defence, but also interpreted due to the tone of the article, as a form of mockery. Such cases and their reporting in a humorous style, maintain social order as they offer a 'moral tale' of the impact of alcohol and drugs, creating an image of those involved as lacking intelligence. This leads to another form of downward comparison, which readers can use to distance themselves from such individuals. The mocking tone also indicates that the events are 'victimless', that such members of society are less worthy of sympathy. In reality, the actions of the friend played no role in the death, but the emphasis was on the 'comic' events following the death. Such reporting serves to maintain social order through mocking the friend, rather than focusing on the death of a man, which is also seen as less important, as his death was caused in part, by drugs and alcohol.

A sense of otherness relating to drugs, alcohol, and crime is accentuated, and in some cases the focus is on women as perpetrators of social problems. Although crime, drugs, and alcohol are reported, when the subset of women as criminalised, there is a heavy focus on their wrong-doing and how this relates to their gender role. One particular case refers to the woman arrested, accused of giving alcohol and drugs for sexual favours to two teenage boys. The case was reported eight times including local, red-top, and broadsheet newspapers. The fact that she was a mother, and the power differentials between her and the victims, were present in each headline:

Extract 24

"Mother-of-three "takes 15-year-old boy and his friend to bed for threesome"; Caroline Lea allegedly performed oral sex on one boy during the session at her home - where she is said to have allowed the boys to drink and do drugs" (The Telegraph, 5/1/2016)

"Blackpool mother-of-three denies having sex with three underage boys; She also denied ever having sex with another 15-year-old who claims pair slept together almost daily for several months" (The Independent, 8/1/2016)

"Mother, 36, denies having threesome with 15-year-old boy and his friend because 'I don't like skinny blokes'" (The Mail, 9/1/2016)

"Mother-of-three, 36, is cleared of having drug-fuelled threesome with 15-year-old boy and his friend after insisting she didn't like 'skinny blokes'" (The Mail, 12/1/2016)

"Boy, 15, 'was given amphetamines by 36-year-old mother-of-three to keep him awake for sex'" (The Mail, 5/1/2016)

"Mum, 36, 'takes 15-year-old boy and his pal to bed for steamy THREESOME'; Caroline Lea allegedly performed oral sex on one boy during the session at her home - where she is said to have allowed the boys to drink and do drugs" (The Mirror, 4/1/2016)

"Teen sex charge mum cleared by jury in hours" (Fleetwood Weekly Times, 13/1/2016)

"Woman 'gave drugs to boy to keep him awake for sex'" (Daily Star, 5/1/2016)

The emphasis on the role of the woman serves the purpose of recreating a sense of 'double deviance', not only for the crime, but the betrayal of the maternal role of 'mother', specifically her involvement in a sexual crime with youths. The use of language emphasises her wrong-doing, and by making reference to not liking 'skinny blokes' creates a dismissive tone to the accusations made against her. For example in The Telegraph:

Extract 25

"Francis McEntee, prosecuting, said the second 15-year-old complainant believed he was in a relationship with the defendant, who is the mother of three sons."

By including information relating to the naivety of the young complainant, and the gender of her children, this serves to further emphasise the sense of otherness and immorality of her actions. The reference to Blackpool is present in all articles, which include details of specific sexual acts allegedly performed. One sentence that is included in the majority of articles is:

Extract 26

One boy described the threesome and said Lea told them: "Come on boys, I thought you knew what you were doing."

This could make reference to their sexual experience, or their complicity in the sexual acts reported. More newspapers focused on the court case with only two referring to her acquittal. The heading for one of these was as follows:

Extract 27

"Mother-of-three, 36, is cleared of having drug-fuelled threesome with 15-year-old boy and his friend after insisting she didn't like 'skinny blokes'" (The Mail, 12/1/2016)

Rather than focusing on evidence, the headline makes reference to her partner preference, fetishizing her and the case. Even though she was found not guilty, a local newspaper (Fleetwood Weekly Times, 13/1/2016), includes a final quote which raises questions regarding her morality and behaviour:

Extract 28

"She told Lea: "Your lifestyle clearly has a number of elements which are of concern to the court."

The depiction of the woman in these articles, in relation to drugs, alcohol, and criminality, produced and reproduced a sense of 'otherness'. The fact that she was a mother, and lived in Blackpool was emphasised. Another case, which involved both parents, but the emphasis was placed on the mother, was reported in The Daily Mail (29/9/2014), which had the headline, 'Newborn baby died after being crammed into single bed with parents who had been drinking vodka and smoking cannabis'. The article continues:

Extract 29

A newborn baby may have accidentally suffocated after she was crammed into a single bed with her parents while they slept after drinking vodka and smoking cannabis.

Alesha Roberts was 16 days old when she died after her mother Letisha, 22, lay her between herself and her boyfriend for a cuddle.

Here it is clarified that the parent was the mother, and she was responsible for the incident. This report was repeated in The Mirror (30/9/2014):

Extract 30

A NEWBORN baby died when her parents slept with her in a single bed after a booze and drugs session.

Alesha Roberts stopped breathing as her mother Letisha Roberts, 22, and boyfriend - named only as "Ahmed" - "cuddled" her, an inquest heard.

The vulnerability of the child is emphasised (NEWBORN). The Mirror (6/4/2016) reported a similar incident:

Extract 31

Parents of baby who died after they 'forgot where they put him after drinking binge' won't be prosecuted; Tragic little Freddie Neil was found lying on the floor wedged between a wall and bed in his older brother's room and pronounced dead on arrival at hospital

The depiction of the case is one of guilt, as the emphasis is on their irresponsibility of their 'drinking binge' which is directly related to the incident, even though all charges were dropped:

Extract 32

The parents of a month-old baby who died after they allegedly went on a 24-hour Christmas drinking binge and then forgot where they had left him have been told they won't be prosecuted.

Tragic little Freddie Neil was found lying on the floor wedged between a wall and bed in his older brother's room and pronounced dead on arrival at hospital

[…]

It found how his mum and alcoholic dad spent the 24 hours beforehand downing 'a large quantity of alcohol' in a pub and with friends at their home in Blackpool, Lancs.

The mother, aged 32, last remembered attending to Freddie around 5am and her husband, a local DJ, stayed up with the baby until around 6am when their friends left.

[…]

An inquest heard that Neil, 34, who was 'extremely tired and intoxicated', remembered taking Freddie to bed but could not say how he came to be in their other son Alex's room.

He was woken around noon the following day - Boxing Day - by Alex crying at the stair gate with his nappy off and excrement on the floor.

The details here create an imagery of neglect, enabling readers to make comparisons relating to morality and the social practices of parenting. These incidents of neglect were reproduced across national and local newspapers. Although these were limited cases, their reproduction and focus on motherhood, across a number of newspapers, serves to produce a sense of otherness regarding the women who are from Blackpool. Such repetition and reproduction can be seen as a way of anchoring these images into the existing representations of Blackpool as a site of deprivation, where the individuals have agency over their social situation, as well as being responsible for the cost to others. These costs in relation to drugs, alcohol and crime can be seen on multiple levels: macro-level, the financial cost and otherwise, to upstanding members of society as a whole; meso-level, the cost to fellow residents in terms of the environment created by their wrong-doings, and the local costs in terms of health; and micro-level, the harm caused to children, the most vulnerable members of society.

3.4.Discussion

Overall, the social representations of Blackpool tended to be hegemonic. In terms of poverty, families, and children, both hegemonic and emancipatory social representations were identified. Hegemonic social representations identified Blackpool more clearly, the focus was on the agency and responsibility of parents for their hardship. The overarching social representations were that families were responsible, due to their dependency on support, which led to poor choices, affecting their children. The social representations lend themselves to concepts of meritocracy and independence. This serves the purpose of identifying those who are poor as 'undeserving' and 'feckless'. Blackpool is depicted as an exemplar of these issues in society, which serve the purpose of maintaining the power structures in place. They create images of fairness in inequality, and in fact, that the power structures, including

the government are perhaps overgenerous with the poorest members of society. These images and representations were also seen in relation to the second theme.

In terms of criminality, drugs, and alcohol, the social representations tended to be hegemonic, which is unsurprising due to the power structures and the focus on morality in relation to social structures and social practices. These hegemonic social representations in national newspapers serve to create a homogenous negative representation of Blackpool. Beyond that, drug usage, alcohol consumption were all reported in narratives that constructed a sense of cost, to vulnerable individuals, their local environment or society as a whole. Narratives focused on creating a sense of otherness, stigmatising residents of Blackpool, through morality and social practices, and mockery. The reporting of issues focusing on environmental and national financial costs created a sense of agency and responsibility, again stigmatising local residents, reinforcing the idea that this social group are treated more than fairly by the power structures, and abuse the support they receive. For those outside Blackpool, this would give individuals the opportunity to make downward social comparisons based on social practices and morality, with Blackpool as the exemplar of immorality leading to deprivation.

However, there were some emancipatory representations in relation to poverty, families, and children, in national newspapers. These tended to refer to Blackpool as an example of social injustice. However, they depicted residents of Blackpool as passive and lacking agency. They also raised questions as to why Blackpool, a once thriving seaside town had fallen so dramatically when other seaside towns had not. This highlights the distinctiveness of Blackpool, as a declining seaside town. Emancipatory articles in local newspaper articles focused on the difficulties faced by those living in deprivation in Blackpool, which were sympathetic to the plight, making reference to the depiction and cynicism surrounding poverty and Blackpool. The social representations of Blackpool tended to be homogenous, not distinguishing between the different areas of Blackpool, and how they differ socially and economically.

In terms of young women's identity, this could impact on how they manage where they live in the town. For those living in more affluent areas, there is the opportunity to distance themselves from the wards identified as problematic. The issue of identity for those living in more deprived areas might be more challenging. Based

on social representations, they might draw upon a lack of agency. However, this in itself could lead to identity threat, particularly to the content and value dimensions of identity. The other potential strategy would be to draw upon the hegemonic social practices and morality, and use this as a strategy to distance themselves on an abstract level, rather than spatially. For those who are from deprived families, the social representations would be something that may influence self-presentation, to challenge these on a familial and social level.

However, this would be more problematic for participants in the study. To accept these hegemonic representations, they would need to manage their identity through distancing and distinctiveness, challenging the homogenous social representation of Blackpool residents. They could draw on a sense of victimhood, as young women, their lack of agency and vulnerability could serve as a way to distance themselves from the social representations. However, this could lead to another type of identity threat, as this would lead to a sense of disempowerment as this would impact on their sense of efficacy and agency.

Distancing and distinctiveness could be achieved by geographic spatiality, similar to that in relation to poverty, families, and children, by identifying themselves as outside the areas of deprivation and criminality. However, they would still need to develop strategies in social situations with individuals who are not Blackpool residents, who would potentially accept the homogenous social representations of Blackpool. This would require a degree of denial, or creativity in how they construct their identity in relation to others through discourse. Participants could challenge the subject position of the immorality of drugs and alcohol consumption. However, challenging the representations of criminality, especially in light of the cases that were repeatedly reported creating representations of women in Blackpool as criminal is problematic. The emphasis on the immorality of women creates a double- bind. This concerns the immorality of their conduct, but also their 'betrayal' of the feminine role. The fact that the cases highlighted in the media, involved mothers who harmed more vulnerable members of society would mean that participants would accept the subject position, but would need to distance themselves from these depictions, through social creativity and their self-descriptions in relation to their gender and femininity. The challenge for participants is complex; they need to position themselves in relation to the social

representations they accept, based on experience and prior knowledge. They then need to negotiate their position in relation to their social and personal identity.

This could impact on young women in Blackpool in terms of how they perceive poverty and who is responsible. The narrative of the 'undeserving poor' lends itself to potential identity threats, as this would affect the value component of their identity based on these social representations. Such social representations of the town's residents can serve as a form of social practice, based on agency, responsibility, and deservedness. The sense of agency and responsibility, which is portrayed to those living in poverty in Blackpool, may pose for those living in poverty, a challenge to attempt to manage the identity threats by justifying their lower status, or through denial, by obtaining symbols of wealth through clothing and appearance. This could lead to identity management through creativity and social action; young women may internalise some of the social representations by accepting the hegemonic social representations, but distance themselves from such representations by redefining their personal identity in relation to these. They may achieve these by drawing on a distinctive identity, or by redefining the social group that they belong to. However, both of these processes lead to a reproduction of the social representations of Blackpool residents and poverty.

As young women, the participants in forthcoming chapters may not feel responsible for their status of someone living in Blackpool, or living in areas of deprivation in Blackpool. The depictions of parents and adults being responsible may lead young people to distinguish between 'good' parents (their own) and 'bad parents', so choosing to deny that the social representations relate to them. This could create a sense of otherness when discussing families and poverty.

Chapter 4: Methodology

4.1. Method

4.1.1. Recruitment – Schools

Every school in the Blackpool area and those in close proximity to Blackpool were approached to take part in the research. The schools were contacted via telephone and email. Only three schools responded positively. This could be due to the fact that at the time of the research, many schools were transitioning from council control to academies, which would have affected the schools' willingness to be involved in research. Once contact with the schools was established, a meeting was arranged with the relevant member of the management team to discuss the research. Also, I explained the overall goals of the research, and potential long-term benefits of the research. Unfortunately due to the untimely death of a member of staff, one school was unable to continue with the research. Therefore there were two schools that took part in the research. The schools were geographically situated in Blackpool and the nature of the schools meant that the schools offered a good representation of young women from different socio-economic backgrounds in Blackpool. Once the schools had agreed to take part in the research and signed the informed consent form, the academic year that would be involved in the research was negotiated. For one school, this was Year 9 transitioning to Year 10 and for the other this was Year 10, transitioning into Year 11. A meeting was arranged to give me the opportunity to explain the nature of the research to the young women in each school.

The choice of gender (female) and age range (14-16 years old) was intentional and was motivated by two key factors. The first was that, prior to commencing my PhD studies, I completed my MSc thesis where I explored the role of social influence on educational aspiration. As the research was conducted on 18 to 21 year olds at a local college, the courses tended to be more vocational, even though some were planning to attend higher educational courses. This meant that the sample was limited by the choices the young women had made previously and by their GCSE results

attained at school. However, from the MSc it was clear that further research was needed, as many of the participants alluded to their identity as young women in Blackpool, which needed exploring in more detail, rather than focusing solely on social influence (the focus on my MSc project). By focusing on young women attending secondary school at the age where the foci were their GCSEs and life after secondary school this opened up the possibility of exploring them at a key point in their lives in terms of their identity and future aspirations. Further to this at the time of commencing my PhD studies, there were numerous newspaper reports relating to how young women were outperforming young men in GCSE attainment nationally (e.g., Shepherd, 2011). However, this was not the case in Blackpool; on average GCSE results in Blackpool were lower than the national average, with young men still outperforming young women. This raised the question as to whether there were issues of aspiration in young women which were leading to a lack of educational engagement, and in turn, attainment. Based on my MSc findings and the GCSE results, the focus was on whether identity played a role in young women bucking the trend in terms of their GCSE results.

4.1.2. Recruitment – Participants

A two-stage sampling method was used. Initially I gave a presentation to all potential participants explaining the nature of my research and my research aims. There was also the opportunity for all potential participants to ask questions. After a talk, a numbered questionnaire was given to the young women. The number corresponded with class lists, so that confidentiality at this stage was maintained. The questionnaire had questions relating to future aspirations and a willingness to take part in the research. Aspiration was included as the initial focus of the research was related to the interconnectedness of identity and future aspirations. The aspirations element of the questionnaire included the opportunity for the potential participants to state their career goals. These were then indexed using the ONS (2013). From this index, it was possible to establish the 'level' of the career aspiration, for example, skilled, managerial, professional, and so on, so that the questionnaires could be scored as 'high' or 'low' aspirational. All those requiring post- further education qualifications

(professional and managerial) to be attained within a 10 year time span were deemed as high aspirations; whereas those requiring compulsory or further education/training were categorised as low aspiration. Questions based on salary gave an indication of how realistic the participants' aspirations were, i.e., whether they predicted a managerial level salary for semi-skilled employment. These salary levels were also based on ONS data (2013). Lifestyle questions were also included, relating to potential house prices; again based on their career choice, the likelihood of them being able to afford certain house prices, or underestimating the type of house that they would be able to buy based on their career choices. The house prices used were based on average house prices in Blackpool at the time (Home.co.uk).

The questionnaires where the young women did not want to take part were removed, then quota sampling was used, organising the questionnaires as follows:

1. High aspirations-high realism.
2. High aspirations – low realism.
3. Low aspirations – high realism.
4. Low aspirations – low realism.
5. Neutral

Each question was scored according to the level of aspiration in terms of career choices, and the level of realism, was generated based on the lifestyle factors and how realistic these would be based on their aspirational career choices. Once the questionnaires had been scored, three participants from each school were randomly selected from each of the categories (total of 30 potential participants). Parental consent forms were placed in envelopes with the numbers that corresponded with the numbers on the questionnaires. These were then matched with the students' names and were distributed by personal tutors. Four weeks were given for the forms to be returned and then the completed forms were collected by the school.

Participants. In total there were 19 returned parental consent forms. Nine from one school and 10 from the other. Eight of the participants were Year 9 transitioning to Year 10, aged 14 years old, one was 16 years old and had completed her GCSEs. This particular student specifically asked to be involved in the research even though she had officially left school. Ten participants were Year 10 transitioning to Year 11 and were aged 15 years old. However one student from this group dropped out

of the study. This meant that the total sample size was 18. 17 of the participants identified as White British; one identified as Mixed Race British. 17 participants identified as women, one identified as gender fluid, but predominantly female. The participants were representative of young women in Blackpool, with a range of socio-economic backgrounds and family compositions.

4.1.3. Materials

All potential participants were provided with a questionnaire as part of the sampling process. All participants were provided with a secure Lancaster Box account (a secure cloud storage facility provided by Lancaster University) to upload images. As part of the poster construction, all participants' images were printed off and given to them in a secured envelope. A2 paper was provided alongside art materials, such a coloured pens, glue, feathers, sequins, tissue paper, and glitter. A secured digital camera was used to take photographs of the poster for analysis. A secured digital recorder was used to record all interviews. The construction of the posters will be further elaborated on in the Procedure section.

4.1.4. Procedure

The study followed a three-stage process of data collection, as had been previously agreed with the schools:

Stage 1: Generation of images. The generation of images was based on the principles of photovoice (Barndt, 2014). Photovoice was developed as action research based on post-positivist epistemological approaches, where participants were involved in self-reflexivity and being actively engaged in data generation processes. The use of images was therefore seen as a useful and engaging way for participants to reflect on their identity, and potential future identities. Also with the increased use of social media which rely on imagery as a narratives of self (Page, 2011), the use of images seemed appropriate and familiar way for participants to reflect on their identities. Research by Lyons et al. (2016) highlight the importance of imagery in relation to identity in young women.

Participants were given instructions regarding the images and two weeks to collate relevant images. To help them generate images, the study was explained to them again. They were advised to use any images that did not include pictures of themselves or anyone they knew personally, but that represented them. I gave them possible examples, based on myself, and my identity and gave them the opportunity to ask questions. I tried to give them as few instructions as possible, and they had the opportunity to generate some examples in my presence, which they discussed with me. My general feedback was positive and that these images would be discussed later on in the study. I avoided being too prescriptive and assured the participants that all images were 'right' if they felt they represented something about who they were. I also asked them to think about their future selves, how they envisage who they would be in adulthood, in terms of career, place of residence, and relationships. All students were given access to Lancaster Box so that they could securely upload images. At this point they were given the opportunity to generate pseudonyms, which they all did. Their folders were named according to their pseudonyms.

I visited the schools two weeks after the initial instructions were given to help participants upload images. The participants had access to laptops or computers with internet access. The sessions were two hours long. This gave all the participants the opportunity to upload their images and to further clarify the nature of the images. When participants asked about the suitability of their images, my response was that if they felt they reflected them or who they will be, then they were suitable.

Following this session, I gave the participants one week to upload more images. I then accessed each secure folder and printed off the images. The images were placed in individual envelopes which were sealed and labelled with the pseudonym and school code for identification purposes.

Stage 2: Poster creation. The purpose of the poster generation was to enable participants to use the images and provide further opportunity for the participants to reflect on who they were and how they saw themselves, the images, and posters being reflections of these self-images and thereby providing the basis for participant-led discussions of their personal and social identities. Furthermore, as the participants were new to the research process, the poster generation would give them the opportunity to become relaxed with a process, using a technique familiar to participants. The Jigsaw

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Classroom was developed to encourage learning based on 'segmenting' information into smaller groups with each group being an expert on a specific segment. Students are tasked with presenting information that is then relayed to the other groups (Jigsaw Classroom, 2020). This method has been further developed to include the generation of posters using images with a limited number of words and numbers to further cognitively and creatively engage students (Teacher Toolkit, 2020). As a range of visual and co-operative techniques are used in schools, this was therefore deemed a familiar way to engage participants in reflecting on their identity.

A week later another session was arranged where participants were given another informed consent form. They were given their images in sealed envelopes, paper, and a range of art equipment, including glue, pens, glitter, feathers, sequins, and tissue paper to design their posters. This session lasted three hours, where participants created their posters. They were given little guidance, but encouragement was given. Informal discussions took place to ensure that participants felt relaxed throughout the research process.

Stage 3: Interviews. Following the poster session, individual interviews were conducted, following the completion of a further informed consent form. The posters were used to give some focus and structure to the interviews. The participants chose the order in which they discussed the images. Participants were asked to discuss their posters. They were prompted as to the images they wanted to discuss and the order that they were discussed in. Prompting questions were used to ask participants how the images related to their identities or future identities. Interviews were recorded using a Roland R-09 MP3 Recorder. Upon completion, interviews were uploaded to Lancaster Box in encrypted files. The recordings were stored and deleted according to Lancaster University Data Protection guidelines. Once all the interviews were completed, they were transcribed verbatim. NVivo was used for coding purposes; all interviews and digital images of posters were uploaded to NVivo.

4.1.5. Ethical issues

The study was reviewed and approved by the Research Ethics committee of the Psychology Department at Lancaster University on 20th June 2016. However, during the research two specific incidents arose which made me question myself and my

ethical understanding. The processes of gaining ethical approval were robust and sound, but these were completed prior to the research. There is an argument to be had in respect of wider ethical implications: researchers need to consider our position and that of the participants in ways that are not always codified in conventional approaches.

The two issues that arose related to the posters which were initially incorporated as a means of enabling the participants to speak more freely and to help them reflect on their own sense of self and future self. However, due to the participants' relationship with the posters, this had to be reconsidered. The posters were initially conceived as a participant generated stimulus for the interview and, potentially, as a form of data. As such they were governed by the ethical concerns for the secure storage and handling of data, including their deletion/destruction once the analysis has been completed. However discussions with one participant indicated that these posters were meaningful to the participants beyond the scope of the inquiry. This was not just something that she had spent time collecting images for, planning and creating, but she was giving part of herself, a visual depiction of her life, which had emotional meaning to her. This meant that not only would I have to reconsider my view on how the posters were understood and valued by participants; I needed to treat them with respect, in order to demonstrate respect for my participants. It was decided that she would have the choice to keep the poster, and I would just have images of it, or I would keep the poster and she would have images. The former was chosen by the participant, and this option was given to all subsequent participants. Initially the ethics form stated that posters would be destroyed along with all data pertaining to the research to ensure that the ethical guidelines of Lancaster University and the BPS were adhered to. Due to the response of participants, digital images were taken of all posters which were uploaded to Lancaster Box, and participants were given the option of keeping their posters, requesting the images of their posters, or allowing me to keep them to be destroyed according the ethical guidelines.

The second issue which arose was at a later date with participants from a different school and related to the images they selected. I was very clear that the images selected by participants should not include pictures of themselves or those personally known to them. However the participants disagreed with this. As users of social media, they use images regularly to reflect their everyday lives and these images reflect who they are. These perspectives of the participants have been supported by

research by Lyons, et al. (2016) and Goodwin et al (2016), who qualitatively examined the role of Facebook, the images used, identity and self-presentation and found that the images of participants in their research, who were young women of a similar age to those in my research, were carefully selected as a means of representing who they were. The images were important for participants in ensuring they represented themselves positively. Participants actively engaged in negotiating the images and determining how they would be portrayed. With this in mind, and the fact that as a group, the participants in my research felt strongly about their need to use the images they thought represented who they are (they actually quoted me back on this point to emphasise their point), ethical guidance was sought. My attempts to explain the importance of confidentiality led to them questioning who would see the posters. When I explained they may be used for research purposes, as the first incident had meant that I had decided to analyse the posters as a data set in themselves, their response was one of dismissal (views that they would never meet 'stuffy old professors' was the general view) meant that I had to change my approach, not only to the images, but also the notion of aspiration, which I will deal with in the Discussion chapter.

Although the process of gaining ethical approval did not lead me to question the ethical principles, the two incidents meant that I had to re-examine my stance and take action to ensure that the ethics were appropriate for the project, but also ensure that participants were protected from psychological harm, that I showed respect for the participants, alongside compassion and understanding for them, not just within the research setting, but as individuals that my research was supposed to benefit. This meant that alongside dealing with the issues that we address within an ethics form (informed consent, right to withdraw, confidentiality and anonymity, and protection of participants), I also needed to examine the BPS Ethical Code of Conduct (2018) to reflect on the qualities that I needed to exhibit and embody to work as an ethical researcher with a potentially vulnerable group, within the research setting and the wider context of their everyday lives. A disconnect between the ethical imperatives and the practical *telos* of the project needed to be avoided.

It was decided that to give the participants a sense of agency and autonomy, they could choose images and that for the purpose of confidentiality and anonymity, if the posters were to be used for research purposes I would ensure that they would be anonymised. This supported research by Levinson et al.,(2010) who highlighted the

potential issues when researching under-represented and marginalised groups. Although he did not offer specific answers to ethical problems (this would in itself assume a homogeneity of participants and situations which would be counterproductive). He emphasised the need for transparency and candidness to prevent resentment in participants, which would not only affect the research process, but their perceptions of research and academics ('outsiders' in the case of Levinson who conducted ethnographic research on Romani Gypsies). My understanding of the purpose of the research was that the research should be not only about the participants but be a beneficial process for participants. My approach was that the target population were marginalised and needed a voice and I felt a need to reflect this in my practice. Also, my aim was to ensure that they saw those associated with academia as approachable and similar to them, challenging their preconceived ideas of 'stuffy old professors'.

This wider view meant that I had to reflect on my own practice to ensure it aligned with the aims of the research, to keep the integrity of the research. Overall, the ethical principles were sound, but to ensure that no psychological harm was caused to participants, through the treatment of the posters or the interview process, during the research process, unforeseen instances and reflexivity meant that my practice had to evolve to meet the psychological needs of the participants.

The issue of informed consent also arose in terms of the method of analysis. Hammersley (2014) raised concerns relating to the use of discourse analysis and how this could be deemed a form of deceit, and how it related to informed consent and the need for research to be 'about' and 'with' participants, but I would argue it should also be 'for' the participants and the groups that they are members of. It could be argued that this is an easy stance to take as someone who is familiar with the geographic location and from a Northern working-class background. It could mean that opinions emerge which are challenging or extreme. I would argue that with the current climate, some views may be stereotypical in themselves, the role of the qualitative research is not to challenge the participant, but to gain an understanding of the discourses in an attempt to challenge the overarching discourses themselves. This is why I conducted research in a way that was participant-led, with them in effect leading the interviews through their posters. Also as the research process was conducted through different stages, participants were given every opportunity to ask about the nature of the

research. This meant that through the posters and choice of analytic method, informed consent, as much as possible was present in the research.

4.2. Analytic Method

When analysing text-based two approaches that were considered, which are closely linked, were Discursive Psychology (DP) and Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA). This is because the 'turn to language' and how language is used to construct reality (Lyons & Coyle, 2007; Willig, 2013) as a productive and dynamic process was seen as most appropriate, but also as a social action in itself. According to Billig (1997, p.43) discursive approaches involve "a theoretical way of understanding the nature of discourse and the nature of psychological phenomena". Therefore by taking a discursive approach accounted for the dynamic nature of how language is used. These approaches take into account the social context of discourse (in this case, the interview setting), and how participants understand and interpret the questions in the given social context. By using a discursive approach, how 'objects' (or 'things' as Parker, 1992) described them, due to the array of possibilities of what could constitute a 'thing' or 'object') are constructed and negotiated through language can be analysed. As language constructs the objects, they do not represent reality, so each object is open to different interpretations. Discursive approaches also allow for the performative nature of language.

The two main discursive approaches, DP and FDA were considered. However, FDA was deemed the most appropriate in this instance. The key difference between DP and FDA relates to how discursive resources are treated by the two analytic methods. DP focuses on how people use discursive resources; whereas FDA focuses on the objects and subjects being constructed through discourses (Willig, 2013). This gives insight into the ways of being, the objects, and the subjects made available to participants. FDA is also more closely associated with identity, selfhood, power, and social changes (Lyons & Coyle, 2007), which are the main concerns of this thesis. FDA describes and critiques discursive 'worlds', with implications relating to subjectivity and experience. Although FDA is described as a poststructuralist approach that takes into account the social and the psychological (Willig, 2013), it allows for the

structural reality of participants in light of power relations and social structures, which underpin how we talk about the world (Burr, 2003; Willig, 2013).

The availability of discursive resources is an important part of FDA as these can act to facilitate or limit the individual, due to discursive resources being socially and culturally bound; they "facilitate and limit, enable and constrain what can be said, by whom, where and when" (Willig, 2003, p. 100). These discursive resources serve a specific purpose, an action orientation; this is the social function that emerges from these resources in the social context. Therefore discursive resources have a functionality as they are strategies that individuals engages in, in relation to a specific object or 'thing'. Discourses form a social reality which are a product of social practices and interaction, which are embedded in the historical and cultural context (Lyons & Coyle, 2007). This means that discourses are determined by the discursive resources available to participants, and will shape how their realities and self are constructed. When referring to discourses, Parker (1992, p. 5) described these as "a system of statements which construct an object". Burr (2003, p. 202) defined a discourse as "systematic, coherent set of images, metaphors and so on that construct an object in a particular way." In this thesis, discursive resources will be used to identify individual's 'talk' relating to particular 'objects' and discourses will be used in relation to the patterns that are identified across participants' collective discursive resources that indicate that they are systematic across the participants. As discourses represent patterns across the data, they are invoked to construct 'things' in a number of ways, but form a coherent pattern, illustrating the social organization of talk.

Discourses are identified as relating to institutional practices; unlike DP, FDA considers discourse and subjectivity as related to internal processes; this psychoanalytic perspective is specific to FDA (Lyons & Coyle, 2007). This is an important point as FDA is concerned with power relations, and the extent to which these are accepted can be linked to how power relations are maintained. Dominant discourses in effect legitimize these, and are culturally and socially bound that they are accepted as 'common-sense' (Lyons & Coyle, 2007), which aligns with the media to establish social representations of Blackpool. Subject positioning allows for the examination of how, through discourses, these dominant discourses are accepted through subjectivity and interpreted through experience, as well as wider social processes. However, counter-discourses can challenge these power relations. As FDA is associated with

identity, position is also related to identity. According to Davies and Harré (1990), positioning is the discursive interpretation of the social psychological concept of identity. The individual can accept or reject the dominant position, allowing participants to act upon their environment, giving them agency, through talk.

FDA allowed for an accurate and enriched interpretation of the interviews that would serve the purpose of recognising how identity affects, and is affected by the categories of which the participants (and the wider target population) assumed membership. Using an IPT framework, this meant identifying the threats that emerge from these categories in relation to social and personal identity and how these were managed by the participants. Furthermore, the overarching purpose was to identify key features and issues that could be used in the future to enable research and practice to be developed to support the wider target population.

4.2.1.Epistemological argument

Social constructionism is relevant: there is a historical, cultural, and linguistic context to discourse. When considering the theoretical framework, and the participants, other epistemological approaches were deemed insufficient. The purpose of this research is not only to establish an understanding of self in relation to the deprivation of Blackpool, but also the social representations of Blackpool. The fact that the key tenet of research is to examine identity this way naturally leads to a relativist approach to the speakers understanding of the world they inhabit.

This can be seen in the work by Potter and Wetherell (1987) where they focused solely on the interpretative strategies of participants. Their research highlights the importance of social constructionism as an epistemological approach, as they showed that explanations of attitudes as internal and consistent processes are flawed, and highlighted the role of language and culture in the reproduction of attitudes. This approach challenges the notions of reality as objective (Burr, 2003), which again is appropriate when dealing with a marginalised group, negotiating the 'reality' of their social world. It also gives the opportunity to understand their social processes which would be historically and culturally determined. By analysing the linguistic resources available (and selected) by the speakers, this would give insight into the collective understanding of reality, and the interpretation of marginalisation.

FDA incorporates social constructionist epistemology. FDA is based on the principles of Foucault, who coined the term 'Archaeology of knowledge' which explains how knowledge comes to exist and how it is maintained (Burr, 1995, 2015). In other words, Foucault states that knowledge is culturally and historically situated, allowing for a temporal and spatial interpretation. Parker (2015) understands FDA in Jungian terms, that this archaeology of knowledge is a form of 'collective unconscious' (p. 53) which is 'inherited'.

As Burr (2018) pointed out, relativism does not contradict realism, and is not anti-realism as many critics argue. Based on the underlying approaches of discursive methodologies in psychology that discourse is action and has power, not only will the realism of their life shape their understanding of their world and sense of identity, but the symbolic violence of social representations that will impact on their lives and sense of self (Fairclough, 2003). The realism and relativism argument is a complex one when dealing with specific groups, but in this instance the important focus is that their experiences are real but how they experience and understand them is socially constructed. Potter (1998) argued that relativism in research can serve a political purpose, in that qualitative research has the potential to be used as an agent for social change. I would agree with this but, that due to the marginalised status of participants, a more realist approach to ontology is necessary. What became apparent were the subtle, maybe unconscious power differentials expressed by participants, in relation to Blackpool, the groups within Blackpool, how they placed themselves in Blackpool, in relation to the issues, seen and assumed.

4.2.2. Political Argument

FDA allows for social construction of knowledge, while addressing the material reality of the participants, in essence, a how discourses regulate knowledge of the world. Furthermore, Foucauldian theory (Burr, 2015) states that discourses also regulate social practices. FDA accounts for structural reality and that some entities exist outside of discourse. One key feature of FDA is the idea of power and knowledge, that dominant discourses reproduce and legitimise power relations. These discourses serve to either facilitate or constrain what can be said, and by whom. The stance individuals take with regards to these discourses, or the subject position is

crucial in understanding power dynamics within discourse. Positioning in discourse accounts for the identity of the speaker and their position in relation to categories and discursive practices that give meaning to the identity of the individual.

Also through subject positions, it enables the analysis to examine the 'world-view' of the participants, how they take certain vantage points as their own, even though these positions may be based on overarching beliefs (Davies and Harré, 1990). Fraser (1992) further defines the subject position in terms of hegemony and how certain social situations are defined. Parker (2005) argues that patterns of discourse are based on a Capitalist society, which is dependent on power and inequality. Through discursive practices and the construction of knowledge, a sense of 'otherness' can be identified. However according to FDA, subject positioning and the narratives formed around positioning, subject positions can give a sense of self through the constraints of discourse and knowledge and discourses available to us. This knowledge is reproduced whereby there is an understanding of how the oppressed, due to the relationship between power and knowledge, perform a form of 'self-oppression' through discourse. According to Davies and Harré (1990) the narratives formed around the positions can also be a form of resistance of discursive practices of the categories. Therefore, arguably FDA acknowledges the speakers have agency, but this may be socially constrained and limited, due to the material reality of participants and the discourses available to them.

Weedon (1987) identifies that women, through discursive practices have a sense of 'otherness' and that there is a need for women to create new subject positions for real equality. If this line of argument is taken, for the young women in this research to have a sense of a valued identity, they will challenge the subject positions available relating to womanhood and their membership of a marginalised group and form their own subject positions. In other words, whether participants can effect social change through their discourse. However, this would be limited by the resources available to participants, which will be influenced by geographical locations, gender, media influences, and social capital (Bourdieu, 1982).

Positions taken will be influenced socially and culturally. Positions also relate to power, but it must be made clear that power is intangible and does not relate to the traditional hierarchical system of class, but relates more to 'identity' (Burr, 1995;

2015). Postmodern socialists disregarded class in itself as a form of power and powerlessness, instead they focused on power in terms of discourse, and the role discourse plays in power differentials. As the focus of Foucault's theory relates to marginalisation, it takes a more flexible and fluid approach which suggests that power is also flexible and changeable. The positions taken can give insight into how speakers see themselves and others. They can give an insight into how their positions relate to power, and how they use the prevailing discourses which in the short term may mitigate threats, but ultimately reproduce and maintain the structural power constructs through discourse; this can be a form of regulation and surveillance directed at themselves and others. This could lead to identity threats which need to be managed.

For example, when examining sexual practices, the use of discourse can influence how sexuality is portrayed and understood in society. Homosexuality was once described as 'perverse' and 'unnatural', this discourse marginalised homosexuality. These principles can be applied to other social groups, including those in this study. Previous research has used FDA in relation to identity. Triandafilidis et al. (2017) explored the stigma of smoking and intersectionality in women. The study examined how the women in the study negotiated the stigma of smoking from a moral and health perspective, which lends itself to support the use of FDA to explore threatened identities. Zitz et al. (2014) examined friendship of transgender men, examining friendships and families. This study explored how friendship and families were situated during change. Furthermore, they analysed experiences on a micro- and macro- level. The research examined how relationships and identity are negotiated in the 21st Century which pertains to this study, which focuses on marginalised identities based on social representations and material reality.

Threats can be based on social representations (Breakwell, 1986, Fairclough, 2003), leading to delegitimising the group, which can lead to accepting the established position as a form of repression (Burr, 1995; 2015). However there is the opportunity to challenge the threats, and this can be achieved through discourse. Foucault argues that discourses can be used for resistance and change; because given that discourses can be constructed, they can also be deconstructed. Therefore, how participants manage identity threats can be empowering. Using FDA can give an insight into overarching discourses that relate to their identity and material reality and how they position themselves in relation to these. Insight into how their perceived powerlessness is

maintained or challenged. FDA can help understand how some representations stick, because representations support power inequalities (Fairclough, 2003; Moscovici, 2000).

Foucault describes these as 'regimes of truth' (cited in Burr, 1995). These discourses are reinforced by events and have a potential for social action, but by using marginalising discourses, such as 'chav', 'junkie' and 'downy', as well as pathologising language e.g., discourses of anxiety and 'otherness' as internal states, lead to acceptance and distancing rather than challenging these discourses. Schneider and Remillard (2013) used FDA to explore the stigma of homelessness and how individuals positioned themselves in relation to homeless people and homelessness as an issue. This study also deals with the ambivalence of discourse in relation to certain topics and issues, and what Foucault (1982, p. 777) described as "dividing practices," how certain groups are 'objectified' and categorised according to their group membership, and then excluded.

FDA also accounts for embodiment, so there is this idea that people are not just 'doing discourse', FDA takes into account how we embody accounts of ourselves. This can be seen in Gavey and Braun (1997) who explored sexuality and sexual coercion. Embodiment allows for a psychosocial approach, in other words, examining psychology, and social processes as a whole (Burr, 2015).

The focus of FDA means that discourse is analysed in relation to social and psychological life of the participants (Willig, 2013). Also as members of the wider society, this would shape their talk. By using FDA, the analysis will serve a number of purposes. It will allow the analysis of situational factors and how participants position themselves in relation to these factors and 'power', whether they accept the discourses of power or challenge them. There is also the allowance of their subjectivities of the material world, as well as acknowledging that their identity and subjectivities are internalised and affect their social practices and sense of self. Subjectivity can be defined as the sense of 'personhood', the narratives of identity embedded in discourse (Harré, 1983).

Subjectivity relates to the regulative practices which are predetermined by culture, society, and social groups. They are connected with norms and governing bodies, and are motivators of the ideal self. Subjectivity relates to the agency speakers

have over discourses, and lends itself to a psychoanalytic approach, in that it deals with internal processes such as agency. Subjectivity in psychological research has implications in terms of the 'critical ontology of self' (Foucault, 1982), how the speakers manage material reality, possible systems of knowledge and social practices. This gives insight into the possible practices and identities of the speakers (Henriques et al., 1998; Parker, 1992). This lends itself to the implicit 'rationality' of the speaker, their psychological selves based on the knowledge available to them, how they regulate characteristics through discourse and how they relate to specific 'truths' (Yates & Hiles, 2010). This lends itself to agency, but it must be remembered that it is bound by power relations and the social construction of knowledge.

By identifying dominant discourses, it is possible to understand their impact on identity, and their consequences for the speakers' agency and autonomy regarding their sense of self. Also, the role of institutions are particularly important in terms of social and power relations. The management of subject positions taken, can itself be seen as impactful on social identity, in relation to their lived experiences and the choices available to them in terms of their present and future selves, which is the focus of this thesis.

4.3.Analytic Procedure

Once all the interviews were completed, each interviews was transcribed. Sound recorder was used to aid the transcribing, as it allowed for the looping of smaller extracts of the interview. Each interview, during and after transcribing was read through at least three times, and memos were made on each transcript. This was done manually, using hardcopies of the transcripts. These were destroyed as soon as the transcripts were uploaded into NVivo and the memos were used to draw up initial thoughts and for this first coding process. The transcripts were coded twice using descriptive and latent coding. NVivo report generations were used to link together codes and initial patterns in the data, to form three overarching themes, each of which represents a chapter of analysis in the thesis. Subthemes were identified within each of these themes, which helped to structure the analytic process.

Once the themes and subthemes were identified, relevant extracts were selected for analysis. The analysis process was conducted on each individual extract. Once the

extracts were identified, and read through again, the discursive object was identified.
The extracts were individually analysed for the discursive resources used by
participants, which then determined the action orientation of the individual participants.
For each subtheme, patterns were identified in the resources, indicating specific
discourses (patterns or systems of talk) which were produced by participants. From this
the subject position was identified and how this related to the identity of participants in
light of the subthemes and overarching themes. This was conducted systematically for
all extracts, subthemes and themes, so that conclusions could be drawn that were
grounded in the data.

Chapter 5 - Drugs, Alcohol & Poverty: Interpreting and managing threats

Blackpool is a town of multiple deprivations, with specific 'pockets' or LSOAs being some of the most deprived in the UK. These potentially lead to direct threats to young women living in Blackpool, where they fear physical threats to the self. Also given the problems in Blackpool and the media coverage of these problems, specific social representations are generated, and reproduced, which can be a source of threat, i.e., being from Blackpool may be a negative, even stigmatised, identity. This suggests that the threats to young women are two-fold – situational/actual threats and identity threats. However, the physical/actual threats themselves can be a source of identity threat, as Breakwell (1986) identifies a distinction between positions of identity threat and experiencing identity threats. Therefore, young women in Blackpool are likely to need to negotiate personally threatening situations, alongside the threat this would have on identity principles such as efficacy, self-esteem, and continuity. Alongside this, they would need to manage the threats of the social representations of residing in Blackpool.

Social identities based on group membership tend to be treated in isolation, theoretically and empirically. However, due to the different groups the speakers are likely to be members of (e.g., residency, gender, socio-economic status), intersectionality of identity has to be considered. Overall, this means that identity for the speakers is likely to be nuanced, which would give the individual a source of distinctiveness, as well as a sense of belonging. Therefore in this chapter, I will focus on the social identities and their effects on the individual in relation to Blackpool, alongside the identity threats that emerge, exploring their discourses of their lived experiences in Blackpool. The aim of the analysis is to establish how, through particular discursive resources and strategies, these young women navigate potential threats to their identities that arise from their status as Blackpool residents. Although there are a number of issues related to multiple deprivation that could be sources of identity threat to young women in Blackpool, there are three main issues that emerged in the discourses: drugs and drug users, homelessness and benefit claimants.

5.1.Drugs

In this section, I will examine how the speakers use particular discursive resources and strategies to manage the threats of social representations of drug usage in Blackpool, and discourses of perceived physical threats relating to drug users, to manage identity threats that emerge. However, it must be noted that the perceived physical threats could be due to the social representations of drug users and the threats they pose to individuals and communities as a whole.

5.1.1.Drug usage in Blackpool

Drugs were identified by several participants as problematic, but how those problems transpired, tended to focus on the impact on Blackpool as a whole. The discursive objects of the following three extracts are drug users as out-groups members. The discursive resources used are common derogatory terms used to describe frequent drug users, alongside repertoires of amplification (the process of increasing and emphasising the (potential) threat of those they identify as drug users) to iterate the frequency of drug users in Blackpool.

> **Extract 1**
>
> Chloe: Like, there's like smack heads just walk up and down the street (Line 628)
> **Extract 2**
>
> Justin: There's loads of druggies and junkies not nice people (Line 235)
> **Extract 3**
>
> Maccie: Cos there's like, dunno just like, loads of druggies and that (Line 57)

The action orientation of the discursive resources is to distance themselves from the drug users through discourses of negativity and stigmatisation ('druggies', 'junkies', 'smackheads') Their subjective position is that drug users in Blackpool are undesirable, identifying drug users as specific group members, of which they are not members. What

is notably is that the discursive resources of amplification may be due to geographical social representations relating to Blackpool and drug usage in the town. If the speakers live in areas associated with drug usage, they use this technique to distance themselves on an intrapsychic level, from the drug users as they cannot use geography to do this.

The discursive object identified by Netflixpoptarts is the impact of drug users on her area of residency and how this personally affects her:

Extract 4

Interviewer: OK so how do you find living in [specific ward in Blackpool]?

Netflixpoptarts: Its I dunno, its quite trampy

Interviewer: In what way is it trampy?

Netflixpoptarts: Like its just druggies and all that, yeah

Interviewer: So how does that make you feel living there?

Netflixpoptarts: I wanna move but my mum's got a mortgage on the house so we can't (Lines 92-96)

She uses discursive resources similar to those used in Extracts 1-3. The discursive resources of 'trampy' produces an image that the presence of drug-users has an effect on the area as a whole, one in which she feels trapped, indicated by her desire to move, and the lack of agency due to her mother's financial ties to the area. This could also be a form of identity threat management within the context of the interview, by expressing a desire to leave the area, she is distancing herself from her image of the area where she lives. The speakers are using discourses of negativism relating to drug use.

Jane speaks of drug usage as more ubiquitous and normative, forming the discursive object of the proliferation of drug usage in Blackpool:

Extract 5

Jane: Yeah, probably a lot. Yeah its just got to the normal now all the smoking (Line 196)

[…]

Jane: It's a problem in Blackpool, its everywhere, but Blackpool stands out and it's at a point now where its normal now, it's just expected now (lines 313, 314)

[…]

Jane: Yeah, it's just. It's just everywhere you go in Blackpool now, it's just people. I don't wanna say this without sounding bad
Interviewer: No, it's fine
Jane: Like loads walking around smoking weed and things like that and you start to feel unsafe, so I'd like to move out to somewhere a bit more (Lines182-187)

The proliferation of drugs in Blackpool is indicated in discursive resources of frequency ('loads' 'a lot' 'it's everywhere'), but also of normativity ('it's normal' 'it's expected'). This expectation is of interest, as it has two potential meanings: that the presence of drug usage is anticipated, or that the norm of drug usage means that as a group member, she should take part. The use of 'people' as opposed to derogatory terms is used here to emphasise the typicality of drug usage in Blackpool. Like Netflixpoptarts, her way of managing the identity threat is to express a desire to escape, which can be seen as a form of distancing. Jane's action orientation is to distance herself from drug usage, but rather than identifying specific types of individuals, she uses discursive resources of drug usage, rather than drug users as problematic.

The discursive object in Zoe's extract is the social representation of drugs in Blackpool and how she manages this in relation to the reality:

Extract 6

Interviewer: And you've said that Blackpool is not a very nice place to live

Zoe: I just think that people have stereotyped it now and are like saying oh it's a really bad place because generally it's where the drug addicts are and all that. I don't think it's all like that and that people are stereotyping but then you go up town and you do see that and you're like the stereotypes are correct

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Interviewer: So there is a media thing but also a reality to it. So you say you see people doing drugs on the street, so how do you feel as a 15 year old young woman?

Zoe: Well I feel like that they should care more about people like seeing them. When I was doing work experience there were people dealing drugs outside the shop and like they didn't really care about people seeing them even though through the glass from the shop

Interviewer: So you think they should think more about the impression they make?

Zoe: It kinda makes me sad that they really don't care and they see it as a norm now in Blackpool

Interviewer: So do you feel sad for the individual or for Blackpool?

Zoe: For Blackpool, because again it gives us a bad reputation (177-190)

She uses discursive resources of 'others' (drug users) in two ways. The first is implicitly when referring to stereotypes of Blackpool. By using the term 'stereotypes' she is orientated towards social representations of Blackpool being over-simplified and potentially inaccurate. This leads to a dilemma for Zoe, as she then uses an anecdote to identify the otherness of drug users in Blackpool. On one hand she is attempting to challenge what she deems as generalisations of Blackpool, and on the other, she is using her lived experiences to identify the 'otherness' of drug users and the problematic nature of drug usage in Blackpool. She is placing responsibility for the problem of Blackpool's association with drug misuse on the visibility of drug usage, and the subsequent impact on Blackpool and its residents as a whole. Two action orientations emerge here, one is to address the social representations of Blackpool by constructing a specific group responsible for these, and to construct an identity that is in opposition to this social group, in that she cares about Blackpool.

The discursive object below is, like Zoe, the otherness of drug usage and its impact on Blackpool:

Extract 7

Toni: I mean there is a few like, that's just the like the people in it. Like it's not actually Blackpool that's the problem its certain people that come to live in Blackpool all here

[…]

Toni: But like the people who have moved into our old house smoke weed and everything and get drunk and teenagers go into that house, like all the time, just to smoke and everythin' which is really bad and they always cause arguments on the street which is really bad (Lines 464-467)

[…]

Toni: Er, I know there's loads of people my age who go to that certain house that drink and everything and smoke weed. Like more like teenagers, like young teenagers (lines 464- 541)

Using anecdotes as a discursive resource, Toni distances herself from the group she identifies as problematic in relation to drugs. In doing so she negates Blackpool residents' responsibility for the social problems in Blackpool. These individuals and the location they occupy are jointly constructed as representing a threat to the local community and to a vulnerable group (teenagers younger than her), by encouraging anti-social behaviour (drugs and alcohol consumption). Toni does not identify any individuals as attracting the teenagers, but the house, which gives an uncanny threat, one that is faceless, but a place of potential harm. This discursive resource adds to the sense of an out-groups and 'otherness' which are affecting the in-group of which she is a member. However, in this instance she is not directly referring to a specific out-groups, but gives a clear indication of group members who are at particular risk from the out-group. The action orientation here is to identify drug users as a specific group who come to live in Blackpool, as a means of distancing herself from drug usage which is in close proximity to where she lives. So, even though she cannot physically distance herself from the drug users, she can do so psychologically.

5.1.2.Discourse of drug usage in Blackpool

The discourses used by the young women here are of distancing from drug users, and in doing so identifying them as a negative force within Blackpool ('Smack heads', 'druggies', 'junkies', 'trampy'). They also give responsibility to the social group, for example, in Extract 6, Zoe refers to a lack of 'care' for Blackpool, and Toni, by focusing on those moving to Blackpool, rather than members of her community, being responsible. Although only one speaker made direct reference to social representations of Blackpool, all used discourse lending themselves to the visibility of drug usage in Blackpool ('just walk up and down the street', 'You go up and down town and see that'.). There is a tension in many of the discourses, where the speakers are trying to negotiate their subject position of the 'otherness' of drug users, with the normalisation and ubiquitous nature of drug usage in Blackpool ('It's everywhere, but Blackpool stands out'). This is problematic, as the way of managing the identity threat of drug abuse in Blackpool is distancing, using repertoires of 'otherness', while constructing drug users and usage as prevalent in Blackpool. The speakers take a subject position that locates the social problems of Blackpool with another social group. They also take the subject position that the social group are responsible for negative social representations of Blackpool, in doing so distancing themselves and their group from these representations.

Through anecdotes of anti-social behaviour and drug usage, the speakers use these as a way of taking a moral position opposing their behaviour as a means of psychological distancing. Also, by drawing on the impact of Blackpool and communities they are implicitly distinguishing themselves from the social group ('I wanna move', 'So I'd like to move out to somewhere a bit more'). There are very few identity threat coping strategies available to them, they cannot deny the drug usage in Blackpool, but they can use denial as a way of identifying themselves as distinct from it. Negativism is initially used by Zoe by attempting to challenge the generalisations of Blackpool and drug usage. Also escapism is not possible, however psychological escapism is used, in the desire to leave Blackpool or deprived areas to escape the social group. However this is problematic, because while the speakers construct the social group as responsible for the social problems in Blackpool, and as separate from typical residents in Blackpool, the desire to leave Blackpool strengthens the idea of Blackpool

and associated drug problems are intertwined. This acts to further reproduce the social representations of problematic drug usage and associated social problems in Blackpool.

The subjectivities of the speakers are that drug usage poses an identity threat due to their lived experiences of the prevalence of drug usage. It is clear here that the speakers manage the potential identity threat within Blackpool and how this is a complex task, due to proximity, visibility and normalisation of drug use. This is one layer of threat, which can be managed by identifying different social groups within Blackpool. However, some participants showed an awareness of the social representations of Blackpool and how this could be a source of identity threat on an individual level.

In extract 6, Zoe made direct reference to the idea that drug usage in Blackpool is 'stereotypical', suggesting that there is a sense that there is a widely held, simplified view of Blackpool in relation to drugs. The relationship between stereotypes and stigmatization was recognised by Crocker and Major (1989), and they defined stigmatization as "individuals who by virtue of their membership in a social category are vulnerable to being labeled [sic] as deviant, are targets of prejudice or victims of discrimination, or have negative economic or interpersonal outcomes" (p. 609). It is apparent that participants used discourses to locate themselves outside of a potentially threatened, or stigmatised, identity.

5.1.3. Threat to the person and drug abuse

In the previous section, speakers discussed the prevalence of drug-usage and the impact on their identity. At the individual level, some participants discussed experiences with drug users as personally threatening. Participants discussed the fear they felt by the presence of, and interaction with drug users. The fact that they are reported as threatening can be seen as an implicit form of upward comparison. In the below extract, the discursive objects are drug users as a source of physical threat and her subjective vulnerability in relation to this:

Extract 8

Maccie: Well yes because like I grew up there and no because like of the way people like act round like really weird and I just get scared but [….]

Maccie: Yeah, well like, because like when um I walk past em, they like, they like try and like grab me and then they just like try to speak to me
Interviewer: They try and grab you?
Maccie: Yeah
Interviewer: But what do you do?
Maccie: And then like I just phone my dad and my dad comes and gets me
Interviewer: That must be really scary
Maccie: It is. And then they like, well sort of, normally like I just cross over. I don't see a lot of them, I just see like a few (Lines 81-91)

As with other participants, Maccie refers to drug users through the use of the colloquial pejorative term "druggies" (Extract 4). Maccie uses two discursive resources of drug users here, the clinical and public health discourse on drug use, and the criminal discourse of drug use. Use of this discursive resource indicates that the drug users she comes into contact with are easily recognisable by their bizarre behaviour that she needs avoid to protect herself. She highlights her vulnerability by stating she needs contact with a parental figure because of the risk they pose to her safety. The action orientation here is to construct a sense of 'otherness' about the social group, which allows her to distance herself from the social group, while managing the potential threats the out-groups pose to her.

The discursive objects of Chloe's extract here are the impact of drug users on her area of residence, and how this is a potential threat to her:

Extract 9

Chloe: To an extent. I sort of [like] living here because there's things to do and you don't have to travel very far to like [laughs] to like do things an' there's like

the other side where like there area that I live in its like, its not got the best of reputations

Interviewer: And what does that mean when you say that?

Chloe: Like, there's like smack heads just walk up and down the street and there's like down the road someone got punched and they ended up dying [laughs]

Interviewer: So you see smack heads daily?

Chloe: Yeah

Interviewer: Does that scare you or bother you that you see that every day?

Chloe: Erm I don't think it bothers me now cos like erm my parents like sort of like know the people cos they used to be friends with them and then when they like kind of went into that, the drugs and stuff, they kind of like you know, stopped being mates wiv them. So I think as well cos like my parents are known in the area, there's less, I'm less likely for anythin' to happen with me cos they know like my parents (Lines 624-637)

Like with other speakers, Chloe uses discursive resources of pejorative, colloquial terms for drug users, and as a common occurrence where she lives. She distances herself from drug users and the perceived threat caused by their presence, using a specific incident to indicate the sense of danger in the area. She manages the personal risk, using 'anythin' to happen with me' which diminishes the sense of threat due to her parents' status as 'known' in the local area; the threat is also ambiguous in nature. There is tension here, as the implication of being 'known' lends itself to this idea of 'reputation', so her action orientation is to distance her parents from this, by identifying previous ('they used to be friends…the drugs and stuff…stopped being mates'), rather than current relationships with drug users; presenting her parents as highly moral in relation to previous friends, further strengthening their protective role. The action orientation in this extract is to manage the identity threat of living in an area where drug users are constructed as a consistent presence, and mitigate the physical threat of their presence.

Drug use is constructed as a threat to the participants at both individual and social identity levels. On an individual level, threats to individual identities tend to stem from the content dimension (Breakwell, 1983). Through the discourses available to

participants, they were involved in distancing themselves from drug usage. In effect, they used passing as way of mitigating the threat, through the use of derogatory terms, to mitigate the identity threat based on social representations of Blackpool residents being associated with drug usage. Another source of distancing came from discourses relating to their contact with 'problematic drug users', of an undefined potential harm ('anythin' to happen to me'). The threat stems from social representations of the prevalence of drug use in Blackpool and potentially by extension, among residents of Blackpool, a category of which the speakers are members. As an identity threat this would threaten the legitimacy of the group (Breakwell, 1983).

Discourses of criminality are resources which are used to identify specific out-groups as the source of threat, rather than residents of Blackpool as a whole. This means that participants are actively involved in managing their identity in relation to these social representations, which could be seen as a threat within the context of Blackpool. Discourses of parents as a source of protection are used as a means to manage the physical/situational threat. However, this raises another challenge for participants, as it means that in terms of managing the physical/situational threat, efficacy and self-esteem in the situations are dependent on others. This in itself could pose another identity threat for participants, in terms of efficacy and autonomy; they are reliant on others for a sense of safety. Conversely, the sense of continuity, security, and belongingness given from these social networks could act as a means of maintaining a positive identity. Their subjectivities are based on managing ambiguous physical threats caused by the presence of drug users, while managing the identity threat of their lived experiences of prevalent drug usage where they live. These are reflected in the social representations of Blackpool. To do this, they construct drug users as a threat to them and in turn an out-groups or 'Black Sheep' in the area where they live.

5.1.4. Coping with the identity threat of drug usage in Blackpool

What is apparent is that the speakers use discourses that construct drug usage as prevalent in Blackpool, as well as harmful on an individual level and to Blackpool as a whole; the threats established are physical and symbolic in that they influence how Blackpool discourses construct Blackpool as represented by drug usage. Speakers

actively engaged in identity coping strategies as a means to distance themselves from these. In the following extract the discursive object is geographical boundedness:

Extract 10

Albion 12B: Yes, it's not bad compared to the rest of the streets. That area's, like, a good area.

Interviewer: Okay, what makes it a good area? What do you mean by 'a good area'?

Albion 12B: Because, it's well looked after, and it looks presentable in comparison to other roads around.

Interviewer: What are the other roads around you like?

Albion 12B: Like, not taken care of and stuff like that. Just looks like what people generalise Blackpool as.

Interviewer: Okay, how do people generalise…? I know I'm going to ask you questions which might seem a bit obvious, but what do you mean? How do they generalise Blackpool?

Albion 12B: Like, dossy.

Interviewer: What makes it dossy?

Albion 12B: Just, like, druggies.

  […]

Interviewer: Have you experienced that, people saying…?

Albion 12B: Yes, kind of. Well, whenever I say to someone I'm from Blackpool, I'm just like, "I'm not a druggy." (Laughter)

  […]

Interviewer: Do you think it has quite a bad impact on Blackpool, or do you think it's actually fair?

Albion 12B: Town centre is like that, but the outskirts, it's fine.

Interviewer: So, you know like, because obviously people live on different

streets to you, what do you think of people who don't perhaps live on the same

kind of street as you?

Albion 12B: Just the same people. (Lines 28-82)

The discursive resources are based on the impact a specific social group has on

Blackpool environmentally; the environmental consequences also relate to the

visibility, in turn the social representations of Blackpool and how it is perceived and

understood. This is achieved by using her area of residence as a direct comparison

('well looked after…looks presentable'). There is contradiction here, because Albion

12B constructs Blackpool according to areas of respectability, but does not distinguish

herself from residents of the 'other' areas. However, this supports the discourses of

other speakers that although drug usage is visible and prevalent, it is a specific social

group who are responsible for the stigmatized view of Blackpool.

Albion 12B identifies Blackpool residents as stigmatized due to representations of

drugs, and how she manages potential identity threats is through humour. Her use of

humour is a form of identity management strategy, where she does not challenge the

social representations of Blackpool, and the potential marginalised identity of being a

Blackpool resident. Albion 12B's action orientation here is to distance herself from

drug usage by using geographic boundaries and using discourses of 'nice' residents,

where the area is 'looked after'. This parallels with Zoe's discursive strategies in

Extract 6 where drug users are described as 'not caring' about Blackpool.

Transgender uses a different approach, with the discursive object questioning the

social representations of Blackpool:

Extract 11

Transgender: Er I don't know it's just like in town all the people and stuff and

like, I don't know. It's like, we're in Blackpool innit, it's not that bad like, it

could be worse (Lines 267-268)

She draws upon discursive resources of geographic boundedness to manage the

identity of Blackpool. The first is "in town" as opposed to the rest of Blackpool, the

second is the comparison between Blackpool and an unspecified place where 'it could be worse.' Transgender's action orientation is to mitigate the risk of Blackpool. The discursive resource of 'it's Blackpool', implies a shared knowledge. The discursive resource used relate to Blackpool, reinforcing the social representations of Blackpool. These extracts lend themselves to constructing Blackpool in a way that allows for distancing through geography. However, Marshy's discursive object is the social representation of Blackpool:

Extract 12

Marshy: Er, it depends on what they've seen of it. They will just hear about the stuff happening like, like dodgy stuff like drugs and people walking about on Spice. Most people will take the stuff like that and not the good stuff that happens. So if you hear the bad stuff you'll think bad of it, but if you hear the good stuff, you'll think good of it. (Lines 320-325)

Marshy uses discursive resources of potential different gazes as a means of mitigating the identity threat of being a Blackpool resident. Like all three speakers in this subsection, they uses discursive resources which lend themselves to the limitations of social representations relating to Blackpool and drug usage. They use limiters of geography, as in 'not all Blackpool', and open up the possibility that this 'just isn't Blackpool' and that potentially other towns have worse problems. Limiters are placed on the extent that the social representations are a true reflection of Blackpool by using discourses of limited knowledge and specific gazes leading to acceptance of certain versions on Blackpool. Marshy's action orientation here is to mitigate the social problems of Blackpool through the selectivity of representations that focus on negative representations. She further manages the threat through the exclusiveness of these representations, that Blackpool cannot be defined solely by social problems.

The subject position they take is that Blackpool is problematic in terms of drug usage, which is also seen in the social representations of Blackpool (see Chapter 3: Media Analysis). However, they challenge this somewhat, by using discourses that Blackpool is not as extensive and problematic as depicted, and that Blackpool should not be defined solely by this social problem. The strategies adopted differ: Albion 12B

uses geographic boundedness (drug usage is geographically isolated), whereas Transgender and Marshy acknowledge the presence of drugs in Blackpool, with Transgender arguing that Blackpool is not an isolated case, and Marshy using negative social representations as being the cause of the perceived extent of drugs in Blackpool. Their subjectivities are that drug usage in Blackpool, and the social representations associated with this are sources of identity threats which need to be managed.

5.1.5.Discussion

The issue of drugs and its impact on Blackpool was raised by a number of young women in the research. In terms of how they manage their identity, according to Breakwell's (1983) Identity Processes Theory, there are limited strategies available to them. On an interpersonal level, passing and compliance are not appropriate as this would suggest either that the speakers are already involved in drug usage, or should become involved in drug usage. The challenges made against the idea of Blackpool and drug usage would not be deemed as a form of negativism, as the challenges are more related to how drug usage is limited geographically and according to social groups. By using distancing and taking the position of potential victim of the implications of drug usage in Blackpool, due to social representations, environmental or physical harm, they are able to re-evaluate what it means to be a Blackpool resident. By using discourses of geography and environment, and personal risk, they can give different contexts which distance them from the identified problematic social group. Their subjectivities are complex in relation to drug usage. The speakers' discourses highlight the need to negotiate the lived experiences of drug users with the social representations of Blackpool (which they are only able to partially challenge), and the physical fears and identity threats.

5.2.Alcohol

Another social problem associated with Blackpool, alcohol use, was discussed by several speakers relating to various effects on the culture surrounding alcohol consumption, including the impact on young women in terms of their sense of physical safety. However, alcohol consumption by adolescents is not uncommon, so this section

will also look at how the young women differentiated their own drinking behaviour from what they identified as 'problematic' drinking and risk-taking behaviour. In terms of alcohol consumption, the culture and tourism of Blackpool were discussed by some participants. Therefore, in this section, I will examine the discourses of alcohol in Blackpool, and how they discuss the impact on Blackpool and how alcohol in Blackpool impacts on the identity of the individual.

The discursive object in this extract is the impact of drinking as a tourist activity and the physical threat it poses to her.

Extract 13

Albion 2:   I think it's quite scary, because some people go who drink, and they're out and about, and it's quite intimidating. You quite worry to be around them. So, if you go in town, because it's really, as soon as you go down the nearest road, there's a pub there that people will be drinking. And they come out drunk. And it's probably not the most kid environment place to be in. I think it's more hens people go around here now, isn't it? Like hen parties, and stag do's that go around here. I think it's more of a party place to be now. (Lines 392-400)

She uses the discursive resources of specific groups to construct an image of debauched behaviour, but also environmentally the prevalence of pubs. These together are used to construct what she describes as a 'party place'. The repetition of the word 'now', indicates a change in environment in Blackpool, which was once a place for children and families, but is less safe due to the drinking culture that has developed through the number of drinking establishments and the behaviour of the groups attracted to Blackpool for this purpose. The action orientation here is to identify specific alcohol based activities in Blackpool and the impact on Blackpool as a town and its residents.

However, rather than distinguishing between tourists and residents, the discursive object in the following extract is a specific social group:

Extract 14

Interviewer: So, do you think a lot of the problem isn't the people who live in Blackpool, but the people who come to Blackpool?

Albion 2:   I wouldn't say it's the people that come to Blackpool. But it could be seen as that because a lot more drinkers are out, maybe, out and about. You might feel unsafe because of that. (Lines 402-406)

Here Albion 2 is making a straightforward disclaimer that she will not blame people who are not from Blackpool for the drinking culture. Albion 2, like speakers discussing drug users, uses discursive resources of visibility of drinking, constructing an environment that is unsafe. The social representations of Blackpool intensify this threat and potentially the identity of "Blackpool resident" being stigmatized ('But it could be seen as that'). There are also potential threats to her personal identity emerging from the discursive resources used here. By referring to the social group being 'out and about', the danger constructed leaves her subjectively vulnerable, therefore her sense of independence, could be affected, leading to threats to her sense of esteem and efficacy as part of her everyday life. This action orientation to identify a general group including residents in Blackpool that could lead to an identity threat as a Blackpool resident.

On the whole the speaker accepts the social representations of the wider context of Blackpool and where they live in Blackpool, as a town of anti-social behaviour (drug abuse and excessive drinking). However by identifying a specific social group, and constructing herself as cautious of the group, she is distancing herself from the group and the behaviour to mitigate any threats.

The discursive object of Toni's discourse is a different form of drinker, and a more 'anti-social' form of drinking:

Extract 15

Toni: When they say get drunk an' all that I think it's true. But when they say it's worse than people describe it, it's not that bad. It's like certain streets, it's like not all Blackpool

Interviewer: Are there certain parts that you would avoid because of the drinking and drugs, apart from your own street

Toni: [Laughs]

Interviewer: Are there certain parts you would avoid?

Toni: Erm, no

Interviewer: You don't think you have to be careful anywhere around Blackpool?

Toni: Just like, do you know when you turn certain corners it's like, and it's like an empty street, like I'm always careful walkin' down those because like they could just walk round the corner or anybody could walk round the corner. Like cos I remember and I know they say Blackpool's safe like certain streets but my sister was ridin' her bike when I picked her up from school and she rode off and I got so scared cos didn't know who was gonna turn round the corner [...] Like cos they, she said they were walking up to her and I were like you shouldn't have gone but glad you come back

Interviewer: So even at 3 o clock in the afternoon with your sister you are still wary because people could be hanging round the corner

Toni: Yeah cos they could be hanging round from 6 in morning 'til like midnight, like all throughout the day (Lines 504-532)

She uses discursive resources of vulnerability and geography. Here the construction of anti-social street drinking is depicted as a latent physical threat, it is not reported to be ubiquitous like drug use, but somehow still ever present as a possible threat. Toni's action orientation here is towards managing the threat of anti-social drinking that she experiences as present in Blackpool.

5.2.1.Discussion

The issue of drinking in Blackpool corresponds with social representations of Blackpool as a 'party' and 'stag' and 'hen' town. However, only two participants adopted discourses of drinking in relation to social representations of Blackpool. This is surprising when statistically alcohol consumption is strongly related to a number of deprivation factors that affect Blackpool, such a crime against the person and poor health outcomes (JSNA Blackpool, 2020). However, like drug users, they used discourses of drinkers, whether 'party' or anti-social drinkers as specific groups. The discourses relate to potential physical threat, which allows participants to distance themselves in terms of the 'Blackpool resident' identity. However the discourses of potential threat without geographic or temporal boundaries lends itself to identity threats on an intrapsychic level, in terms of continuity, self-esteem, and efficacy in their everyday lives. The subjectivities of the speakers are of drinking as problematic in Blackpool, environmentally and physically, but also as an identity threat, based on their lived experiences which correspond with social representations.

5.3.Poverty

Economic deprivation was discussed in a variety of ways as an overarching problem in Blackpool, including through references to homelessness and benefit claimants. However, the issue of economic deprivation in Blackpool when discussed by participants was not neatly divided according to different social groups and the social groups often merged in the interviewees' talk.

Due to the complexity of the lived experiences of participants and social representations of the causes and consequences of economic deprivation, the potential issues, including benefit claimants and homelessness will be treated collectively. This is to allow the analysis to focus on how they position themselves in relation to these. As young women in Blackpool, some may live in families dependent on the welfare state, whereas others will only have knowledge of economic deprivation in terms of observations and social constructions of poverty they are exposed to.

The discursive object in the following extract relates to clothing as markers of socio-economic status:

Extract 16

Albion 2:   A bad reputation, but it's also not the worst place in the world, it's also has nice places. The tower is still a nice place to go, and we do have a few nice restaurants. But the thing I don't like, if you're in Blackpool, like into [area of Blackpool], but then as soon as you go to [local area outside Blackpool], or [local area outside Blackpool], it's completely different. The look of it, and the way people dress, is completely different as well

[…]

Albion 2:   Not overly, I feel like, because people might have good, because a lot of people in Blackpool wear tracksuits, and there are not a lot of tracksuits in St Anne's ___. But it doesn't mean what you wear determines who you are.

Interviewer: No, well, it might, it's an expression of who you are though, isn't it? So, when you say tracksuits, because tracksuits, they're not cheap are they?

Albion 2:   They're not as cheap as they used to be anymore.

Interviewer: No, so people wearing tracksuits in Blackpool.

Albion 2:   I think more people spend it on clothes in Blackpool, because you do see them wearing new things all the time, but they might not live in the nicest house.

Interviewer: Why do you think they do that?

Albion 2:   I think it's a reputation. (Lines 332-358)

Albion 2 uses discursive resources of geographic boundedness of 'appearance' and reputation. She does not explicitly state that these relate to SES, but this is implied based on socially constructed knowledge of the SES of residents in these areas. She uses discursive resources of agency in relation to choices regarding consumption. Albion 2 also uses reputation in two ways here, the first is the reputation ascribed to Blackpool due to the nature of residents in Blackpool. Secondly, reputation is constructed as a driver in focusing on clothing as a marker of economic status. This implies that there are caveats on the agency available to individuals, due to how they

will be perceived by others. She constructs a local culture within which certain markers of status, perhaps more immediately accessible ones, are prioritised. The prioritising of homes and reputation are not mutually exclusive, it is just a matter of scale and accessibility of those markers of status. Albion 2's action orientation here is to differentiate social groups according to physical markers, and using these to distance herself from these (the use of 'they' is used throughout to establish this).

The discursive object below also identifies economic difference in Blackpool based on markers such as clothing:

Extract 17

Albion 12A: No. Well, I see, when you go into town and stuff, you do see problems there. Like, different people range, like if you see people that are different to you, then… Yes.

Interviewer: In what way 'different', and what kind of problems?

Albion 12A: Like, people with just different clothes

Interviewer: What kind of clothes?

Albion 12A: Well, some people just wear more upmarket clothes, when you see them out shopping. Then, there are people on the streets and stuff like that.

Interviewer: You mean homeless people?

Albion 12A: Yes.

Interviewer: Yes, do you think the people who wear…? What do you mean by 'upmarket'?

Albion 12A: Well, not 'upmarket', just, I don't know, like…

[…]

Albion 12A: I don't know, really. I think people do spend a lot of money on clothes, even if they don't have that money.

Interviewer: I mean, do you do that, or do you think it's just something that you see in other people?

Albion 12A: I don't know, really. I don't know.

Interviewer: Okay, so you see quite a lot of homeless people in Blackpool?

Albion 12A: Yes.

Interviewer: So, how does it make you feel when you see homeless people and all the problems that there are in Blackpool?

Albion 12A: I don't know, it does make me feel sorry for homeless people. Because, they're probably homeless because they don't really have that much family. They probably need help from people. (Lines 397-427)

Albion 12A uses discursive resources of clothing as markers of differences in economic status, she differentiates between the 'deserving' and the 'undeserving' poor. The use of 'don't know' throughout indicates a lack of confidence or possible reticence in her talk relating to this issue. However, by using clothing as a marker, she is using this to contrast with homeless people, the visibility of homelessness in Blackpool which she constructs as a failure of familial and social support, and homeless people as deserving of sympathy. The discursive resources of the homeless as victims provides compassion and pity for this social group, but still functions as a form of downward comparison. The action orientation here is one of self-presentation, firstly by distancing herself from those who use clothes as markers, but also to construct herself as sympathetic to the economic hardship of specific groups.

The discursive object here is also of the deservingness of benefit claimants in Blackpool:

Extract 18

Albion 12B: Just like, I don't want to say anything generalising, but from what I've seen, just people who are on benefits

Interviewer: So, do you think those people who are on benefits and things, they give Blackpool a bad reputation?

Albion 12B: It depends what they do with the benefits. If they go out and try and find a job, it's fine. But, if they spend it on alcohol, and drugs, and cigarettes, and stuff. (Lines 108-114)

Albion 12B initially uses an inoculation relating to the generalisation of benefit claimants; this could be a form of self-presentation or an awareness of the social representations available to her. Here she distinguishes between two groups of benefit

claimants, using discursive resources of the deserving and undeserving poor, dependent on how they use their benefits. By distinguishing between the two groups of benefit claimants and the notion of reputation, she is implicitly identifying the 'undeserving' as in some way responsible for the reputation of Blackpool. By doing this she is establishing that benefit claimants have agency and choices available to them. The action orientation is to manage the threat of being a Blackpool resident by identifying a group responsible for the negative social representations associated with Blackpool, but also managing her identity through self-presentation.

The discursive object here is how her attitude is shaped by the visibility of poverty, and self-presentation in light of these attitudes:

Extract 19

Chloe: Erm. I think that erm it affects my view on other people. Cos erm I kind of like judge people, like I don't know. It's not like the way that they dress or anythin' but just like their appearance, which like, say like their parents and everythin' are like alcohol and drugs and everythin'. The kids like aren't really fed well and stuff and to be, its usually like younger kids that are like quite scruffy [laughs] and stuff and I kinda like judge them cos it's like, well, if they hadn't been like brought up around Blackpool and everythin' I feel like they sort of wouldn't look like that (Lines 649-653)

She uses discursive resources of vulnerability, in terms of children's general appearance, and how this is an indication of not being sufficiently cared for. The parents are held responsible for the appearance of the children, but the cultural context of Blackpool is also indirectly identified as the determinant of the child's appearance, through its contribution to the parents' problems; she identifies the local culture of Blackpool that exerts a social force on individuals, which to some extent mitigates the responsibility of the parents. Chloe's action orientation here is to rationalise her own judgement of a specific social group through discursive resources of responsibility. As Chloe stated in Extract 26, Chloe sees Blackpool as an influencing factor on the behaviour and choices of individuals in Blackpool.

Alex's discursive object is also the responsibility of others in relation to Blackpool as the environment in which they live:

Extract 20

Interviewer: Do you like living in Blackpool?

Alex: Not really

Interviewer: Why not?

Alex: The people in it, dirty, don't like the beach or anything. All my mates go in the sea and I refuse to go in it

Interviewer: So dirty, you mean like mud dirty or?

Alex: Just like the people are dirty, you've got like a load of homeless people here. I'm not against homeless or anything it's just like you live in the UK, you can at least claim benefits and it just winds me up how people attract other people who are bums and that, and then but and then, yeah and you like go along the Prom and its covered in rubbish. I spend half my time in Cleveleys or St Annes, Lytham. I like St Annes beach because it's a lot cleaner than the actual Blackpool beach plus the tide doesn't come in as close (Lines 679-690)

Alex uses discursive resources of 'dirtiness' on two levels here, environmental dirt, but also more symbolically, in the sense of 'unclean' people. The discursive resources used suggest a tension between agency and a lack there-of. On one hand, the reference to benefits suggests choice in homelessness; however, the 'attracting' of others presents a lack of agency. As a means of managing the threat of the 'dirtiness' of Blackpool, she identifies a social group as responsible for this sense and actual uncleanliness, establishing psychological distancing, which is emphasised by her descriptions of 'escaping' Blackpool through physical distancing. The action orientation here is to uses discourses of physical escapism to distance herself from her construction of Blackpool as 'unclean'.

The discursive object in the below extract also relates to the relationship between cleanliness (physical and symbolic) and socio-economics:

Extract 21

Albion 2:   The town, the surroundings, not fully surroundings, but I mean the… It's not very clean, it doesn't feel like a clean place.

Interviewer: So, does that mean there's rubbish, or, quite clean, because it's got very different meanings.

Albion 2:   Probably different meanings but then people can't control that, can they? Some people can't, you get given, what's it called, if you're on benefits, you can't control, I don't know how to explain it to you. I really don't know how to explain it. (Lines 306-313)

The discursive resources used here, like Alex, focus on the sense of uncleanliness in Blackpool, as well as the physical dirtiness. The action orientation here is to establish the lack of agency of those living on benefits. She uses discursive resources of a lack of agency of those who rely on benefits.

The discursive object here is on the consequences of visible poverty on Blackpool:

Extract 22

Interviewer: How does that make you feel, if you see people like that down the street?

Albion 12B: It makes me feel, like, bad about Blackpool. It's not like that, like where I live, everyone's normal. Not saying those people aren't normal, but it's just, I don't know, it's different (Lines 124-129)

Geographic boundedness is invoked, with the use of 'where I live', and the extrematization in 'everyone's normal'. In doing so she categorises and constructs, and reifies residents of Blackpool people in relation to geographical locations. Using the discursive resources of normality, implies an 'otherness' not within the geographical boundaries constructed here. The action orientation here is one of establishing the

impact on residents of Blackpool as a whole, as a means of managing her identity as a Blackpool resident.

5.3.1.Discussion

Discourses of cleanliness are used, and although not explicitly stated, the use of 'dirtiness' to describe Blackpool, opposes Blackpool as being 'clean' ('the people in it, dirty', 'it doesn't feel like a clean place'). The idea of something being 'dirty' invokes feelings of disgust, and although the speakers do not explicitly state disgust, this usage is interesting and one which is used by more than one speaker. Discourses of responsibility are also used throughout ('it depends on what they do with the benefits'), whether in relation to parents being responsible for the hardship they cause children ('well if they hadn't been brought up like that'), or adults in general and their impact on Blackpool as a whole ('you can at least claim benefits…it just winds me up how people attract other people'). As Blackpool residents this creates a problem for participants, in terms of their social identity and how this can be managed. They distinguish between different social groups, but this is not simply based on the statuses of individuals (homeless or on benefits) but the sense of agency and how that is used to ascribe 'others' to social groups ('I think people do spend a lot of money on clothes, even if they don't have the money', 'It depends what they do with the benefits. If they go out and try and get a job, that's fine', 'They probably need help from people').

The subject position taken is that the reason for the sense of 'uncleanliness' in Blackpool is due to poverty. The subject positions taken in regards to economic deprivation in the speakers are quite complex. In terms of responsibility, the subject position is that economic deprivation is the cause of negative social representations of Blackpool. However, in terms of agency, some take the subject position of sympathy and pity, whereas others take the position that those who are deprived have agency over their situation; discourses of choice through consumption, such as clothing as markers of status, are used to exemplify this.

By using agency as a means of differentiating between different economically deprived individuals, this means that even the participants whose families rely on benefits can implicitly make downward comparisons based on the choices they and their families make. Many speakers also use geographic boundedness as a means of distancing themselves, and this allows them to give a sense of 'otherness', about those

who are not immediately local to them. Both these strategies are on an intrapsychic level, they can maintain self-esteem by seeing themselves as distinct from those responsible for the 'dirtiness' of Blackpool.

5.4.Conclusion

Many social issues affect Blackpool, and the speakers have to negotiate their identity in relation to the social representations and lived experiences of the issues that emerged in their discourses. The speakers constructed their realities of living in Blackpool which lend themselves to a reality of multiple deprivation. The discursive resources used lend themselves to a sense of prevalence and normalisation of drug usage. Furthermore, although drinking is not constructed as normalised, like drug usage, there is a construction of physical risk to participants. This means that their lived experiences of drugs and alcohol in Blackpool lead to an acceptance of social representations of Blackpool. This is problematic in terms of their 'Blackpool resident' status; this is managed through processes of distancing, either through construction of geographic boundedness or moral distinction from the members of groups associated with drug and/or alcohol usage.

By using moral and psychological distancing, they can manage the identity threat on intrapsychic and interpersonal levels. However, the construction of fear and risk could lead to personal identity threats; social interactions and observations of drug users and drinking behaviour are deemed as a physical threat to the speakers. Some use strategies of avoidance, while as others draw upon other social relationships, such as family, as a means to manage the physical threat. However, physical risk as part of everyday life, and the dependency on parents or avoidance of geographic areas, could lead to a loss of a sense of efficacy and self-esteem on an intrapsychic level, which is not dealt with by the speakers.

Economic deprivation is a more complex issue for speakers. This could be due to the socio-economic status of the speakers; those from more affluent areas may be aware of self-presentation, whereas those from more deprived backgrounds would be aware of their association with members of deprived groups. Also, as seen in Chapter 3, the issues of poverty are social represented in a more complex, nuanced, and sometime, contradictory way. The speakers construct poverty in terms of agency, that some suffering from deprivation deserve sympathy due to a lack of support and agency over their situation. Whereas others are constructed as having agency and their deprived status is due to the choices they make, which has consequences for them and

others dependent on them. However, this sense of agency is constructed as limited, that the culture of Blackpool and the need to maintain 'reputation' are influencing factors in the choices made. Again, by defining individuals in terms of agency, this allows participants to manage the identity threat through distancing. Discursive resources of clothing and appearance as markers, which are associated with geographic boundedness, are used in the identity work by participants to manage the identity threat of Blackpool as a town of multiple deprivation.

However, one recurring theme that emerged throughout is the 'sense' of Blackpool; in terms of physical environment and how Blackpool 'feels' to speakers was one of 'dirtiness', as opposed to 'cleanliness'. Such repertoires could be associated with disgust, however the speakers did not explicitly state disgust (some used repertoires of upset and anger). This is potentially another source of identity threat for Blackpool residents which the speakers did not attempt to manage. This could be due to the fact that rather than being an experienced threat, it is a threatening social situation that speakers inhabit (Breakwell, 1983).

Chapter 6 - Group membership and identity within Blackpool

As seen previously, young women in Blackpool acknowledged and discussed issues which affect Blackpool in terms of material reality and social representations of Blackpool, specifically drugs and alcohol, as well as economic deprivation, including homelessness and benefit claimants. They discussed how these factors affect Blackpool from their perspective, but also the impact on them as individuals in terms of their social identity and identity threats, and the sense of personal risk that they face, as well as those in their social group which gave implicit insight into threats to their personal identity. In this chapter, I will examine their lived experiences in terms of social interaction with others, and how these shape their identity on a personal and social level. In other words, rather than focusing on identity in relation to social representations of Blackpool and the subjectivities relating to material realities, the focus will be on their lived experiences of these as group members within Blackpool. However, as already mentioned lived experiences and social representations are interdependent, so their talk of lived experiences will be shaped by the resources available to them, which will include social representations.

Blackpool, like other larger towns in the UK, is made up of a number of LSOAs. These vary in terms of the residents' economic status. This leads to the formation and stratification of social groups according to residential area and level of deprivation. Logically, this would mean that group status would depend on socio-economic status, as in our society consumerism and wealth are deemed as favourable characteristics. Skeggs (2011) highlighted how 'personhood' is seen in terms of values and that today these values are based on economy, commodity, and social capital. However, as the least deprived are in a minority, this could place them in a position of an 'out-groups' if deprivation as the basis for comparison is negated. Scheepers et al., (2006) examined the function of group comparisons and argued that groups can be defined in terms of material or symbolic forms. Badaoui et al. (2018) argue that clothing and labels relate to adolescents' identity and are mediating factors in terms of personal and social identity.

6.1. 'High status' group membership

It is clear that Blackpool is depicted as a town of high deprivation. However, there are areas of affluence in Blackpool. This means that young women from affluent areas of Blackpool have to manage the social representations of Blackpool, while managing their high socio-economic status, which may be seen as high status in typical terms. As they would be viewed as the minority, this could pose an identity threat, in terms of fitting in and managing what could be seen as privileged status.

One way in which this can be managed is through intergroup comparisons and the dimensions on which those comparisons are made. Appearance and what is observable, is one recurring dimension on which group membership is determined, and Albion 2 uses this to make comparisons with lower status group members, identifying different groups in the Blackpool area and her identity in relation to this, as the discursive object:

Extract 1

Interviewer: What do you mean?

Albion 2:   There are a lot more posh people around those areas.

Interviewer: Can you tell the difference between a posh person, and a non-posh person,

by the way they dress, do you think?

Albion 2:   Not overly, I feel like, because people might have good, because a lot of people in Blackpool wear tracksuits, and there are not a lot of tracksuits in St Anne's . But it doesn't mean what you wear determines who you are. […]

Interviewer: Why do you think they do that?

Albion 2:   I think it's a reputation.

Interviewer: So, you think it's what other people think of them?

Albion 2:   Yes. (Lines 327-362)

For the first group she identifies, she uses the discursive resources of geography and position in society (posh) to differentiate herself from this group. She also uses discursive markers of clothing and reputation to differentiate herself from the second group in Blackpool. By constructing these two groups through these resources she is establishing her identity as not based on the markers or the expectations of these groups. Further on in the extract, social groups within Blackpool re-emerge, with the discursive resource of social groups and the role of family and environment that determine group membership:

Extract 2

Albion 2:   Yes, basically, I don't want to sound snobby. But I think it's the way you've been brought up though, isn't it? I think everything is to do with where you're brought up. I've never been brought up, "That's an awful place", but I've heard there are a lot of things that happens there.

[…]

Albion 2:   Yes, yes, definitely, very hardworking.

Interviewer: Yes, and you said that she's got us a nice house, so that's different, isn't it? That's not being snobby, by saying…

Albion 2:   She's done it herself, it hasn't actually come to her.

Interviewer: That's what I mean, because sometimes, if you're criticizing something, you think you sound snobby.

Albion 2:   Yes, that's what I mean. I definitely, if you work hard for what you get, and I think that's what my mum has always said, "You work hard, and this is what you get." And this is what she always shows us. You only get this if you work hard, I'm only able to do this, because I can afford this, because I work hard for what I get. And that is definitely what she says a lot in the family. (Lines 833-863)

By using inoculations, she directly states that she is not 'snobby'; then when using discursive resources of family, she makes a statement about areas in Blackpool, but constructs them as said by others. However, by using the discursive resource of upbringing, she constructs her identity in relation to her own upbringing, based on values of meritocracy, focusing on hard work to explain the privileged position she is in. This, with the initial reference to upbringing, constructs choice and agency as the explanation for different socio-economic positions in Blackpool. The action orientation here is to identify different groups of which she is not a member, as well as one of self-presentation; she is aware that she is of a higher socio-economic status, but distances herself from this by using pejorative stereotypes relating to relative affluence.

In the following extract, the discursive objects relate to markers of privilege, challenges to privilege as identity and the importance of meritocracy:

Extract 3

Dinosaur: No, but a lot of people say like, are you rich? But I'm not

Interviewer: Does it bother you when they say that?

Dinosaur: Yeah because it's like, why would you think that? But it's because I have horses and people think if you've got horses you're rich but it's not like that

Interviewer: Is it bad being rich?

Dinosaur: No but if people think you are rich they think you're stuck up and I don't like people thinking stuff like that and people know stuff like I have a car and stuff already and people know and I don't like telling people things like this cos they're like oh my God and just

[…]

Dinosaur: I like having nice things but I work for everything so, so everything I've got I have got myself. I don't like asking my mum and dad for things

Interviewer: So expensive clothes?

Dinosaur: Yeah

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Interviewer: What like?

Dinosaur: Like Gucci, like Louis Vuitton, things like that

Interviewer: I bet a lot of your friends don't have those kind of things

Dinosaur: No but I don't brag about those kind of things. And its like, I'm not bothered, say like I could go into Primark and see a nice top and still get it (Lines 295-321)

Dinosaur uses discursive resources of privileged identity ('stuck up') and her own identity ('I don't care' and 'I don't brag) to distance herself from socially constructed images of privilege. The use of the word 'brag' indicates an awareness of her affluence and that to speak of it could have negative connotations, demonstrating her awareness of her socio-economic status. She also uses markers of consumption power ('Like Gucci, like Louis Vuitton' and 'Primark'), to establish her privileged position, but the lack of importance of these markers to define her. Her identity is based on independence and efficacy ('so everything I've got I have got myself').

She uses discursive resources to highlight her similarity to others in Blackpool, using a shop like Primark, which is associated with bargains, as an example to establish her typicality within the local context of Blackpool. By doing this she is managing the potential threat to her identity of being in a privileged position, by acknowledging what she has, but that this is based on deservedness, and that her identity is not related to her financial privilege. The action orientation here is to manage the identity threat of being in a relatively privileged position.

In the following extract, the discursive object is the role of meritocracy and group membership:

Extract 4

Dinosaur: No cos people come to Blackpool and do things

Interviewer: Why do you think Blackpool has the problems or reputation?

Dinosaur: Grange Park and things like that and where people grow up and where and who they hang around with and things like that. And the buildings, the state of some buildings. But honestly it doesn't bother me cos my dad's side

of the family, my dad grew up quite rough in Grange Park and things like that. And my dad when he was younger and he didn't go to school and my dad was well known in Blackpool for who he was, with his brothers and things like that. Like he tells me stories and people say is [name of father] your dad and I say yeah and they are like oh right and I can tell you some stories about when we was younger.

Interviewer: So what's different about your dad?

Dinosaur: [No response]

Interviewer: Do you think he's just lucky?

Dinosaur: What that he doesn't live in places like that now? He turned, cos like he was really bad and he turned himself to God, he like turned to God and he's always done advertising and it was like, I don't know it was like, and he set up a kitchen for homeless people and things like that. He's like turned himself around. He gave up his work for four years to do this charity and now that it's up and running it's like quite well known and there's so many volunteers and people in charge, he's left it at a really stable like point with like £5000 in the bank and things like that so they're never gonna struggle, if you get me. So he's resigned at the right point and he's like left but my mum's still behind everything, so she's always there.

Interviewer: Do you admire your dad?

Dinosaur: Yeah it's so amazing what he's done (Lines 405-427)

Dinosaur establishes a specific social group based on geographic area and the nature of their upbringing, based on her dad who grew up in one of these areas. This enables her to be critical of the social group in two ways. Firstly, through her father, she is assuming a sense of in-group membership, allowing her to be critical of the group. Secondly, he 'turned it around' lends itself to her constructing deprivation as based on efficacy and agency. She is stating that deprivation can be escaped, she uses discursive resources of moral choices, by drawing on God and faith here as an indication of the moral differences between her family and those who choose not to change their lives. She is also using her dad further in terms of agency and morality, by describing the positive work her father does and his commitment to helping those less

fortunate. She invokes discourses of meritocracy and moral behaviour as a way of aligning herself with her father, which contrasts with the snobbery associated with privilege. The action orientation here is to further manage the identity threat of her privileged position by using discursive resources of family, and her humble background.

The following extract is a continuation from above but in this extract the discursive objective is the social representation of a social group:

Extract 5

Interviewer: What about your mum?

Dinosaur: Her side of the family is like quite stuck up and things like that and posh and my nan, she like, I wouldn't say she doesn't like my dad because she does like my dad but she never used to like my dad and because she knows what he was like she's always a bit like about him.

Interviewer: So do you admire your dad more than your mum?

Dinosaur: Yeah, I am all for my dad but I've got all my mum because we are so alike. Buts weird with my nan because if I do something, she's like, oh you're like your dad but she's like, and I look like my dad as well, but Alfie looks like my mum and my mums like, you look like me and my dad's like, no she doesn't. So it's say how I put my salt on my food, my Nan's like, you're like your dad. (Lines 427-435)

She invokes discursive resources of the snobbish gran to align herself with her father. She uses discursive resources of appearance and actions and then uses an explicit act of alignment in 'I am all for my dad'. By aligning herself with her dad and rejecting the snobbish identity, she is implicitly aligning herself with social group members who may be in a less privileged position, which can be seen in the extract below where the discursive object is the struggle her parents have faced:

Extract 6

Dinosaur: But it's like my mum and dad haven't always been in like a good position, like you know what I mean. Like when they got their first house apparently it was horrible, when my nan walked in she cried and things like that, yeah (Lines 475-477)

The discursive resources here are of struggle, hardship, and privilege been earned. The reference to her nan as a marker of snobbery, is a character that she draws upon throughout. Dinosaur's action orientation throughout these extracts is to resist snobbery by differentiating between relative affluence and the characteristic of snobbery.

6.1.1.Discussion

Both Albion 2 and Dinosaur are aware of their status as relatively affluent, but they are careful to manage and mitigate its implications through the use of discourses of agency and morality, as well as taking the subject position that their relative privilege can be explained by meritocracy, that it is in some way earned and therefore justified. This not only justifies their position of relative privilege but offers a juxtaposition and implies that deprivation is due to individual agency and morality, not situational factors. This means they are able to use denial (Breakwell, 1986), but this is limited. They are unable to deny that they hold a position of relative position; on an intrapsychic level, they are able to challenge their association with certain characteristics ('if people think you are rich they think you are stuck up', 'I don't brag about those kind of things') and challenge the legitimacy of negative evaluations associated with their relative affluence as residents of Blackpool by using discourses of meritocracy ('I like having nice things but I work for everything', 'You only get this if you work hard'). On an interpersonal level, they are also able to align themselves with members of less economically privileged social groups by focusing on individual characteristics associated with meritocracy.

6.2. Managing 'low status' group membership

Just as relative affluence can be seen as potentially identity threatening, it is equally true that relative deprivation can be a source of identity threat. What will be established over the following analysis, is that young women in Blackpool draw upon several strategies to mitigate the potential identity threats caused by membership of a lower SES groups.

The discursive object of Chloe's extract below is social grouping according to geographic location, used as a determinant of SES:

Extract 7

Chloe: I think, yeah I think it depends on the person. Like if you're from [area in Blackpool] and people know that you fight so it sort of like raises you cos people aren't gonna wanna mess wiv you if they know that you're from that area. And other times people will be like, oh you're from that area, its really rough an' everythin'

[…]

Interviewer: Well what about kids from like [area in Blackpool] though?

Chloe: I know like, quite a bit of my mates are from like [area in Blackpool]. I suppose they are all like chavvy?

Interviewer: OK, what do you mean by that?

Chloe: Like erm tracksuits, smokin', like bikes and just skateboards and stuff.

Interviewer: So even though they from one of the nicer areas, they've still got their faults? What do you think makes them more chavvy?

Chloe: If think it's just the way they talk to people like. Like, like, sort of like a lot of slang and stuff like that

Interviewer: Does that make sense being from a posh part of Blackpool and talking slang? Do they go together?

Chloe: Erm sort of, I've got a friend like that came from like [area in Blackpool] and she's moved like, it's like it's near the [area in Blackpool], on the outskirts of Blackpool sort of and she's quite well spoken and stuff. Whereas people have been born and brought up in Blackpool like they seem to like talk differently. I think they're like more aggressive as well like you say somethin' out of line and they'll like have a go at you and stuff

Interviewer: People from [area in Blackpool]? Why do you think that is?

Chloe: I don't know. I feel like sometimes they've got some'ert to prove.

Interviewer: Because they're not from an area where you have to be tougher or…

Chloe: I think its all to do with like reputation and stuff and the way that they're seen. They're like well oh if I let you get away wiv sayin' that and everythin' people are gonna think that they can just take the mick. (Lines 665-695)

The discursive resource used is denigration based on phrases like 'chavvy', she constructs the social group's characteristics, accordingly, focusing on clothing, activities, and linguistics. This use of discursive resources, alongside resources of presenting a specific image by the out-groups, enables Chloe to gain legitimacy through her implicit authenticity.

Chloe's action orientation is to manage the potential identity threat of residing in what she describes as a 'rough' area. The way she manages this is through the salience of characteristics of the in-group, by introducing other dimensions of identity. The action orientation here is compensatory (Cadinu & Cerchioni, 2001), by focusing on authenticity, she is able to maintain a positive status for her in-group. This could be seen as a form of inverse hierarchy, by constructing a sense of authenticity, this dimension becomes the most salient. This in turn reduces here identity threat, in terms of her group membership, and by maintaining a positive in-group identity, self-esteem is maintained.

The use of authenticity as a means to manage the threat of lower group status, can act as a means of elevating status. However, Chloe also has the personal identity of being from a household dependent on benefits with is the discursive object of the following extract:

Extract 8

Chloe: Erm, I think it's good cos like there's always like someone in the house. What it used to be like erm, is like when we came home from school and they were both out and everythin' we'd have to like sit on the doorstep and wait for them to come home [laughing] (Lines 551-553)

Here Chloe is using discursive resources of 'latch-key kids' (Rutter, 1972), to construct an advantageous family situation. The action orientation here is to manage the threatened identity of her household. The discursive object of the extract below relates to the change in situation of her family:

Extract 9

Chloe: Yeah they like encourage us more to like erm work and you know make your own way in life, don't. It's just like they both used to like work and used to be like on decent paid jobs and going from that to basically like nothing, its like, well its important to not just like

Interviewer: Does it affect them that they used to be on decent money and now they're not?

Chloe: Yeah it's like when we were younger and they worked we used to get whatever we wanted basically and now it's like, it's not the same. I feel like they think, they want to treat us more and they can't. I feel like it upsets them a little

Interviewer: But you're quite empathic to that. And it doesn't bother you

Chloe: Nah it doesn't me cos like erm if I need something, they'll always make sure like I have it an' stuff (Lines 555-564)

The discursive resources are ones of parents prioritising children, in terms of material needs and emotional connectedness. To manage the personal identity of her parents' changed circumstances, she constructs a family as providing as much as possible, but also being actively engaged in their children's well-being and future aspirations. However, Chloe's discursive object relates more to social representations and the lived reality of families living in deprivation in Blackpool:

Extract 10

Chloe: Erm. I think that erm it affects my view on other people. Cos erm I kind of like judge people, like I don't know. It's not like the way that they dress or anythin' but just like their appearance, which like, say like their parents and everythin' are like alcohol and drugs and everythin'. The kids like aren't really fed well and stuff and to be, it's usually like younger kids that are like quite scruffy [laughs] and stuff and I kinda like judge them cos it's like, well, if that hadn't been like brought up around Blackpool and everythin' I feel like they sort of wouldn't look like that. (Lines 648-653).

There is a 'confessional' discursive resource here, where she 'admits' to passing judgement. However, she qualifies this judgement with the use of discursive resources of neglectful parents, which align with social representations of Blackpool. Here she constructs the parents as responsible, but also that social forces and culture of Blackpool affect the outcome for the children who have no agency over their situation would be different. Her action orientation here is to explain the judgements of deprived families in Blackpool and how they do not apply to her and her family as a form of identity strategy.

Toni also lives in an area of relative deprivation and the discursive object is the 'culture of deprivation':

Extract 11

Toni: But like the people who have moved into our old house smoke weed and everything and get drunk and teenagers go into that house, like all the time, just to smoke and everythin' which is really bad and they always cause arguments on the street which is really bad for my mum and then the kids see all of it and then they get influenced by it and that's why I think my sister's so bad (Lines 464-469)

The discursive resources of anti-social behaviour are used here to construct this specific house as the source of the problems in her local community, and in doing so frees other members of the community, and her family of any responsibility. The

action orientation is to distance herself from the undesirable behaviour of members of her community.

The speakers here are derogating undesirable in-group members, similar to the 'Black sheep effect' (Marques & Paez, 1994), they are positioning these group members as representing the stereotypical view, and by doing so are able to distance themselves from these group members. This is done implicitly by most of the participants, except for Alex, who is more explicit through her use 'chavs'. 'Chavs' is a term that was used to describe specific youths of the lower classes (Jones, 2011). The term is derogatory in terms of status and taste (Lawler, 2005). However, the term is now ubiquitous and is used as a derogation of youths and adults more generally, but often in relation to taste. The issues of taste and class were highlighted by Skeggs (1997) who explored how working-class women experienced falling short of experiences of good taste, how they strived to gain the idealised middle-class taste, which remained unachievable. As a term historically it was used to stereotype low SES group members and played a role in the construction of an 'underclass' (Hayward and Yar, 2006).

The term 'chav' and how this relates to her social interactions is the discursive object of the below extract:

Extract 12

Alex: Yeah so it's alright. He picks on the chavs every time [laughing].

Interviewer: Do you think that's good? Do you think they deserve it?

Alex: Well yeah.

Alex: Cos chavs just annoy people and have you seen the way they talk? 'Yer mate, I'll knock ya out' [imitating a chav].

Interviewer: [laughs]

Alex: So that's literally like what every chav sounds like sounds to me and it's like 'Stop talking'. When your step-brother is a chav, your step-sister is a chav, it's basically your step dad's a chav, your mum is like slowly turning into a chav with her trainers erm. It's like everyone I know like and the lads at school are

mainly chavvy, erm my cousin, my sisters, my sisters are all going chavvy and I'm just sat like this, please, hoping my little brother int a chav [laughs]. (Lines 552-563)

She uses discursive resources of mockery here to invoke an out-group within her own family. Discursive resources are used to ascribe a set of characteristics to this group, and then to her immediate and extended family members. The action orientation is to set herself apart from the characteristics and family members, allowing her to deny membership to this group and to manage her personal identity in opposition to the characteristics she ascribes to a specific social group.

However, some speakers do not use denial as a means of identity management. Chloe in the below extract cannot deny the membership of the social category 'benefit dependent family'. However in the discursive object is one of the values she has based on her relative deprivation:

Extract 13

Chloe: I think it comes from my parents and how like you can't just like, you've gotta like work for things, like especially like erm say of I like wanted somethin', say if I wanted a fiver to go out wiv my mates or somethin' I'd have to like do chores like you know do somethin'. They wouldn't just give it me [laughs] (Lines 920-923)

The discursive resources are of deservedness and meritocracy, which serve the function of constructing an identity based on values of hard work, which have been instilled by her family. The action orientation here is to establish the values she has gained from her relatively deprived social status.

Jessica's discursive object is the virtues and values instilled in her by her mother:

Extract 14

Jessica: No. She doesn't like pictures, but she is a big influence on me, because she has 12 kids yeah, but still manages to carry on. She struggles. She doesn't work, but still manages to carry on and basically. Mum's influence persuaded

me. If it wasn't for me… I found my singing voice at the age of ten, and Mum has pushed me to go further. The same with dancing to go further. She pushed me to go further, and she just pushed me for everything I did. I didn't believe I could do it. Mum did believe in me and said I could do it, and I did do it. (Lines 481-489)

She is not directly challenging the social representation of a mother with a large family and dependent on benefits; instead she uses discursive resources of financial hardship and resilience while emphasising the role of her mother to construct her own sense of self-esteem and self-efficacy. The action orientation here is to maintain a positive identity based on the values she gained from her mother.

Like Chloe, the discursive object of values, meritocracy and deservedness emerged:

Extract 15

Jessica: Erm, well not really, because my mum's really good with her money. She works it out and we, like, get what we've earned, and everything. It's really easy, because my mum tries to get what she can for us all, and get what we want and everything, so I think really, she does try her hardest with what she gets.

[…]

Jessica: We have chores to do, and if we complete them after one week, from Tuesday to Tuesday, we get our pocket money that we've earned for everything. (Lines 627-643)

Jessica here is using discursive resources of fairness and deservedness. By constructing her mother as ensuring the children are provided for, but that values of 'earning their keep' are established, to construct an identity based on values, which stem from her family, specifically her mother. The action orientation is to establish a positive identity through the social interactions within the family unit and the values that these instil, as a means of identity management

6.2.1. Discussion

The challenges that these young women face is they have limited identity coping strategies that they can use in relation to their lower status group membership. They cannot deny their group membership but can limit the threat this causes by drawing on social representation from which they can distance themselves, which can be seen by Toni and Alex ('smoke weed and everything, and get drunk', 'cos Chavs just annoy people'). Chloe and Jessica's use of discourses of meritocracy provides a subject position which enables them to effectively distance themselves and their families from other putative in-group members ('they'll always make sure like I have it an' stuff', 'I'd have to like do chores. They wouldn't just give it me', 'She pushed me to go further', 'we get our pocket money that we've earned'). Toni also takes this subject position, however instead of using discourses of the values of her family, she implicitly constructs an identity based on morality, in contrast to the 'immorality' of others. Although Alex uses explicit discourses of a specific social group, this is used to construct an identity which is distinct from her family and others who hold the same characteristics.

By using discourses of work ethics, values and taste, and invoking other characteristic to create further in and out-groups within ostensibly the same low status group, they provide these women downward comparisons that mitigate potential threats to their identities, their sense of self-esteem and self-efficacy. The use of discourses that relate to other, apparently higher status groups, also allow for a subject position of authenticity in their social group. According to Stets and Burke (2014) a sense of authenticity is one component necessary for positive self-esteem. Authenticity is particularly important during adolescence for a sense of psychological well-being (Thomaes et al., 2017). The discourses serve as a means of maintaining a positive identity for the individuals and the social group they directly identify with, based on the values they construct in relation to their identity.

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6.3. Maintaining group membership

As is evident above, members of low status groups manage group membership by redefining the groups to which they belong and using different content dimensions to manage self-esteem. A number of strategies will be examined in this section, including the use of consumption power and risk-taking behaviour. As seen previously, participants use discourses relating to drug misusers to construct them as an out-groups, to distance themselves from their perceived social representations of alcohol and drugs in Blackpool, often taking the social position drug abuse being harmful and dangerous to others. Furthermore, discourses surrounding alcohol were more locally and age-related, and were discussed in relation to group membership. Stanley (2006), in a study of a seaside town and a rural area, identified the prevalence of risk-taking behaviour in seaside towns. Stanley related this to some degree to identity, and Coleman and Hendry (1999) point out that risk-taking behaviour is normative and part of adolescent development, to establish self-regulation and control.

Since the term 'ladette' was coined in the 1990s, the media has problematized women's drinking and what is seen as women being involved in male drinking practices (Jackson, 2006). Conversely, Rosenbaum and Hartley (2019) argued that drinking and risk-taking behaviour are a means to establish a sense of identity, specifically in relation to gender. In this section I will examine how participants negotiate their identity, and how they manage these potentially contradictory positions on drug and alcohol use. Also, I will relate this to group membership and social identity.

The discursive object and action orientation of the following extract is the pressure to use markers of consumption power to maintain group membership:

Extract 16

Maccie: Because its just who I am and what I like to wear. Like, I've, I cant have cheap clothes either, they've got to be dear. Like that is 75 quid and they're 65

Interviewer: What happens if you don't?

Maccie: Cos everyone just takes the mick out of you, don't they? You've got to have expensive stuff

Interviewer: So people take the mick out of you if don't?

Maccie: Yeah, say like if, if I don't, if I dint wear all the stuff I wear now, like I'd be classed as a Downy

Interviewer: What's a Downy?

Maccie: Say of like I dint wear the stuff I wear and act the way I do, like I'd be down with the people who cant like afford like as much stuff as everyone else. I cant be classed as one of them. And then like no-one would wanna know me so you've got to like.   But [friend's name], she don't care what I wear and what I do, she don't care, if I'm good, naughty or, but like everyone else like.   And its not just what everyone else thinks like I like wearing that stuff and I've been brought up to like wear that stuff as well (Lines 641-658)

Maccie uses discursive resources of 'conspicuous consumption' of status as 'markers' reflected in attire. A social imperative is constructed here that stems from the in-group, and the pressures to conform. She uses discursive resources to construct the pressure to conform as not only herself, but the need for others in her situation to do so; this is seen in the use of 'you' and 'I'. By invoking the imperative of conspicuous consumption, Maccie makes explicit the possibility that not conforming would provide for her being deemed an out-groups member ('a Downy') and being stigmatized, thereby leading to ostracism by current in-group members. Through out-groups and the identity threat this poses, the extent to which Maccie experiences the world and groups she inhabits is apparent. Furthermore, how in-group norms and imperatives are experienced as more powerful or important than autonomy or individual distinctiveness is explicitly stated by Maccie. Maccie's action orientation here is to manage her identity in relation to the markers she 'chooses' as a way of maintaining group membership; however in this context, she draws upon a lack of agency, in that her choices are limited.

The lived experience of Maccie and how this leads to her constructing her identity predominantly in relation to group membership is shown in the pressure to behave in a way to maintain her place in the group, which is the discursive object here:

Extract 17

Interviewer: So do you get into fights? So you're physically aggressive as well?

Maccie: Yeah but sometimes I don't start them. Like sometimes, cos I like, like, because I have arguments with people sometimes like, they wanna fight me and I can't say no

Interviewer: Why can't you say no?

Maccie: Because then I'll look like I'm flappin' it

Interviewer: You'll look like you're flapping it?

Maccie: Yeah

Interviewer: What does that mean?

Maccie: Like you're backin' out, you can't fight

Interviewer: So why is it so bad to look like you're flapping it?

Maccie: Because then everyone takes the mick out of you, you've got to say yes and you've got to fight that person

Interviewer: But surely that's better than being hit?

Maccie: No cos then you'd get terrorised for the rest of your school life

Interviewer: So it's really important that you maintain a certain image and behave a certain way?

Maccie: Or you'd get terrorised for the rest of your school life (Lines 719-738)

Here Maccie uses discursive resources to construct group membership as dependent on conformity to in-group behavioural norms. 'Got to' is used to construct the strength of in-group pressure to conform. Maccie also uses discursive resources of undesirable alternatives to group membership which serve the purpose of presenting an either/or situation as determining behaviour. The action orientation here is to manage her identity in light of the behaviour that she exhibits, to free herself of responsibility of any unfavourable behaviour she is involved in.

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Toni's discursive object is also of group pressures as determinants of behaviour:

Extract 18

Toni: Not really because like sometimes they're drunk or they'll just say something, like, they don't particularly like certain people like if they don't fit in with them, they don't like them and I don't fit in wiv them so they don't like me. Like cos they're like complete different to me (Lines 488-492).

She uses discursive resources of anti-social and confrontational behaviour as a means of constructing the policing of the group in terms of determining in-group behaviour. By presenting drunkenness and behaviours of policing, she is positioning herself as diverging from the in-group norms and expectations. By using 'they' she is constructing de-individuating group behaviours, and a sense of homogeneity within the group. This implicitly constructs Toni's identity as distinct and not adhering to group pressure. Toni's action orientation is to explain in-group norms and intragroup processes, and to manage her identity as someone who is not accepted as part of the group, because of her moral choices.

The extent of social norms of the in-group is the discursive object here:

Extract 19

Jane: Erm, yeah due to like alcohol and things like that, I just stay away from it, but everyone, a lot of people, like more than you probably think do, even the ones you don't expect
Interviewer: What do you mean?
Jane: Like the quiet ones, the ones that you know, who are doing really well at school. You wouldn't expect them, you wouldn't look at them and go ah they smoke and they drink but they do (Lines 215-219)

Jane uses discursive resources to present problematic behaviour in the group as more widespread than expected and constructs her identity as outside of the group due to her lack of engagement in this normative in-group behaviour. The action orientation

here is to construct specific behaviours as prevalent across the group by using discursive resources that rely on a certain constructed knowledge of what is the 'typical problem teenager'.

All three participants take the subject position that group membership is determined by the willingness to conform to the expected behaviour, which is managed by in-group members, and that the consequence of non-conformity is exclusion. The way these consequences are managed by the speakers are by discourses of conformity, individuation, or isolation. However, all three participants construct a need to manage in-group membership and behavioural expectations of the group.

Although the three previous speakers constructed lack of conformity of group norms are key in determining group membership, in the following extract the discursive object is the liberalism within the group:

Extract 20

Dinosaur: Yeah I try to like, as much as I can. I don't do anything like that really

Interviewer: So as much as you can?

Dinosaur: Yeah like stay away from it

Interviewer: Is it difficult to stay away from it?

Dinosaur: Yeah cos a lot of people do it at parties and stuff. It's just like everywhere

Interviewer: Do you feel peer pressure ever?

Dinosaur: No cos like if you don't wanna do it, you don't do it so

Interviewer: And people are alright with that?

Dinosaur: Yeah, everyone's fine

Interviewer: So what do you think about other people doing it?

Dinosaur: Honestly, it's not good, but if people like, if they wanna do it's up to them, like can't stop people

Interviewer: Would you stop them if you could?

Dinosaur: Yeah if I could

Interviewer: Why do you think they do it?

Dinosaur: Fun

Interviewer: Do you think it's fun?

Dinosaur: They think it is (Lines 225-242)

Dinosaur uses discursive resources in a number of ways in this extract which relate to identity management. She firstly establishes her individuality and agency, that although other group members partake in these activities, she does not, even though she uses discourses of prevalence ('everywhere'). She also manages the group identity through her talk of their behaviour, which in this case is within the friendship group. She establishes that she has autonomy in the group, to not be involved in taking drugs or drinking and this does not delegitimise her membership to the group. She is using discursive resources of individualism and liberalism ('like if you don't wanna do it, you don't do it so' and 'if they wanna do it, it's up to them'), and through these she is able to position herself as exercising agency and self-determination to avoid a potential negative influence, but others must also be afforded the same rights to make bad decisions. She also establishes her commitment to the group in relation to drug use as being undesirable and her wish to prevent drug usage within the group. Therefore, even though she establishes the individualism within the group, she constructs a sense of limiters in relation to group norms (avoid drugs as much as she can), and her reticence in relation to her peers' drug usage. Dinosaur's action orientation here is to distance herself from the risk-taking behaviour, while maintaining group membership.

All four speakers to varying degrees and from different perspectives, construct group norms and expectations as determinants of group membership ('Say if like I don't wear the stuff I wear and act the way I do', 'I'll look like I'm flappin' it, 'like if they don't fit in'). They construct groups as lacking in individuation, and even though Dinosaur constructed her direct friendship group as more flexible than the overarching group, the subject position of the participants here is that group membership is maintained through conformity. Further, the subject position is that failure to adhere to, or respect the group norms, leads to being ostracized. This identity threat is managed by the speakers who construct themselves as outside the group, through a process of distinctiveness and distancing, based on the subjectivities of group membership in relation to identity and self-esteem. They use discourses of moral ambiguity and risk as a means to manage this threat and to form a moral identity.

This can be seen in the follow extract by Marshy, where the discursive object is the comparative nature of friendship groups in light of the larger social group of adolescent Blackpool residents:

Extract 21

Marshy: I think it's definitely something to do with the age. Like, the stuff we do definitely isn't half as bad as the stuff other people in Blackpool are doing. Like other people in school even

Interviewer: What do you mean?

Marshy: Like, there's, like they'll all be out going to people's houses and they don't know who they are, they have no idea, and they'll go just because someone says 'Oh there's drugs here' and they'll go because they know they are gonna get really high on something (Lines 468-475).

Marshy uses discursive resources of comparison, using examples of other members of the social group, to manage her social identity in relation to her friendship group and the wider social group. By using discursive resources of risk, she is distancing herself and her friendship group through morality and safety, that 'they' are motivated to take drugs for a specific purpose. This allows Marshy to implicitly position her friendship group as distinct from these specific actions. Therefore, Marshy is constructing a sense that there is a need to adhere to group membership norms, but that there is also agency in the motivations and behaviours. The action orientation here is to mitigate the risk-taking behaviour to her friendship group by using discursive resources of normative adolescent behaviour, but also manages her identity as a group member by constructing the group in a favourable light.

The need to manage group membership is an active form of 'identity work' that the speakers are involved in. There are constructed consequences of not meeting these norms, in terms of lack of group membership, being ostracised, or engaging in practices of distancing. Identity work at the group membership level is paramount for speakers, as well as managing the consequence of situated identities.

The extract below focuses on the discursive object of consequences of conforming to group norms:

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Extract 22

Maccie: Yeah cos when you're good you're classed as a geek and like stuff like that so I don't wanna be one of them but like even if I get my head down now they know what I'm capable of like. The worst thing is like I came to this school behavin' the way I did and then like all the teachers expect the worst of you. So even if you try to be good they still expect you to be bad so like the tea- most of the teachers, they don't understand me, only Mr [Teacher] and Miss [Teacher]. They're the only two but even if I'm good now like PE- the people that know I can be naughty, they won't care cos they know what I'm capable of (Lines 462-471)

[…]

Maccie: Yeah because I wanna do good, I don't wanna be like one of those people who's on drugs and that and like when they leave school they have nowhere to live

Interviewer: Do you think that could happen to you?

Maccie: If I carry on behavin' the way I do, yeah, but if I start getting my head down like I am doin' now and behave in the way my mum and dad want me to behave then, no I should have a good life (Lines 462-500)

She uses discursive resources of social groups as a means of managing her identity in the classroom, as well as efficacy, in that she is 'capable'. There is a constructed tension between how Maccie wants to be perceived by others, between not being categorised as a 'geek' by her peers, and how she is perceived by teachers due to her resistance of the category of 'geek'. Maccie uses discursive resources of consequence when constructing her future self which constructs another conflict: by getting her head down, she risks being labelled as a 'geek' but her life chances will be 'good'. But by resisting this, she risks educational failure, leading to 'one of those people who's on drugs and that and like when they leave school they have nowhere to live'. Here Maccie is using discursive resources of extrematisation, the consequences of not 'getting her head down' are dire. However, by getting her 'head down', her life

chances are constructed in a more moderate way, 'good'. This suggests that there are more discursive resources available to her in terms of the negative outcomes available to her. The action orientation here is to manage her current social identity in relation to her possible future selves, and the tension she experiences in light of this.

Zoe in the extract below also deals with the discursive object of what she constructs as conforming to normative group behaviour

Extract 23

Zoe: Personally I don't agree with that like we're too young for that I think at the moment, so like I personally agree again that we should focus more on education than meeting friends, having boyfriends like getting drunk and all that cos the education opens the door for everything I believe

Interviewer: So do you think there's too much focus on drinking and boys?

Zoe: Yes

Interviewer: so what do you think about girls who do that?

Zoe: Well generally and this is being stereotypical again but they aren't the best in the class and the people at the top are the ones who put their education first

Interviewer: So do you think it's because they go out they are not in the top sets, or because they are not in the top sets they do that?

Zoe: I think it's because they spend more time thinking about boys in lower sets and in my sets as well. I've got some girls in the class who are like that, they distract themselves and they distract others in the class

Interviewer: And how does that make you feel?

Zoe: It kinda angers me cos I'm, I just want to learn, and they are just kind of being selfish

Interviewer: Does it ever lead to conflict?

Zoe: I will say to them can you quiet it down because I am trying to work but I'll never get angry at them or shout at them

Interviewer: But you do confront them?

Zoe: Yes

Interviewer: Do they ever respond?

Zoe: Sometimes

Interviewer: Does that bother you?

Zoe: Not really (Lines 483-506)

Throughout the extract, Zoe shifts between 'we' and 'they'. This indicates that she has an awareness of her social identity, but that she distinguishes herself from particular group membership. When using discursive resources of 'we' when constructing her knowledge of what 'should be', but 'they', in terms of 'what is'. By doing this Zoe is distancing herself from the constructed normative group behaviour. Zoe uses inoculations to construct herself as distinctive from group members, by using the term 'stereotypes', which allows her to use discursive resources of the motivations of 'typical' teenage girls and to distance herself from this 'stereotype', constructing an identity of educational success for herself. Like the other speakers, there are consequences from the normative group behaviour, in this case, she positions herself outside of the group, placing herself in opposition to the group.

Zoe's discursive resources negate the influence of others, she states she is 'not bothered' by the confrontation, which is justified due to the long-term consequences of their behaviour on her (and others') education. There is an indication that implicitly, all the speakers are managing the consequences of decision-making in relation to group membership and the adherence to the assumed normative behaviour. The action orientation here is to manage her own identity in relation to the social group, and her agency relating to her lack of group membership.

6.3.1.Discussion

The participants use discourses of normative behaviour throughout. This is used in two ways: some as an external forces which negates them of individual responsibility in relation to their actions that are constructed as necessary to maintain group membership; the other way is to use discourses of conformity negatively to allow

participants to be involved in identity work for their lack of group membership. The subject position of the speakers is that non-compliance of normative behaviour leads to consequences in terms of group membership, and potential identity threats. Alternatively, consequences can be redefined, in light of the normative behaviour, in terms of risk and future selves, and how to reconstitute identity in light of these redefinitions, either by realigning friendship groups, or distancing and distinctiveness of personal identity.

6.4. Conclusion

What is clear in this chapter is that group membership plays a fundamental role to the speakers' identities. The speakers are involved in 'identity work' to manage their group membership to avoid identity threats. In terms of group status membership, salience of group characteristics are defined as a means to manage their identity in relation to their socio-economic status. In relation to SES, similar subject positions are taken, such as meritocracy, deservedness, and agency. However, to manage lower status, discourses of authenticity are used. In terms of markers of consumption, these are constructed differently, according to SES; higher SES use discourses of taste, whereas lower SES members use these markers as a means of constructing downward comparisons.

Group membership in terms of normative behaviour also involves identity work. The decision to conform to these behaviours have consequences; conforming leads to group membership maintenance, but potential long-term consequences. Whereas the decision to reject or challenge the normative behaviour leads to peripheral group membership, non-group membership or being positioned in a less favourable group. For those who do not conform, this is managed through distancing, through discourses of risk and more favourable life outcomes. The discourses of the speakers shows that they are actively involved in managing the threats of their social identities, and carefully construct an identity that aligns themselves with a desirable social group, while maintaining a personal identity in an attempt to maintain identity principles.

Chapter 7 - Belongingness, distinctiveness and resources constructed for self-enhancement

The aim of this chapter is to examine how the young women in the study were involved in 'identity work' as a means of self-enhancement. To do this, Breakwell's (1984) theory will be considered in terms of its potential alignment with Erikson's (1968) theory of adolescent identity formation. One criticism of identity theories is that they acknowledge the complexity of identity but only engage in examining specific components rather than identity in its entirety (van Doeselaar et al., 2018). Arguably, Erikson and Breakwell offer more holistic approaches to identity, but from different perspectives: Erikson focuses on identity as a developmental stage, whereas Breakwell views identity process as dynamic. This is relevant here as the participants are adolescents negotiating their identities in relation to Blackpool, but also as young women considering their future selves.

There are further similarities to the theories, but differing standpoints. For example belongingness and distinctiveness plays an important role in both theories. Erikson sees distinctiveness, coherence and continuity as "superordinated to any single identification with individuals of the past: it includes all significant identifications, but it also alters them in order to make a unique and reasonably coherent whole of them" (p. 161). Erikson goes on to argue that distinctiveness is only part of the development of identity. Ultimately, it is a balance between maintaining the consistent identity and belongingness with family, but in some way distinct from this; so in other words, still maintaining the values and attitudes of their parents, while developing distinctiveness. Breakwell (1986) argues that the content of one's identity gives them their 'uniqueness', and similar to Erikson, she argues that this uniqueness comes from social interaction, as well as internal processes, which arguably can be aligned with Erikson's description of a need for a sense of coherence within one's sense of identity. However, Breakwell maintains that group membership and belongingness is an important component of identity. Continuity is more complex when attempting to draw parallels between the theories. Erikson (1968) emphasized that the feeling of having a personal identity is based on "the perception of the self-sameness and continuity of one's existence in time and space" (p. 50). Breakwell (1986) theorises that there are temporal and spatial elements of identity. However, Breakwell acknowledges that identity is not

always stable and the processes of accommodation and assimilation are continuous, impacting on the content and value dimensions of identity. It can be assumed that this continuity comes from familial links and social groups, as Breakwell is clear that personal and social identity forms through social interaction.

The main differences between Erikson and Breakwell are that Erikson focused on one stage of one's lifespan as crucial for identity to be successfully achieve, whereas Breakwell considered identity as continuously developing. Furthermore, Breakwell argued that identity threats can emerge and be experienced throughout life, whereas Erikson theorised that establishing an identity in late adolescence meant that this was 'achieved'. As the participants in this study are adolescents, and engage in 'identity work' relating to belongingness and distinctiveness, both theories are relevant here. By taking this complementary approach, it offers an insight into the lived experiences of young women in Blackpool. This creates the opportunity to acknowledge the typical principle of distinctiveness in adolescence, while examining the purpose that distinctiveness serves in terms of values and content of identity.

By understanding the roles of belongingness and distinctiveness during adolescence, it can be determined whether this is a process of identity maintenance or enhancement, in light of the social and individual identities of young women in Blackpool. By incorporating Erikson's argument that identity during adolescence is a means of establishing an adult sense of self, there this the potential to consider the extent that young women draw upon their discourses of resources, such as those provided by family through social capital, and distinctiveness as resources for a sense of future self.

As the theory relies on the social and cultural context of the adolescent, their identity development will be influenced by gender and their residence in Blackpool; similarly, Breakwell (1986) emphasises temporal and spatial elements of identity. Baumeister and Muraven (1996) argued that identity is adapted according to sociocultural context, that the choices available are bound by the social, cultural, and historical context of the individual. Based on this premise, young women in Blackpool live in a 'loose' culture, where there are many identity opportunities available, but are constrained by the socio-economic issues associated in Blackpool. This is supported by Adams and Marshall (1996) who argue that identity works on the macro-level due to

the social and economic constraints, and on the micro-level through social interaction and discourse.

There are methodological concerns regarding Erikson's approach which takes an objective stance and has been challenged by post-modernist theorists, who argue that developmental approaches lend themselves to a hierarchical structure (Gergen, 1991). However, by taking a Foucauldian approach in analysis, this can be considered from a subjective and social constructionist perspective. By taking such an approach allows for Rattansi and Phoenix's (1997) argument that identity is fragmented and fluid, and that identity is a form of culturally determined discourse (Slugoski & Ginsburg, 1989), as well as Gergen's (1991) perspective of the 'situated' identity. Therefore, this chapter will examine the role of distinctiveness and the resources young women draw upon to reflect on the current and future self, in relation to the intrinsic and extrinsic resources available to them.

7.1. Family as a source of belongingness and resources for future self

Blackpool, as one of the most deprived areas in the UK, also has one of the highest percentages of low-income families. This differs according to wards, with some showing only 11.4% of children living in low-income families, but others where over 65% of children live in low-income families. As of May 2015, nearly half of children in Blackpool were living in households in receipt of benefits, and 25% were in receipt of free school meals (JSNA, 2020a). As seen in previous chapters, poverty and benefit claimants were constructed as a source of negative social representations of Blackpool on a national and local level.

Arguably, the social representations of family and poverty are intertwined and relate directly to Blackpool. This in itself is a potential identity threat. Some of the participants therefore use their subjective knowledge of families in Blackpool as a means to construct a personal identity that is distinct from the social representations and expectations of families in Blackpool.

Albion 12A uses the discursive object of herself in relation to her activities and careers and the role her family play in this:

Extract 1

Interviewer: Would you describe yourself as a tomboy?

Albion 12A: Yes, I think so. Yes, probably, because I don't do the normal stuff that other girls do.

Interviewer: What's the normal stuff that other girls do that you don't do?

Albion 12A: Don't know, they just don't really do any sports. When they do, they do like dancing and stuff, and gymnastics, and stuff like that. Then, when I say I do football and BMX, it's totally different. (Lines 187-193)

Here she is using discursive resources of gender to establish her distinctiveness, drawing on stereotypical feminine traits and activities to establish her distinctiveness from her female peers. In the following extract, the discursive object is gender-typed activities as a way of establishing her distinctiveness from her twin sister, also drawing on her family as a source of support:

Extract 2

Albion 12A: Well, because my dad used to do it, so he got into it. Then, he got me into it, so people normally get into it through, like, friends. Normally, they don't figure it out themselves, but it's normally family that does it, or friends. That's how you get into it.

[…]

Albion 12A: I used to do dancing. Me and [Albion 12B] used to do dancing together, but when I was like four, I said to my dad, "I want to start football and BMXing," stuff like that. Then, [Albion 12B] has done BMX before, but she doesn't like it.

[…]

Albion 12A: We've both done both, and then we've chosen what we wanted to go, and we just both went separate.

[…]

Albion 12A: Yes, like in class, they always say, "Give me a shout out in the Olympics," and stuff like that. (Lines 249-341)

She uses discursive resources of choice and individuality, emphasising here agency in tandem with her distinctiveness, as well as the resources and opportunities to explore these choices, which she attributes to her family, specifically her dad. She uses reported speech 'Shout out in the Olympics' to construct how she is perceived and evaluated by other, which serves as a source of esteem. Here Albion 12A's action orientation is to establish the choices she has made, with the support of her family, and how they make her distinctive from her peers and how it gives her a sense of esteem.

The discursive object in Dinosaur's extract is herself, constructed through talk about her parents in terms of their constructed through talk about her parents, their achievements and support, and what might be expected or realistic for her:

Extract 3

Interviewer: She has her own salon?

Dinosaur: Yeah

Interviewer: Is that in Blackpool?

Dinosaur: Yeah, South Shore, the salon of the year on [Street name] near the [ward of Blackpool], it's called [name of salon], so I will probably do that, and I've got my horses and the prom and my cabbing

[…]

Dinosaur: Yeah I probably will, I will probably do something like graphics or something like that there. And advertising, I like advertising cos I've grown up around it cos my mum and dad have their own business advertising, so I'll probably do that as well, like another option. I do media as well cos I love it (Lines 75-86)

Dinosaur uses discursive resources of 'family business,' constructing a sense of self whereby her ambition and interests align with her parents' careers. The discursive

resources of parental support and achievement provide her with resources where her ambitions are achievable if not inevitable; her parents did, so there is no reason why she should not achieve.

This provides her a level of success that is within reach. The resources that Albion 12A relate to are those provided by their parents. However, Dinosaur is more explicit in how her future self relates to her parents in terms of the opportunities that are available to her, stating advertising due to the fact she has 'grown up with it'. Conversely, in terms of establishing her distinctiveness and sense of self-esteem in her own achievements, these are related to family, but she highlights her independence and autonomy through these. Dinosaur's action orientation is to establish the possibilities available to her which are actively constructed as realistic and achievable based on her parents' achievement and support, as well as enabling her a sense of distinctiveness from her family if she so chooses. Albion 2's discursive object relates to her role in the family business and her reticence:

Extract 4

Albion 2: Yes, pink jacket, she wants me to go into hairdressing because that means it's the fourth generation going into hairdressing.

Interviewer: Okay, so has your mum got her own hair salon?

Albion 2: Yes, she's a barber, and her granddad was a barber, and he did a very famous man's hair. And I can't remember his name, because he wasn't really that famous to me, but famous back then. And I think his dad did it, so that would make me the fourth generation. So, that's why my nan wants me to do it.

Interviewer: Do you want to do it?

Albion 2: I do, and I don't.

Interviewer: Okay.

Albion 2: I like the idea of having my own business, I do like the idea of doing hairdressing, but I also want to go down graphics route. I don't know what I want to be, because I also want to be an air hostess, because you get to see the world from it. (Lines 196-217).

Like Dinosaur, family and parental achievement provides a ready and, on the face of it, realisable career trajectory. Her route to being a barber is easy given the family history. This route is qualified by the invocation of individual agency, passion, and curiosity. By using discursive resources of family's success, she constructs a sense of esteem. By highlighting her mother owning her own business and her granddad's famous client, she is constructing a sense of distinctiveness on a familial level of which she is an inheritor. However, there is a sense of tension in terms of Albion 2's own ambitions, by emphasising the 'fourth generation', there is an implicit sense of expectation which does not necessarily fully align with her own ambitions. Albion 2's action orientation is one of maintaining self-esteem through potential career trajectories, while managing family expectations.

7.1.1.Discussion

When considering Erikson (1968) and the role of identity formation in adolescence, it is apparent that this time of transition is to form a sense of self with the anticipation of future self. The role of resources and opportunities, or as Bourdieu (1984) stated 'social capital' in this process is clear for Albion 12A, Albion 2, and Dinosaur through their discourses of family as a source of support and motivation to succeed. Their potential success is closely entwined with the opportunities and resources family provide for them, Albion 12A states this explicitly ('Normally, they don't figure it out themselves, but it's normally family that does it, or friends'). This suggests that social capital, the history, connection, and categories of which the speakers can claim membership, provide them with the opportunity to experience certain routes/trajectories, which are more realistic or achievable. This enables the young women to construct a sense of self-efficacy, and utilise this as a way of considering future selves, but this self-efficacy is dependent on their parents.

For Albion 12A specifically, her distinctiveness is constructed as her own successes based on the support and resources afforded to her by her parents. This in itself can be seen as a form of capital in terms of implicitly giving the participants a sense of achievement, and a means of identity enhancement, giving a sense of possible future selves. To qualify the family as a resource, the participants use discursive repertoires of meritocracy, as well as overcoming adversity, as well as a sense of

connectedness to their parents. However, there is also a sense of tension; both Dinosaur and Albion 2 use discourses of family business, and although Dinosaur expresses choice, she aligns herself with the 'family business' based on familiarity, whereas Albion 2 expresses a form of tension between familial expectations ("So, that's why my nan wants me to do it"), and her own aspirations. Their subjectivities are that family belonging can give young women a sense of aspiration, when the resources are available, but can also can be a source of limitations based on familial expectations.

7.2.Belongingness and Distinctiveness through group memberships

For some of the young women their family does not necessarily provide them with the resources for them to establish a sense of distinctiveness through resources and belonging. Although distinctiveness often refers to characteristics that individuals draw upon to define themselves as different to others, group membership can be a means of individuals defining them as distinct in a wider context. When considering the role of identity formation during adolescence, young adults are theorised as negotiating a sense of belongingness and distinctiveness to form their own identity. This can be achieved through group membership. In the following three extracts, the discursive object are the speakers' identities using subcultures or relative (to Blackpool) minority group membership to establish their distinctiveness:

Extract 5

Interviewer: Because you mentioned you're a Goth and death and darkness are part of

Hannah: Yeah. I do hang around with an Emo itself erm, and we're close but, we're not the same and I think, my mum [name of mum], she views me as this girl who loves girlie things. She doesn't see this, like, the other side of me because I love dark things.

Interviewer: So you like both?

Hannah: No. She dress, she, I mean the outfits she gets me like she gets me like pink things and purple things and that but it's not me [laughs]. But I've never told her that

[…]

Interviewer: How would you describe the difference between the two?

Hannah: Erm an Emo like is, like an Emo goes to bands and that where some Goths don't but Emos have to. It's a kind of thing they all do. Erm an Emo has different colour hair like blue hair, erm, they're not as murderous, they don't think of murder

Interviewer: [laughs] they're not as murderous

Hannah: Yeah, I made that word up

Interviewer: No there is a word murderous, something can be murderous

Hannah: Erm but where Goths are very murderous, and think of death and that

[…]

Hannah: Yeah, definitely, yeah, erm I mean some Emos like normal music where Goths just like rock and all that and very, as some people say, as my mum says, scary songs

[…]

Interviewer: Are there many Goths your age?

Hannah: Not really, no. It's very rare I think nowadays, it's really rare to find someone who's a Goth, I think it's mainly Emos now. But it's actually like, it's like a rare thing to see someone down the road and you start talking to them and they're a Goth, you'll be so surprised because they may look scary but they're really nice.

Interviewer: So how did you get into Goth stuff?

Hannah: I've always been it

Interviewer: Can you not remember, was it a parent or a friend who introduced you?

Hannah: It was the start of my life really, erm, I had a rough start in life as these pictures, some of them describe. Erm, but yeah I had a rough start and I just

turned out that way. I started dressing up, I listened to music and then I found out what make-up was and I went and designed my own look a bit.

Interviewer: OK. Do you think that makes you quite unique in your social group? I've met some of them

Hannah: Yeah, everyone's different in their own way. It's kind of unique, its unique and I would say I'm unique because [laughs] I'm different

Interviewer: To the rest of your friends?

Hannah: Yeah because most of them are like, oh my God I broke a nail or something (Lines 172-224)

As stated by Erikson (1968), during the period of adolescence there is a move away from parents towards peers and a distinct sense of self. This can be seen here, where Hannah constructs her adoptive mother's perceptions of her, in stereotypically feminine ways, and the contrast between these and the 'real' Hannah, creating a sense of tension, arising from the performative identity role of 'daughter'. Hannah draws on imagery of 'darkness' to construct her identity as a Goth, one that is performative in terms of activities and appearance, and the other, the inherent darkness that has 'always' been present, associated with difficulties she has faced in her life, for a sense that she is authentically distinctive. Hannah uses discursive resources of Goths to construct her distinctiveness in terms of her character and interests. Also by referring to the dichotomy of how Goths are 'perceived' and the 'reality' ('you'll be surprised because they may look scary but they're really nice'), she is implicitly aligning herself with that interpretation of Goths, while reinforcing how this is a fundamental part of her identity ('I've always been it'), solidifying this sense of authentic distinctiveness.

Hannah uses individuality and femininity to further establish a sense of distinctiveness due to her unique group membership. By using the disclaimer that 'everyone is different in their own way', but adding the 'I'm unique because I am different', she is identifying her 'individuality' as authentic. She uses the trope 'I broke a nail' as discursive resource of stereotypical, image-obsessed, and vacuous femininity, as a form of distancing from traditional notions of femininity. However, Hannah, like Albion 12 conveys a sense of tension between her 'real' self and family expectations. The action orientation of Hannah is to distinguish herself from others who are

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ostensibly similar to her, while gaining a sense of distinctiveness through rare group categorisation.

In the following extract, Hannah's discursive object is her distinctive identity due to familial connections to faith:

Extract 6

Hannah: I am Jewish, yeah. Erm I follow my dad's religion completely. I'm not a God believer but I find it unique being Jewish, I find it, because I am more Jewish than Christian. I mean I don't believe in God but there's a lot of things Christians do where Jews do it differently (Lines 268-270)

The invocations of Jewish identity serve to further distinguish herself from the practices of Christians as a way of maintaining her uniqueness in the wider societal sense, and familial belonging through her father. She aligns herself with Judaism in terms of practice. The discursive objects that index a repertoire of authentic Jewish cultural behaviours and practices, that establish her as a category member are utilised in the following extract:

Extract 7

Hannah: Erm, not really because I don't really follow all of them. I, have, I do mainly the food thing, erm, like

Interviewer: No pork, no meat with milk?

Hannah: I don't eat pork anyway, I don't drink milk, I find it gross

[…]

Hannah: No my mum is Christian. Erm, my fake name is Christian, erm my mum got me Christened in a fake name, erm, Hannah ['fake'surname] but that person doesn't exist

Interviewer: So what's your real name?

Hannah: Erm Hannah ['real' surname], Hannah [name she identifies with]

[…]

Hannah: Yeah, oh yeah. She's very supportive. I mean I eat gherkins and she's like, she's like, 'How do you eat them? They smell', and I'm there just literally like eating away and she just thinks I some weirdo [laughs] (Lines 287-303)

The discursive resources relating to cultural practice are used as a means of establishing her Jewish identity as embodied and behavioural. She also uses discursive resources of identity authenticity to establish her sense of 'real self' on this fundamental level. The action orientation here is to establish her 'Jewishness' on an inherent level by using discourses of food and her familial name, even though neither surname index an identity that might be abandoned in favour of another.

Like Hannah (Extracts 5-7), Justin's discursive objects is her distinctive identity established through her connection with unique cultural groups. Osgerby (2014), based on the works of Cohen (1955) and Becker (1963), argues that subcultures are a means to raise esteem in low status groups and to celebrate challenging wider societal norms.

Extract 8

Justin: Its. Not a lot of people know about it. It's just, its, just really for bikers

Interviewer: OK

Justin: My brother's part of the club as well

[…]

Interviewer: OK, so you obviously like this unit and you like, do you like the fact its bikers?

Justin: Yeah

Interviewer: So what kind of things do you like about it?

Justin: They're like a family, erm they go on rallies. I've been on two rallies. It's like camping, but bikers

[…]

Interviewer: Ok so what kind of people are bikers then?

Justin: They're nice people, like, they're like, they're like a giant family

Interviewer: OK, in what way are they like a family?

Justin: Like, they stick up for each other, like say, or, I can't like. They don't really like, some mates like argue all the time and fall out and just don't. But like they don't they're just mates constantly. Like even if someone does something bad they understand and everythin' (Lines 166-198)

Justin's discursive resources regarding her subgroup family is in juxtaposition to her discourse of her biological family. In the extract below shows a level of reticence and detachment:

Extract 9

Justin: Yeah

Interviewer: So you lived with your mum. So who else did you live with there?

Justin: My brother, big brother [name of brother] and my little sister, [name of sister]. Well we, right I have five brothers and sisters. I have two little sisters, one little brother and two big brothers. One of my big brothers moved out and it was just five of us. Then me and Owen moved in with my dad, my little brother and then my little sister came so, yeah

Interviewer: Why did you move out?

Justin: Erm, social workers really

Interviewer: OK, so they said you had to move out of your mum's house?

Justin: Yeah

Interviewer: Was there a reason?

Justin: Don't know. I'm not allowed to know anythin' about that

Interviewer: OK, does that not bother you?

Justin: No (Lines 287-303)

In relation to her 'biker' family, Justin draws on discursive repertoires of traditional family values, including loyalty ('they stick up for each other'), forgiveness ('even if someone does something bad they understand and everythin'') and togetherness ('erm they go on rallies. I've been on two rallies. It's like camping, but bikers). In relation to her own family, Justin uses the inoculation of 'not allowed' to potentially prevent elaboration on this point, followed by disengagement from the subject of her actual family circumstances. Justin's action orientation is to establish a sense of family within the unique subgroup, which paradoxically offers her a sense of traditional family values not expressed in terms of her actual family.

As Justin and Hannah are from non-traditional families and have experienced varying degrees of separation from their biological family, the explicitness of their distinctiveness serves an important purpose in terms of identity protecting functions. The use of sub-cultures shows the extent to which they construct their identities outside the norm and how this gives them a sense of elevated status through the uniqueness of the groups. They also take the subject position of belongingness as a fundamental part of identity, that although distinctiveness serves a purpose, there is a need for a sense of belonging within that individuality on an intrinsic and familial level. This could be a means of mitigating identity threat, as well as serving the purpose of self-enhancement, through the content and value dimensions of identity, by allowing the participants to draw upon the characteristics and values of the specific group identity, enhancing the value dimension of their personal identity.

As Blackpool has a relatively small ethnic minority population, just 3.3% of Blackpool residents identify as a member of an ethnic group, compared to 9.9% in the North West of England, and 14% of England (JSNA, 2020). Chloe's discursive object in the following extract is her distinctive identity due to the physical marker of hair:

Extract 10

Interviewer: So I'm guessing that your hair is something which is quite important to your identity. Why is that?

Chloe: Yeah I feel like it makes me stand out from everyone else. Erm and I feel like a lot of people like can make conversation with me cos of my hair.

They'll just say oh I love your hair and then they'll just start talking to me. So I feel like cos its different it like sort of like represents who I am to an extent.

Interviewer: So because it's different it represents who you are?

Chloe: Yeah cos I like to be like different and unique and that's sort of why I want to go into fashion cos I don't wanna like wear somethin' that's the same as someone else's (Lines 868-873)

Her self-esteem is a product of her own feelings about her hair and the prevailing evaluations of it within local social contexts. Furthermore, Chloe uses discursive resources of individuals reacting positively to her hair, and by extension to her. Chloe can more easily take a positive stance on her hair, particularly given that is does index her difference. By extension, her difference is positively evaluated and valued. The action orientation here is to construct her hair as a marker of difference, and that this is a fundamental feature of her identity, however she does not make direct reference to her ethnicity and how this relates to her family.

Alex constructs a more active role in the distinctiveness of her appearance, similar to Chloe. However, Alex discusses her appearance as something that she creates that enables her to be a distinct member of distinct groups, creating a distinctive identity.

Extract 11

Alex: Yeah cos I am a dark person cos my makeup isn't always pink and colourful

Interviewer: So is it just your make-up that's dark?

Alex: Its my make-up and the way and dress. I mean concerts as you can see its very colourful, shorts and Batman tights cos why not. And then when like I went to Pride, I could have worn that top but I went in full black

Alex: I like being different

Interviewer: You like being different?

Alex: Yeah

Interviewer: You like standing out?

Alex: Its like I came into school wiv my greeny blue hair. It was blue hair dye but it turned out like that. I got out the shower and I had blue streaks and I was like 'Its actually gone blue' nope nope nope nope. When it faded it ended up like that, if you can tell by the light

Interviewer: Yeah I can see it at the bottom. Its quite pretty though, I like that

Alex: I wore my burgundy beanie that day and I don't know where that's gone

Interviewer: What did they say when you came into school?

Alex: No-one noticed

Interviewer: Really?

Alex: No-one noticed until I was sat in the canteen, right, [name of pupil]. Of all people got Mr [teacher's surname] one of the impact teachers and said 'Oi sir, [participant's name] has got green hair' so I said' [name of pupil] you cunt' and he heard me

Interviewer: You called him a

Alex: A cunt, 'cos why not

Interviewer: So you got into trouble for your hair and for language?

Alex: Yeah [Laughs] He's sat there screaming at me right like' How would your mum feel?' I just literally stared up in the air like, 'My mum will be fine wiv it'. I mean she knows about the hair, if you put me in impact I don't think you want to be here (Lines 114-397)

Alex uses discursive resources that lend themselves to this group: the reference to concerts and Pride indicate her social group in terms of music, and Pride, as reference points to her sexuality. The action orientation of the second part of the extract is to establish her rebellious identity. The discursive resource used here is an anecdote which is advanced to evidence not only distinctiveness, but also rebelliousness, done by invoking imagery and tropes of the rebellious teen (dyed hair, swearing and defying teachers). This illustrates the limited and culturally available

resources out of which she is able to construct rebelliousness. The construction of rebelliousness here by its very nature is an attempt to establish her distinctiveness (going against what is deemed acceptable), even though the anecdote indicates that her construct of distinctiveness can be potentially maladaptive. However, her mum in particular is a source of support relating to this potentially maladaptive behaviour, which is a source of esteem. The first action orientation in the extract is to establish her distinctiveness through her subgroup membership, while using her mum as a source of support for her distinctiveness.

7.2.1.Discussion

With all the participants, their distinctiveness serves the function of constructing a sense of esteem and agency, while also maintaining a sense of belonging. For some of the participants, their distinctiveness is established through subgroup membership, indicating a need for connectedness, as well as distinctiveness. Even Chloe, who does not explicitly refer to group membership, indicates that the approval of others gives her a sense of esteem in terms of her distinctiveness. This indicates that explicitly or implicitly, even though the participants are constructing distinctive identities within specific social situations, there is a need for belonging and approval through that distinctiveness. Although they use discourses of distinctiveness ('It's very rare I think nowadays', 'I find it unique being Jewish', 'there's lots of things Christians do where Jews do it differently', 'Not a lot of people know about it', 'I feel like it makes me stand out from everyone else.'), there is still a sense of belongingness, using repertoires of family and biological connectedness ('I follow my dad's religion completely', 'They're like a family', 'they understand'). These discourses also give weight to the distinctiveness that their group membership is authentic, raising esteem from distinct group membership. Their subjectivities are based on the role of family, or a pseudo-family connection as a form of self-esteem through social identity.

7.3.Distinctiveness as identity threats

In the previous subsections, belongingness is a source of support for their distinctiveness. The participants established their distinctiveness from the overarching social group of young women in Blackpool, through the resources that are available to

them through their family. Others used subgroup membership and appearance as a means of creating a sense of belonging that either directly relates to family, possible through family support, or from pseudo-family belonging. However, some participants' distinctiveness was maladaptive, and rather than give them a sense of esteem, their action orientation was to construct their sense of their perceived shortcomings as a means of self-presentation and threat management.

This can be seen in Zoey where the discursive object is her relative or expressed, inability at school as a source of conflict:

Extract 12

Interviewer: Right OK. Because you did say you get into trouble at school. Why do you get into trouble at school?

Zoey: Because I don't understand the work, cos like they explain everythin' all at once and my brain doesn't function properly, like, it needs to be all break down and then I get confused, and then I get frustrated and then I kick off cos I get bored

Interviewer: So you say your brain doesn't work properly, what do you mean by that?

Zoey: Like if someone told me like a list of things to do I get confused with it all. But if they told me one thing to do then when I did it, tell me another one then I'd understand it

Interviewer: Does the school know?

Zoey: Yeah I had a meetin'

Interviewer: OK. Do you think that will help?

Zoey: Dunno

Interviewer: So do you kick off often at school?

Zoey: Dunno [Laughs]

Interviewer: So how often do you kick off at school?

Zoey: Well sometimes if I feel like it or when I don't understand, yeah

Interviewer: Do you think it's easier to kick off than ask for help?

Zoey: Yeah

Interviewer: Why don't you just ask for help?

Zoey: Because sometimes it might be embarrassing like I don't understand it

Interviewer: Who would you be embarrassed in front of? Your teacher or your friends? Or pupils?

Zoey: Everyone

Interviewer: So you think asking for help is embarrassing? Why is it embarrassing?

Zoey: Cos like I'll be the idiot that won't get it

Interviewer: Is that how you feel?

Zoey: Mm m.

Interviewer: Which sets are you in?

Zoey: They've moved me down in some, in Maths I'm in set 3. In science I'm set 3 in English I'm set 2

Interviewer: So you're 2 and 3, so you're top middle aren't you?

Zoey: I used to be in set 1 for English (Lines 26-55)

Her lived experience is of conflict in school and she uses tropes of neurological pathology to mitigate her accountability for her subjectively experienced 'failures.' However, when asked about helping for assistance rather than 'kicking off', she constructs the ascribed perceptions of others, their evaluations that would be a source of embarrassment. This suggests that to manage the tension between 'bad behaviour' and her perception of failure, her decision-making process is to choose behaviours which are less damaging to her on a status level, that it is better to be seen as 'bad' than 'stupid'. This can be seen as a way to 'save face'. Her perceived lack of achievement is constructed as due to a lack of support from the school; she uses references to previous relative success to establish this. Zoey's account is constructed to establish

that her distinctiveness is inevitable, because she cannot complete the tasks. So the decision is whether to be distinctive in a way that is less threatening in terms of standing among her peers, rather than another, which would result in a 'loss of face.' The position Zoey takes is that it is better to fail for being disruptive, giving her a sense of agency over the constructed inevitable outcome, rather than being seen as 'thick'. The action orientation here is to establish the blameworthiness of her behaviour, if the teachers helped her she would not behave in a maladaptive way to maintain esteem, to 'save face' in front of her peers.

Transgender's discursive object is similar to that of Zoey, in that she is negotiating reactions to her behaviour and how she is labelled due to this ascribed behaviour:

Extract 13

Transgender: Don't know just get sent out from my lessons for stuff

Interviewer: Do you do it on purpose?

Transgender: Not really sometimes but don't know, just weird

Interviewer: You're weird?

Transgender: Yeah

Interviewer: In what way are you weird?

Transgender: Well everyone thinks I'm autistic [laughs]

Interviewer: Do they?

Transgender: Yeah

Interviewer: What makes them say that?

Transgender: Cos I'm weird I don't know like, I do everything weird

Interviewer: Do you like doing everything weird?

Transgender: Not really it's weird

Interviewer: That's just the way you are?

Transgender: Yeah (Lines 207-221)

She uses discursive resources of 'otherness', using terms such as 'weird', and 'autistic'. It is unclear as to who 'everyone' is, but she constructs a sense of consensus regarding her behaviour. The repetition of weird invokes this sense of differentness; she does not attempt to explain her 'weirdness' but establishes this as an undeniable characteristic. Transgender constructs a sense of otherness as a widely agreed explanation as to why she is seen as problematic in school. There is a sense of resignation, and lack of agency in Transgender's sense of 'otherness', therefore constructs her distinctiveness as maladaptive and unavoidable. Here the action orientation is to ascribe a label to her behaviour, to make sense of something which she constructs as out of her control.

The discursive object of the following extract is also to mitigate what is constructed as undesirable behaviour:

Extract 14

Interviewer: And then there's this, is this something you partake in? [reference to image relating to cannabis]

Marshy: Yeah, it's just something that everyone should at least try and get a view on it because you can't not try something and then give your own opinion cos you don't understand it properly.

Interviewer: Do you think people have a problem with people who smoke cannabis?

Marshy: Yeah definitely cos like they see it as just like a gateway drug. I don't think it is, it like, that's the only one I've ever done

Interviewer: And you do that quite regularly?

Marshy: Yeah

Interviewer: Why?

Marshy: It's just like a way of relaxing. I don't like, it's just, it's just, just so easy to like, it helps.

Interviewer: Helps with what?

Marshy: Because like I have like panic attacks and stuff and my brain will be like constantly thinking about the worst things that could happen, that's why I've been messing with stuff, it's just constantly need something to do. It doesn't like, it lets you just chill and it's so easy to sleep as well because you are not constantly thinking about what could happen

Interviewer: So you get quite anxious, do you think that's a common thing for girls your age?

Marshy: Yeah

Interviewer: Why do you think they get anxious?

Marshy: Erm, I think it's because they're like so focussed on what they look like and their image and they're so bothered about what other people think about them.

Interviewer: Do you think you're like that as well?

Marshy: I don't know because I like, I'm not bothered what other people think of me but like if I walk in a room and there's everyone there, then I'll be like, panicking like. But I don't know, I don't understand how I panic or why I panic because, like, like what I want to do is go over and speak to everyone all the time. But I can't because I'm shaking and I'm scared and I don't know, it's weird

Interviewer: Have you always been like that?

Marshy: I bit yeah, like my dad's family are the same so I'd say it's like more genetic stuff. Cos my dad's the same as me, like we're both so indecisive and nervous and stuff (Lines 355-393)

There are discursive resources of knowledge and judgement, that without experiential knowledge, individuals cannot judge drug usage, which are used to manage the potential threat of drug usage on a more social level. Marshy uses discursive resources of anxiety for her therapeutic marijuana usage. Marshy distinguishes herself from other young women by contrasting their reasons for drug use, and her own, by making reference to panic attacks and an inability to relax. Marshy uses pathologising

and biological discursive resources, evident in her construction of her recreational drug usage as justified. However, by managing the threat that drug usage may pose to her identity, she 'creates' another threat to her identity, one of anxiety and an inability to cope without drug usage. This could potentially be more damaging as a self-handicapping mechanism and constructing a sense of dependency. The action orientation is to enable Marshy to manage her identity in relation to drug usage by establishing it as a key characteristic, which like Transgender, she has no control over.

Alex's discursive object is similar to Marshy's in that she is pathologising a reaction to specific social situations

Extract 15

Alex: Like the only, I get stressed about it like I struggle to go through town because I know there's people that there who want to jump me so I can't go into town or Houndshill by myself. I ended up not going into Houndshill anyway cos I get claustrophobic and I get really in there and when I'm there but like nothing.

[…]

Alex: I personally live in [name of area] and my dad lives right behind the [area in Blackpool] so I walk up and to the sand dunes and that. So I normally sit there are the sand dunes burning stuff because why not (Lines 204-660)

Alex uses pathologising discursive resources relating to anxiety and alludes to pyromania as a means to construct the impact of the actions of others' on her state of mind. This indicates on an intrapsychic level, the isolation she constructs has led to an identity based on a sense of 'otherness', but is self-handicapping in the fact that it leads to a construction of distinct identity based on this otherness and isolation. Alex's action orientation here is to explain her behaviour in light of others' behaviour towards her.

7.3.1.Discussion

In the previous subsection, participants claim membership of groups confers distinctiveness within the more local peer group or social context, taking the subject

position that specific groups hold more esteem due to their relative uniqueness. This enables the participants to construct a sense of self-esteem and a means of establishing their distinctiveness. However, in this subsection, the distinctiveness on an ascribed individual level leads to participants constructing a sense of otherness, as outside the local context and ascribed social groups. This in itself can be seen as a form of self-handicapping and has the potential of distinctiveness being maladaptive in terms of managing their identity and potential identity threats. By constructing their otherness through medicalised terminology and discourses of mental illness ('Brain doesn't function properly', 'autism', 'anxiety', 'burning stuff') could serve the purpose of alleviating them of a sense of responsibility. This creates a sense of tension between peers and teachers, and the participants try to manage the perceived impact of external forces in light of their constructed maladaptive 'characters' (there is a sense of lack of control throughout) to remove responsibility and blame to these external forces. However, by using such discourses, their subjectivities are based on a sense of self that leads to a lack of agency, autonomy, and esteem.

7.4.Conclusion

The notion of individuality is one which Erikson (1968) argues is a key component of establishing an adult identity successfully. However, what is clear in this chapter is the role of belongingness in light of this. Distinctiveness alone is not sufficient. It is clear that distinctiveness or 'differentness' plays a crucial role in the identity of young women and for some it can lend itself to a sense of engagement in future selves. However, the level of self-esteem this gives the young women in this chapter is dependent on others, namely family. Those who can directly draw upon their family as a means of belonging, which can be a source of esteem, based on the success of their parents, and the opportunities that this affords the participants in terms of the resources and support available to them (social capital). It can also give young women clear career goals, but this can also be a source of tension between fulfilling family expectations and their own career aspirations.

For those who did not draw upon direct family members for a sense of esteem, relative to the local peer group where that distinctiveness is based on valued group identities can provide for a sense of culture, and belonging. This 'culture' seems to be a

sense of 'inherited' belonging and distinctiveness, which for some participants serves as a loose form of cultural capital, giving them the agency and autonomy to consider future selves. Interestingly, distinctiveness is key to identity of individuals, but in terms of group membership and resources, a sense of belonging and connectedness on a familial (or pseudo-familial) level is interconnected to this. This supports Erikson's (1968) theorising of identity formation success in adolescent as dependent on establishing distinctiveness, while simultaneously having a sense of connectedness on a familial level. Some of the participants used creativity to establish this familial link, through biological links and subgroup membership; this was successful in creating a sense of esteem as it gave familial links but by the nature of the groups, distinctiveness is assumed.

A sense of 'differentness' on an individual basis can have a negative impact on an intrapsychic level leading to participants exploring explanations which lead to a pathologising of self. Participants where distinctiveness was on an individual level, and dependent on anti-social behaviour and the use of pathologising repertoires to manage the threat these could pose, leads to a lack of esteem and agency. The conflict that arises in some of the participants leads to threats on an interpersonal level (through their disruptive behaviour), but also on an intrapsychic level through the use of repertoires of 'abnormality' which are used to explain the external behaviour to internal 'disorders'. The participants expressed situational identity threats, through conflict in schools and managing peer relations. Therefore distinctiveness alone can be problematic; belonging as an identity management strategy appears to be more successful, and in some cases enables participants to consider their aspirations and future selves.

Chapter 8 – Discussion

Initially the aim of this thesis was to explore the identity and identity threats of young women living in Blackpool, with the ambition of giving insight into how these would impact on their anticipated future selves and their future aspirations. The goal was to gain an understanding of how identity research could be used to improve their aspirations, with the scope to extend this to other areas associated with multiple deprivation in the UK. My rationale for this thesis was that young women from Blackpool are not fundamentally different from other young women in the UK, and that lower educational outcomes were due to place of residence. Therefore, but taking a social psychological approach, the thesis would explore how identity shapes aspirations, and in turn educational engagement and attainment, from a psychological perspective, as opposed to the 'traditional' sociological approach. However, by virtue of the discourses that were offered by participants, and the data that emerged from this, I had to reassess the aims of the thesis to deal with the data in a way that was meaningful and respectful to the participants' discourses.

The purpose of this thesis became the exploration of the relationship of social representations and lived experiences, and their impact on young women's identity, and to examine any potential identity threats that they experienced as a result of living in Blackpool, and how they negotiated these threats. These issues presented key challenges in terms of how the participants anticipated the future. In this chapter I will discuss a number of key areas as to the outcome of the research: the inter-relationship of place and identity; the identity pressures faced by young women living in Blackpool; the theoretical contributions of the research in relation to identity processes, and the contributions of the research to understanding identity by reorientating IPT from a cognitive approach to a discursive approach. I will also discuss the limitations of the thesis, my reflections of my own part in shaping the data and their analysis, and the potential for future research. The aim will be to draw these strands together to give insight into the lived experiences and the subsequent identities of young women with the intention of exploring the complexity of identity, and sources that give identity meaning and context, while simultaneously being a source of oppression.

8.1. The relationship of place and identity

There are certain lived experiences of Blackpool which came to light through the interviews, which were offered up freely in the interviews with the young women. Indeed, as the analytic approach for these interviews was based on a discursive approach, that focused on power, subjectivities, and subject position (Willig, 2013), the epistemic approach was social constructionist. Therefore, I needed to establish the young women's discourses of their lived experiences and identities in relation to living in Blackpool based on the 'social knowledge' and resources available to them. The work of Moscovici (2000) was used as a starting point, as it gave a clear understandings of the kinds of social representations available, and a clear argument that supported the aims of this thesis, which were to give social context to the psychological, lived experiences of the young women involved in the research. The decision to use Fairclough's (2010) CDA for analysis of the media (Chapter 3) was based on Fairclough's (2003) socio-political argument, that social representations are resources for identity, but also serve the function of maintaining power constructs and inequality. Therefore, by using this form of analysis, it would establish the veracity of Fairclough's argument in relation to Blackpool. From the media analysis (Chapter 3), clear patterns of social representations of Blackpool in relation to categories identified in the literature review (Chapter 2) emerged, indicating that there are specific categories and social representations relating to Blackpool.

The social representations identified in the media in relation to drug, alcohol and crime were apparent, and the analysis suggested that their function was to marginalise members of these social categories and, when making reference to Blackpool, the town was depicted as an exemplar and nexus of these various social issues. When re-examining the analysis of the interviews relating to Blackpool (Chapter 5), what was apparent was that the social representations that emerged were reproduced by the young women in the research within their posters and subsequent topics they raised in discussions (based on their independently constructed posters). This suggested that the young women were actively involved in identity work relating to social representations, as argued by Breakwell (2012, 2014), but this can be taken further in that these are hegemonic social representations and by their very nature, work in relation to identity as a means to maintain power differences (Fairclough, 2003, 2010). Even though Breakwell and Fairclough are 'strange bed fellows', the analysis supports their

arguments in relation to the role of social representations play in terms of identity. Many of the young women used pejorative discourses in order to distance themselves from the social categories, and group members (Branscombe & Wann, 1994), adopting subject positions which aligned to these social representations, discursively constructing identities that challenge the relevance of these social representations to them. However, not all young women took this approach, in fact some attempted to challenge the relevance of social representations relating to drug usage to them, as they volunteered (through the posters and interviews) that they had been involved in recreational drug usage.

The analysis in Chapters 5 and 6 (to some degree Chapter 7) indicated that participants used these social representations as a means of discursively negotiating their own identities in relation to these negative categories. The use of pejorative terms could be interpreted as discursive expressions of negative affect, used alongside anecdotes where participants used discourses of fear to distance themselves from these categories. This may have served the function of enabling participants to construct drug users through discourse as lower status group members as a means of maintaining self-esteem (Brown and Haeger, 1999) in light of the social representations of Blackpool and the potential identity threat they posed.

Due to the discourses used by many of the young women, there was a strong indication that hegemonic social representations were a source of 'social knowledge' they could draw upon to discursively make sense of their lived experiences, suggesting they play an integral role in the individual's discursive management of identity. The young women offered little to challenge the legitimacy of these social representations, their discourses served as a reproduction of them instead. The use of distancing suggests further validation of these social representations, as they are framed in relation to lived experiences. In other words, as young women living in Blackpool, they are confirming the 'reality' of the issues in Blackpool, through the subjectivities located in their discourses. Even those who attempted to challenge these social representations, through their discourses in effect strengthened the veracity of these, by acknowledging their constructed lived experiences of drug users in Blackpool, which made this difficult. I would argue that this is problematic for young women in Blackpool, as reproductions of these social representations serves as a means of maintaining power structures, which could be interpreted as inadvertent acts of self-oppression.

Social representations in the media that related to poverty, children, and families were more complex (Chapter 3), and proved challenging in the analysis process. Many were explicitly hegemonic, in that they drew upon discourses of meritocracy, and the idea of the feckless, undeserving poor, which have become acceptable objects of prejudice, which has been previously seen in the work of Biressi (2013) and Jones (2012). The analysis chapters (Chapters 5, 6 & 7) indicated that the young women were actively involved in distancing themselves from the social and psychological implications of these social representations. For some, this was achieved through geographic boundedness, by living in more affluent areas of Blackpool. For those living in relative poverty, they still engaged in identity management, drawing on comparisons of morality. Fairclough (2003) argued that social representations offer members of other groups the opportunity to make downward comparisons to the objects of negative social representations. Here, however, these discursive strategies of morality were used in effect by in-group members. These were not always explicit, for some, they in effect used these discourses to make implicit comparisons to marginalise in-group members who impact on the social group as a whole, positioning them as 'Black Sheep' in effect (Hutchison et al., 2008; Marques, et al., 1998, Marques et al., 2001) to manage their own identities.

The problem that I had with analysing the social representations of poverty, family and children, was that some appeared 'emancipatory' as they were superficially sympathetic to the challenges of those living in relative poverty, especially families. However, these supposedly 'emancipatory' social representations coincided with government policy or change (Chapter 3), which led me to argue that hegemonic social representations are dynamic in nature and by using emancipatory narratives and discourses, can be quite insidious, as they surreptitiously garner support from those they are in effect marginalising. From a psychological and identity perspective, these 'emancipatory' social representations generate social representations of individuals lacking agency and efficacy, which is potentially damaging to social groups as they give a sense of hopelessness and helplessness. These 'emancipatory' social representations also emerged in the analysis chapters (Chapters 5 & 6) where young women used these discourses in an unexpected way. These discourses were predominantly used by more affluent participants as they discursively negotiated the

reasons for individuals living in poverty, attempting to distinguish between different 'groups' of people living in poverty.

As the participants used discourses that were so closely related to the social representations, and did so as a means to negotiate their identities, they discursively mediate their identities in light of these social representations. However, rather than challenge the validity of them, they challenged their relevance to them. In other words, these social representations, due to their impact on identities serve to oppress the young women of Blackpool, as they are form of symbolic violence impacting on them as a socially constructed group, both socially and psychologically.

8.2. How young women in Blackpool manage their identities in relation to their social categories

The demographics of Blackpool are complex, and it seemed apparent from the data analysis (Chapters 5, 6 & 7) that young women face a number of pressures based on group and category membership, such as gender, ward of residence (and the socio-economic implications of these) as well as living in Blackpool, which they negotiate discursively. The analysis suggests that they attempt to discursively negotiate the pressures from external forces (peers, friendship groups, family, school and the wider community), which can be a source of tension in terms of establishing a positive identity.

The analysis established how the active negotiation of categories relate to a positive in-group identity (a positive sense of belonging), which conferred a sense of well-being, as well as providing a basis for support and affiliation (Haslam et al., 2009). The contexts inhabited by the speakers and the particular identity threats that they provide for downward comparisons would be seemingly straightforward, but the data indicates that the notion of status is relative, in a town constructed as 'deprived', being relatively affluent could be interpreted as a marginalised position. Those located in more 'privileged' contexts also orient to identity threats which they negotiate by discourses of meritocracy, agency, and responsibility. They also distance themselves from representations of privilege, by using derogatory language in relation to this, using discourses that relate to their typicality of young women in Blackpool, such as shopping

in Primark. By using discourses of agency relating to relative affluence (Wiggan, 2012), they are implicitly managing their own identity, enabling them to draw upon discourses of fairness relating to their relatively higher social position.

By differentiating between privilege and earned position, they adopted the subject position that inequality is justified, and their subjectivities of their position in Blackpool is that those in less affluent positions are responsible for their hardships and the social problems associated with Blackpool, reflected in discourses of lived experiences. To manage their relative affluence, the analysis suggests that they use discourses to align themselves with other young women from Blackpool, and that any difference in terms of affluence is due to the positive characteristics of their families (and by extension them), to manage their social position relative to social representations of Blackpool, and as an avoidance strategy based on potential negative connotations that these young women presented themselves, as associated with privilege.

For those belonging to lower status groups, how they manage their identity seemed to be more complex. These young women used discourses of implicit intragroup comparisons, based on individual identities, drawing upon similar discourses of meritocracy, but re-establishing the meaning of this in their discourses to distance themselves from the negative discourses of 'the poor'. The analysis suggested that they reconfigure meritocracy, and use discourses relevant to them and their social position, so relating to how they personally had to 'earn' 'privileges' from their parents, making comparisons to more affluent young women, as lacking meritocracy. This relates to IPT (Breakwell, 1983, 1986, 2014), in that they discursively negotiated the centrality of identity components to maintain esteem, by focusing on morality and hard work. This is noteworthy as meritocracy serves a discursive function for the young women, regardless of their social position, which is social representations associated with neoliberalism (Venugopal, 2015), which again, is used as a means to justify inequality.

Another discursive strategy adopted was one of authenticity as previously demonstrated by Leach et al. (2007), which allowed them to make positive comparisons with higher status groups, by using discourses of the 'urban' identity reflected in the work of Archer et al. (2007). Discourses of authenticity again aligned with social representations of 'youth culture' and 'urban identities', in that these were the sphere of

the working class and working poor, thereby the adoption of these by those more affluent was deemed inauthentic. This could be interpreted as another way of reconfiguring the salient characteristics of the group to maintain positive identities. In effect, to manage their 'lower status', their discourses functioned to reconfigure those who were affluent as marginalised.

For some, the urban identity was a way to establish a positive peer group identity, but in adopting this strategy, discourses of tensions between peers, and parental and school expectations emerged. The analysis suggested that within the interview setting, they were attempting to negotiate through discourses these tensions, and potential consequences by mitigating their responsibility, using discourses of group pressure, lower status groups and the responsibility of others (namely teachers) for their anticipated, subjective failure.

I would argue, based on the analysis, not only are the young women's discourses based on social representations of Blackpool to negotiate their identity in relation to place. But also on a more local level. In other words, the analysis suggests that groups which they inhabit in Blackpool are a source of tension, irrespective of any assumed status, and as such are a source of potential threat, whether it be due to status or the precarious nature of group belonging, or tensions from other external forces due to group membership. They appear to adopt subject positions that align with overarching, hegemonic social representations, to mitigate any potential interpersonal or intergroup identity threats, and their subjectivities are discursively framed to confirm these social representations.

8.3. Theoretical contributions of the research

The analysis of this population in the research (Chapters 5 & 6) strongly suggests that young women manage their identity in relation to the social representations available to them through the media. In the discourses, social representations are set up as implicit comparative social representations. In other words, the analysis suggests that social representations are a source of threat, but there is also a functionality to these in the young women's discourses, by providing discursive resources and subject positions to negotiate their identities in relation to

social representations of specific social categories that may pertain to Blackpool. I would argue, based on the analysis, that the discursive functionality of these discourses is that they can engage in strategies, to negotiate their position and subjectivity relative to the reported reality.

The social representations serve a functionality as resources that are used discursively to mitigate the threat on a group level, and on an individual level. However, unlike Breakwell (1983, 1986, 2012) the threat is negotiated by drawing upon the content dimension of identity, specifically through belongingness and distinctiveness (or uniqueness), even though not explicitly stated, these were treated in the theory as discrete categories. From the analysis chapter 7, belongingness and distinctiveness tend to be inter-related for some of the young women in the research. The analysis suggests that some young women negotiated their identities through discourses of belongingness and distinctiveness which were intertwined, through familial and pseudo-familial links. For some, they used discourses of the traditional family, as an implicit challenge to social representations of families in Blackpool. For others who could not use these resources due to the relevance of their family situation, used discourses of sub-group membership serving family functions.

For young women from the 'typical' and desirable family unity, the use of discourses pertaining to this, served two main functions:

1. To establish continuity (Breakwell, 1983, 1986)
2. To manage their identities by establishing their distinctiveness from social representations of families in Blackpool

For those using discourses of sub-group membership as a family link, they tended to use discourses of traditional families to establish a sense of belonging and continuity, and distinctiveness, through discourses of the atypicality of subgroup membership. Their continuity and belonging of familial links is established discursively as distinct from social representations of Blackpool. Discourses of familial links for these young women offer up possibilities of what it means to be a resident of Blackpool, in that they do not adhere to the social norm but are still a group member. This could be seen as a way of managing the threat to the legitimacy of the group as theorised by Breakwell (1983), or as a way of establishing themselves as peripheral group members as posited by Tajfel and Turner (1979). I am unclear as to whether it is

either of these or a combination of both, but what I would assert is that, as Blackpool and its residents, through social representations are berated, this is a strategy to manage their individual identities within that context.

The analysis led me to consider the possibility that discourses of familial links are strategies of managing identity through enhancement. In terms of Blackpool, they cannot challenge the social representations, due to their lived experiences (and the double-bind of social representations being a source of how they negotiate these), but are able mediate who they apply to, either through geographic boundedness (actual family) or uniqueness of the group (pseudo-family). This allows them to manage the 'undeniable' through asserting their distinctiveness as a form of multiple group membership which also allows for downward comparisons to be made which would nullify the derision of Blackpool residency. I would argue that based on the analysis, these familial links offer more than a means to manage identity threat and are used discursively as a form of identity enhancement, due to the uniqueness of group membership, as they are a source of establishing a positive identity, and go beyond mitigating threat. Also, these are being used locally, so they enhance their identities on an interpersonal and intragroup level, which suggests to me, that they go beyond identity threats of being from Blackpool, but as a way of raising esteem within the context of Blackpool.

These strategies raise questions as to the validity of the term 'threat', which cannot be explained as simply situational responses to emerging identity threats that follow on from social representations of Blackpool (it is worth noting that although the interview can be seen as a distinct situation which could be a source of threat, I made it clear to all participants that I live in Blackpool myself). They are a response to external forces due to living in Blackpool, but these threats are inherent and implied. This means there is a need to understand the discursive strategies, that identity enhancement need not be understood as a response to a threat but as a more general identity principle, as argued by Murtagh (2009). However, unlike Murtagh (2009), these young women did not use strategies for change, but discourses to establish a positive identity based on categories and ascribed social representations already available to them. Jaspal and Cinnirella (2012) also argued a case for hybridization. This research agrees with this idea of self-categorization to some degree, in that some participants self-categorized subgroups. However, how my analysis differs from previous research relating to

identity enhancement, is that the young women are not using discourses of change, arguably they are resisting change through the negation of social representations in respect of their identities.

How we would distinguish between threat management and enhancement needs to be considered, or it needs to be acknowledged that they cannot be clearly delineated, and whether to attempt to do so is necessary to understand identity. The young women here (Chapters 6 & 7) seem to be reconstruing and reconfiguring their content and value dimensions discursively for a positive identity. They are active agents through the discourses used and are creatively involved in identity enhancement. The key issue here is not whether the strategies are managing threats or enhancement, but should be based on how they creatively adapt their identity discursively and the functions they serve.

As already established, IPT (Breakwell, 1983, 1986, 2014) put forward a cognitive model which delineates different features of identity processes and identity threats. The theory offers a 'dynamic' and comprehensive approach to understanding the complexities of identities. However, this thesis highlights key points which should be addressed to enhance the theory. Although the theory is robust there are issues that emerged by taking a discursive approach to identity, which highlights how a cognitive model of identity management is affected and informed by what people do discursively. This means that although IPT is comprehensive, and in many ways flexible, there is a need for further flexibility based on what people do discursively in terms of identity.

One point that emerged from the data presented in this thesis was that Breakwell's (1983, 1986, 2014) key principles of identity do not go far enough. Not only do they become more salient but they serve a key function in how individuals construct and maintain their self-esteem. For example, belongingness, authenticity, and uniqueness were used discursively to manage the identity threat that was posed by living and 'being from' Blackpool. This means that the principles of identity are not simply maintained to ensure a positive identity by the individual cognitively negotiating the salience of these principles. The young women used their lived experiences of Blackpool to work up their authenticity, belongingness, and uniqueness to elevate their sense of identity (I discussed earlier the complexities of attempting to categorise these as either threat management or identity enhancement). This suggests that identity

principles are more dynamic and play a more active role than Breakwell theorises; principles are not simply vessels that are reconfigured according to salience to protect the identity, they are an active source of identity elevation (Chapters 6 & 7).

As FDA was used for analysis when examining how young women dealt with threat, there is a fine line here between intra-psychic and interpersonal as it is the case that the interview process was a unique social situation which lends itself to identity management on an interpersonal level. Conversely, as FDA allows for analysis to go beyond 'talk as action' and analyse internal processes, their management could be on an intrapsychic level. The tensions of managing their Blackpool identity and distancing from the typical representations of Blackpool that emerged in the data lend themselves to this explanation, but further exploration as to the nuances of 'justification' and 'self-justification' need further exploration. The second issue is the relevance to Breakwell's suggested coping strategies. Overall, they relevance when analysing the data relating to the young women in the sample, with possibly the exception of 'denial'. However, based on Breakwell's (1983, 1986) definition of denial, there are clear problems. The young women were unable to deny where they lived, which is what Breakwell (1983, 1986) would predict based on her example of homosexuality in the workplace. This act of deniability as Breakwell suggests would lead to issues of authenticity. In the case of these young women their deniability takes a different form. They accept their place of residence but deny that the social representations of Blackpool are relevant to them. They do this by drawing upon identity principles, which in turn means that interpersonal problems, such as authenticity do not apply to them. In fact, arguably it leads to an elevation strategy which is effective on an intrapsychic and interpersonal level. This leads to the final point of whether coping strategies always lead to a 'pay-off'. According to Breakwell, with the potential exception of social action, there is always a consequence to adopting specific coping strategies, for example the act of deniability, as Breakwell highlighted can impact an individual on an intrapsychic level, in terms of their authenticity. There is of course a wider issue here which relates more to the work of Fairclough (1992, 2001, 2010) and Moscovici (1993, 2000, 2012) and the role of social representation and how young women managed their identities in light of these, which led to a number of inconsistencies in the discourses.

The inconsistencies that emerged from the data are in line with the arguments put forward by Wetherell and Potter (1987) that the strength of discursive approach is

that it exposes the inconsistencies of rigid, cognitive models in social psychology. However, these inconsistencies lend themselves to another possibility. Breakwell (1983, 1986) stated that the temporal nature of identity needs further exploration. Based on the themes that emerged in this thesis and how the participants relied heavily on authenticity, belongingness and uniqueness, alongside the work of Erikson (1968) and Marcia (1966). Given that these and similar concepts that emerged (Chapter 7), it is possible that what emerged in the data was something distinct to identities of adolescents and young people. The overlap between the three theories raises some interesting questions. Erikson (1986) and Marcia (1966) were able to describe the stage of identity formation but did not give an indication of the processes by which identity is formed in adolescence. The research suggests that IPT is a relevant theory as it deals with the complex nature of identity. However, it also suggests that adolescence is a distinct period of time for identity, which somewhat aligns with the work of Erikson (1986) and Marcia (1966). Therefore by taking the principles of Breakwell but allowing for the distinct nature of adolescence, it is possible to offer an extension of IPT which addresses identity at this developmental stage.

Adolescence is a unique developmental stage universally, due to the onset of puberty and neurological changes (Wise, 2004). But is also shaped by contextual and cultural factors. This is a time when young people are leaving school and making educational/occupational and relational choices. I do not agree with Erikson and Marcia that this is the only stage of identity formation, I agree with Breakwell that it is an ongoing process. However, it is a key point in an individual's life where identity is at the fore. By taking the developmental approach of Erikson and Marcia, and integrating IPT, there is the possibility to develop a theory of adolescent identity processes which does not neatly fit in with IPT but aligns itself to some of the characteristics and its dynamic nature. This would allow for the development of a theory which extends on the work of Erikson, Marcia, to add to our understanding of IPT by developing a dynamic identity process theory specific for this life stage.

8.4. How the research contributes to understanding identity from a discursive perspective

As a theory, IPT (Breakwell, 1983, 1986; Jaspal & Breakwell, 2012) relies heavily on cognitive processes to understand identity. Consequently, the adoption of a

discursive approach could prove challenging in understanding identity using this framework. This is because the focus of a discursive approach is on how identity is constructed through discourse, rather than being driven by the cognitive structures and processes theorised by Breakwell (1983, 1986). Based on the discursive practices of the young women in relation to social representations, lived experiences and identity, there seems to be a clear indication that identity is context-driven, and negotiated discursively. One of the key arguments for a discursive approach to explore identity is the role of context (Coyle & Murtagh, 2012) and the need for understanding to give context to identity (Billig, 1982; Burr, 2015). This thesis used Social Representation Theory (Moscovici, 2000; 2012) to establish the culturally available resources to the young women in the research, through media sources (Chapter 3).

This led to two analytic strategies being adopted. There were specific reasons for this. CDA (Fairclough, 2003, 2010) was seen as appropriate for the analysis of media as forms of social representations. This allowed for the exploration of reproduced and widely available resources and the treatment of these as sources of social injustice. Also, CDA allows for the interpretation of omissions, for example, the emphasis of responsibility placed on mothers in family related incidents (Chapter 3). The stylistic nature and structure of articles of media articles was possible through this analysis, and as the articles are presumably well considered by the authors, CDA was relevant here. FDA (Willig, 2013) was selected for the interview analysis, as the social representations had not been established at this point, so the focus was on identity. However, what can be argued now with hindsight, is that they are the 'complicit' victims of such representations. Also, as CDA makes certain assumptions about intent relating to power, FDA was seen as more suitable. By using FDA, it allowed for an exploration of identity from a discursive perspective (Coyle, 2007), identifying the subject position and subjectivities in relation to the discursive objects of the discourses, and their action orientation, in relation to identity negotiation. Both CDA and FDA have socio-political implications, so their usage here for the respective data analysis was effective, and supported the argument for a discursive approach to identity.

By taking a discursive approach, it enabled the analysis of how individuals who belong to marginalised groups, or lower status categories, manage these threats through discourse. As seen in the previous section, one question that has emerged through qualitative and discursive approaches is the relevance of identity threat to individuals

who are seen as marginalised. Unlike previous research (e.g., Jaspal & Cinnirella, 2012; Markowe, 1996; Murtagh, 2009) self-enhancement was purely discursive here, the young women in the study used the resources available to them to construct positive identities and/or mitigate threat on a purely discursive level.

The closeness of the discourses of the young women in the research to the social representations of the media analysis, suggests that the representations are the discursive resources out of which they fashion and negotiate their identities. As the young women's lived experiences are understood in terms of the resources available, predominantly social representations, so their subjectivities are seen to be shaped by these representation, through the discourses they use. What a discursive approach offers is an understanding of identity in context, that identity is a negotiation between the social and psychological, and as such needs to be understood through discourse.

For this thesis, I used two methodologies. This was initially as they seemed to serve two distinct purposes. However, what they ultimately offered was an integrated approach to understanding the identities of young women in Blackpool in terms of their lived experiences in light of social representations. That is, not only they were exposed to, but ultimately they were active agents in reproducing social representations through discourse. The use of CDA allowed for the analysis of how societal motivations to socially construct others and selves (dependent on the social representations used), and how these social representations served as available discursive resources to the participants in the management of their identities. As Fairclough (1992, 2001, 2003, 2010) argued that CDA is based on socialist principles of power, and that the functionality of social representations through discourse is to maintain power for those who hold it, there was a purposefulness and intent that seemed appropriate for media analysis. This is important as the main aim of the thesis was to understand how identity plays a role in the lack of educational aspiration of young women. Arguably, through social representations as discursive resources, the young women are active agents in the reproduction of the social representations which apply to them. Conversely, FDA was useful for analysing the interviews as the use of objects and subjects allowed for an analysis of the motivations of the individual to manage their own identity (Coyle, 2007; Coyle & Murtagh, 2014); the discursive resources used to describe 'things' allows for the young women to adopt subject positions that are crucial for identity management. This allowed for internal processes to be accounted for. Like CDA, FDA is based on

'socialist' principles, but is post-structural allowing for intersectionality to be considered (Burr, 2015). Post-structuralism takes a wider view of power structures in society, allowing for the possibility that inequality is not based solely on economics, but other factors such as gender and ethnicity. As the research initially aimed to explore the reason why Blackpool girls bucked the trend in terms of GCSE results, this was of key importance.

CDA is useful in establishing the culturally available resources, the power dynamics, and social structures, and how they are reproduced. FDA assumes from the discursive resources used that these are what are available without establishing why. This is based on the assumption of power relations, and there is an assumption of dominant subject position based on the shared subject position across a sample, however there will always be inconsistencies, as power differentials is dependent on it: if those in subordinate positions do not accept the dominant position and power differential, it would be more difficult for those in power to maintain power. The power relations theorised within FDA are based on the assumption that a dominant position exists, without establishing it. The emphasis is on subjectivity and how the individual deals with the complexity of intersectionality. In combination, these two methods allowed for was the dominant positions to be established, the sources of social harm which lead to threatened identities through social representations on a group level (CDA). This then allowed for the analysis of how language and discursive resources are used to negotiate a sense of self. CDA established the potential source and nature of threatened identities through the linguistic analysis of 'things', whereas FDA allowed for the analysis of how individuals managed these potential identity threats.

Both these approaches are dynamic and offer insight into social action in the form of discourse. By using these approaches together, allowed for the social (CDA in the wider sense, and FDA on an individual level) and the psychological (FDA) to be considered, which Moscovici (1993, 2000) described as the 'duality' and 'dividing practices' of social representations. They both allow for the analysis of how discourses can be constructed and deconstructed, which in the case of CDA would relate to resisting the social harm, whereas in FDA would relate to resisting the subject position. Together, they bridged a gap identified through Moscovici's work in that there is a need to address the social when analysing the psychological, leading to potentially a more context-driven approach to discourse analysis.

Batel and Castro (2018) raised the issue of social representations and their relevance to discursive psychology, and argued a need to consider social representations within discourse analysis, how meaning is "constructed, re-enforced, and transformed in discourse and communication" (p. 732). They discussed debates relating to the approaches and 'two psychologies' that emerged in the 1970s (Rijsman & Stroebe, 1989). The key argument that emerged was whether social representations were more related to the 'realist' school of thought due to its Marxist influence. This was a point that Potter (1998) discussed in relation to the 'realist vs relativist' debate. Potter stated that Moscovici is clearly Marxist. Arguably there is a point to be had here, as the three types of social representations seem to relate to the notion of bourgeoisie and proletariat. The structuralist approach is arguably more realist in that it deals with economic realities, whereas relativism is more aligned with post-structuralism and the complexities of power. However, in this thesis by using CDA, which again to some degree is based on socialist ideas (Fairclough makes reference to 'New Capitalism, which could be seen as an early description of neoliberalism), CDA examines the role of linguistics and the idea that social representations are reproduced, which opens up the possibility of social representations being seen from a relativist standpoint.

However, CDA is not without its critics. Newman (2020) argued that CDA's insistence of maintaining a distinction between reality and discourse, and structure and agency is problematic. This is something which was counteracted in this thesis by the use of FDA which epistemologically is social constructionist, but allows for realism ontologically, in that the reality of living in Blackpool was not under scrutiny. Instead, the focus was on how the young women understood their lived experiences of living in Blackpool from a social constructionist perspective. This was not explicitly discussed in this thesis, and a debate was not had as it was established that there was a realism to the lived experiences through the statistics available on the multiple deprivation in Blackpool (Chapters 1 & 2). The concern was the young women's understandings of living in a town which is ranked as being one of the most deprived towns in Blackpool, in relation to their identity.

This means that there is an argument to be had for combining both CDA and FDA for a more comprehensive form of discourse analysis when examining identity in relation to marginalisation based on assumed group membership. They complement each other in a number of ways, CDA focuses on social harms, potential for resistance

and barriers to resistance, which lends itself to the social context; whereas FDA which is distinct from other forms of discourse analysis in that it allows for not only how discourse is used, but the content itself. Also, unlike many other forms of discourse analysis, it allows for internal processes, going beyond 'talk as action'. In effect by using CDA and FDA, this dealt with Moscovici's argument for the need for the social and the psychological to be considered. Furthermore, CDA allows for analysis of what is not included, for example in this thesis (Chapter 3) the defining of feminine roles of female suspects in relation to criminal conduct, but not for their male counterparts is crucial for understanding the social harm against women through the media. Also, the allowance of internal processes and implicitness to be considered by FDA, this could be an interesting advancement in discourse analysis. This would also resolve some of the debates regarding the political stance that discourse analysis claims to take (see Parker, 1998), by combining two approaches, and allowing for social representations to be embedded in discourse analysis. This would lead to what Grech and Grech (2020) argue is needed, a politico-critical form of analysis, which deals with the knowledge-power imbalance. This would also directly answer the criticisms put forward by Forshaw (2007) that qualitative research needs to free itself from some of the theoretical debates that too often stand in the way of the practicalities of successful analysis for social change.

8.5. Practical Applications of Research Methods

The initial intentions of this research were to identify key threats to young women's identities and their reflections on possible future selves. However, it became apparent that for many of the young women involved in the research that their 'identity work' relating to their current selves. For many negotiating their lived experiences of Blackpool, social representations of Blackpool and who they were in relation to these was 'work', without future aspirations being explored. In other words, their focus on their current situation and negotiating their identity in light of this meant they did not consider their future selves. This meant that the initial aims of producing a contributory thesis that would lead to potential intervention ideas that could be applied in schools was left in doubt.

Even though the findings of the thesis do not offer a direct practical intervention, the methods implemented to engage participants may have something to offer. As was stated in the Methodology (Chapter 4), there were several key reasons to adopting posters as interview prompts. The first was their familiarity of transforming knowledge symbolically as a form of collaborative learning (Jigsaw Classroom, 2020). The Jigsaw Classroom uses images as a means of engaging students to think creatively about acquiring knowledge. It is often used in humanities subjects, where they are only able to use images to produce posters to convey information. There is also emerging research relating to how young people, specifically young women, use imagery as a form of identity presentation (Goodwin et al., 2016; Lyons et al., 2016). Furthermore, earlier research (Kleine, et al., 1993) had illustrated that engaging participants in the collection of visual representations was successful in gleaning identity information from young people. The rise of photovoice (Leibenberg, 2018) has also established that actively including participants in the role of collecting visual imagery is a way of engaging participants in the process.

However, this alone is not sufficient to constitute a clear practical innovation, but the informal interaction with the participants during the research process does. With nominal guidance and access to creative resources, the young women were actively engaged in the research process. They exhibited self-efficacy and autonomy over the task, so much so that they took ownership of the work they produced. They negotiated with me the ethics of images and the destruction of posters, and took pride in their work. This indicates that there is a potential opportunity here to develop some form of intervention that could be easily used in secondary schools in PSHE lessons. The purpose of PSHE is to allow time in the curriculum for personal, social and relationship education (Gov.uk, 2021), with a focus on well-being. As can be seen in Chapter 2, identity plays a key role in wellbeing, and as many young people face identity challenges. This leads to 'identity work' which may impact on their educational engagement (see Maccie's extracts in Chapter 6), by creating an intervention that gives young people the opportunity to explore their identity would be a useful way of helping young people establish a positive identity in these types of lessons. As this research enabled young people to discuss their identities in a manageable, non-threatening way, the framework of the method used could be applied

as a means of enabling young people to explore and discuss their identities through visual media.

This work could help young people living in deprived towns to explore and discuss their identities in a positive way. Research suggests, for example, that young women who identify as feminists have higher self-esteem and efficacy (Eisele & Stake, 2008; Yakushko, 2007). This observation was taken further by Martin and Beese (2016) who devised a project which encouraged young women to explore what it means to be a feminist. The project included group and visual work, and led to many of the young women adopting the identity of 'feminist', which led to higher self-esteem, improved educational engagement, and social activism. Their research supported the participants in identifying with something that was meaningful and important to them, and which had additional positive effects. What I would suggest is to use the principles of collaborative learning, identity as a performative and visual, and group work in the context of PSHE to explore positive identities. This could be framed around where young people may face potential identity threats based on external factors, with young people challenging the representations associated with these, by being involved in curatorship of where they live, and highlighting the positive aspects of their place of residence.

By developing such projects in schools in Blackpool they would potentially raise the esteem of young people, leading to a positive identity and a sense of community. This would also fit in with the goals of CDA (Fairclough, 1992, 2001) in that it would challenge the social harms imposed on Blackpool and its residents. It might also lead to emancipatory social representations being produced and reproduced, which according to Moscovici (1993, 2000, 2012) would lead to positive identity. However, this approach could apply to a number of different groups of young people. The method is a potential route to young people reflecting on their identities, in a safe and supportive context, and thereby provides for the development of strategies of resistance, the generation of emancipatory social representations, and the creation of more empowered and empowering personal and social identities. This would apply across any and all marginalised groups of young people.

8.6. Limitations, critical reflection, and potential future research

There are some limitations to the research. One was the sample, which was limited in size, with only 18 participants, nine from each school. As the sample was made up exclusively of young women from Blackpool, this was not a comparative study; a comparative study would have offered insight into how members of other categories within or outside of Blackpool negotiated their lived experiences and identity, in relation to relevant social representations. Ultimately, the primary focus was on young women living in Blackpool. However, I accept that it might be interesting and worthwhile to examine whether similar identity defensive actions are seen in other potentially threatened groups. This research indicates that social representations have consequences due to where individuals live and their identity, which could warrant further, possibly comparative research.

In terms of the research process, more clarity and guidance may have been needed for participants to understand the nature of the task. The decision was to give participants as much agency and autonomy, and freedom to understand their own identity and how to interpret this in terms of images, the posters, and interviews. All participants produced posters that were used successfully as interview prompts, which allowed participants to feel a sense of agency during the interview process. This seemed like the most appropriate approach, but upon reflection, and the fact that I based my methods on what would be familiar to the young women, I should have been prepared to give them more guidance, even if this was to make them feel more at ease with the task. My approach supports Barndt (2014), in terms of allowing participants to reflect on their identity, and the usefulness of imagery as a way of enabling them to do this (Lyons et al., 2016; Page, 2011). Even though participants were not directed towards their social categories or issues associated with Blackpool these emerged through the research process. Also, their discursive repertoires reflected the social representations of Blackpool that they may have been exposed to. I avoided the problem Potter and Hepburn (2005) identified, the risk of flooding the interview with my own theoretical stance by allowing participants to shape the direction of the interviews.

One factor that could have influenced participants' responses was the situational context, in that the interviews all took place in the schools they attended. This could have affected how the task was interpreted, and the interviews taking place in the schools may have meant that participants focused on particular features of identity salient to the schools. Breakwell (1983) theorised that identity and situational contexts make certain identity features more salient, and this could be the case in this research. Some participants focused on negative school experiences, or used school anecdotes as discursive resources. To avoid this in future research, a more neutral environment would be needed, such as a public space.

When considering the limitations, addressing some of these could lead to further research, allowing the exploration of social representations, lived experiences and identities. One improvement would be to use a larger sample and include a comparison group, for example, young men living in Blackpool, to examine how they negotiate their identity compared to young women. Also, any sample including Blackpool residents could include a more diverse sample, such as age group, as discursive resources relating to nostalgia and Blackpool did not emerge. It would be interesting to explore whether those who have lived experiences of Blackpool in its 'hey day', draw upon these. If so, what would be interesting is how they draw upon these in terms of their discourses of Blackpool as a town of deprivation, whether they would reproduce social representations of Blackpool as in an inevitable state of perpetual decline. Alternatively, they could challenge these, offering a more optimistic discourse of hope for Blackpool, i.e., it was once thriving and could be again.

Alternatively, ethnic diversity could be considered. Although there is a small ethnic minority population (JSNA Blackpool, 2020e), it would be interesting to explore the resources that are available to ethnic minorities living in Blackpool, that are used to manage their identities as Blackpool residents. These could have been developed based on their minority group membership in Blackpool, which would identify them as distinct from typical Blackpool residents, meaning that they may already have established identity strategies that allow them to distance themselves from the negative social representations of issues in Blackpool. Other research possibilities include samples from different geographical localities for comparison. This would allow for a comparison of different kinds of social representations and how they are interpreted and managed. Based on Stanley's (2005) research, young people in rural areas are less

likely to partake in risk-taking behaviour, and when we consider the participants for my research, risk-taking behaviour was used as a discursive repertoire in relation to identity, suggesting that different locations would lead to different social representations to manage their identity, and would face different types of identity threats.

This research highlights the importance of embedding reflexivity throughout the research process in qualitative research (Willig, 2013). The reflexive process enabled me to be responsive to participants and situations that arose, as well as allowing me to reconsider my methodological stance. Initially the intention was for the research to examine future aspirations, e.g., to enter Higher Education, in relation to identity based on place. The motivation for this was to, in some way contribute to improving the lives of young women in Blackpool, whose educational outcomes are below the national average (JSNA Blackpool, 2020c). However, it became apparent that the focus on 'aspiration' was based on my expectations, and that there was a risk I would impose these on participants. My understanding of 'aspirations' and 'successes' are based on my beliefs, values and experiences of educational aspirations and my middle-class perspective of the direction in which young women should aspire, for social mobility and enhanced life quality. This meant that when this issue emerged, e.g., when the young women in the study were more concerned with current identities, I had to re-evaluate the focus of the research.

To ensure that my own subjectivities and value judgements did not influence the interview process, I focused on the posters as prompts. As I was aware of my own subjectivities relating to womanhood, Blackpool, and education, I was reflexive throughout the analytic process. I checked my analysis and reflected on it to ensure that my own values were not imposed onto the data. One striking point for me was how closely the young women's discourses were to the social representations identified in the media analysis chapter (Chapter 3). The obvious answer would be my own biases. However, the media analysis was conducted after the interviews were analysed, so the analysis was not shaped by any expectations from the media analysis. This leads to questions of biases in the media analysis to align that with the analysis chapters (Chapters 5, 6 & 7). The analytic process for the media analysis was robust, with clear sampling parameters and themes determined by statistical analysis (tests of association and correlation), coding was also checked for drift. Fairclough's (2010) stages for

CDA were adhered to and checked. So, even though, like all qualitative research, there is a risk of my subjectivities influenced the analysis, based on the steps taken to prevent this, it seems unlikely, and that the inter-relationship between social representations and identity is real, and warrants further exploration.

8.7. Conclusion

This thesis has offered theoretical contributions to IPT in terms of how identities are negotiated, how we understand the functionality of identity processes, and the usefulness of a discursive approach. What the research shows is that identity is context driven, closely interconnected with lived experiences and social representations as resources to understand oneself in context. The thesis began with a quotation by David Cameron, and the aim was to challenge this, it could be seen that I was unsuccessful in this as the analysis did not give a great deal of insight into the aspirations of young women. This is perhaps the point. Examining the quote again, "It's not where you've come from that counts, it's where you're going" (Prince, 12/10/2012), this is itself a hegemonic social representation, and it would be difficult to read this statement as anything other than a form of symbolic violence for those living in deprived areas with low social mobility. I would argue that the analysis chapters illustrate this (Chapters 5, 6 & 7), as the young women seem to be managing their identities to avoid the self-blame associated with symbolic violence, by restructuring and reconfiguring their individual identities to avoid self-blame.

What this thesis has shown is the pervasive nature of social representations. Across the data, there was a pattern of the young women negotiating their lived experiences and identity, in relation to social representations of Blackpool. This was pervasive across the group. This thesis shows that where someone is from and the social categories they inhabit are crucial, and that the ascribed social representations of places (and associated categories) act as a form of oppression, and self-oppression. These social representations are so pervasive, they are challenged discursively, but are still the sources available for young women to use to make sense of their lived experiences and their identities. Although this thesis did not lead to any practical strategies that would be immediately available to young women in Blackpool, what has

developed is that identity is not just psychological, it is context-driven, and that to fully understand the negotiation and mediate of identities of marginalised groups, a more socio-political approach needs to be adopted within psychology to account for this.

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Appendix 1: Ethics application and participant forms
THE UNIVERSITY OF LANCASTER

PFACT project information and ethics questionnaire

(*To be completed by the Principal Investigator in all cases*)

Name of principal investigator: Melanie Haughton_____

Project Title: The role of social identity in mediating the academic aspirations of young women living in a North West seaside town.

1. *General information*

1.1   Have you, if relevant, discussed the project with

⊠   the Data Protection Officer?

⊠   the Freedom of Information Officer?

X   N/A

Please tick as appropriate.

1.2   <mark>Is publication an intended outcome of the research?</mark>

Y

1.3   If yes to 1.2, is publication allowed under the funders' terms and conditions?

Y

1.4   Has a contract, terms and conditions, tender, acceptance form, or similar document requiring institutional approval, been received?

Y̶ / N

1.5   Does any of the intellectual property to be used in the research belong to a third party?

Y̶ / N

1.6   Are you involved in any other activities that may result in a conflict of interest with this research?

~~Y~~ / N

1.7   Will you or research staff be working with an NHS Trust?

~~Y~~ / N

1.8   If yes to 1.7, what steps are you taking to obtain NHS approval?

_____

_____

_____

_____

1.9   If yes to 1.7, who will be named as sponsor of the project?

_____

_____

1.10   What consideration has been given to the health and safety requirements of the research?

All research will be carried out in the school/youth club to ensure the safety of participants and researcher, and their health and safety policy will be adhered to. Up-to-date DBS clearance will be needed. Also Safeguarding policies of the organisations will be followed to ensure that if participants disclose information that indicates they are at risk and/or a risk to others, to ensure this is appropriately reported to the Safeguarding officer.

1.11   Is a statement of institutional commitment to the research required?

Y / ~~N~~

2.   _Information for insurance or commercial purposes_

(*Please put N/A where relevant, and provide details where the answer is yes.*)

2.1   Will the research involve making a prototype?

~~Y / N~~ / N/A

2.2   Will the research involve an aircraft or the aircraft industry?

~~Y / N~~ / N/A

2.3   Will the research involve the nuclear industry?

~~Y / N~~ / N/A

2.4   Will the research involve the specialist disposal of waste material?

~~Y / N~~ / N/A

2.5   Do you intend to file a patent application on an invention that may relate in some way to the area of research in this proposal? If YES, contact Gavin Smith, Research and Enterprise Services Division. (ext. 93298)

~~Y   /   N~~   /   N/A3.

Ethical information

(*Please confirm this research grant will be managed by you, the principal investigator, in an ethically appropriate manner according to:*

(*a*)   *the subject matter involved;*
(*b*)   *the code of practice of the relevant funding body; and*
(*c*)   *the code of ethics and procedures of the university.*)

(*Please put N/A where relevant*)

3.1   Please confirm that you are prepared to accept responsibility on behalf of the institution for your project in relation to the avoidance of plagiarism and fabrication of results.

$\sqrt{}$

3.2   Please confirm that you are prepared to accept responsibility on behalf of the institution for your project in relation to the observance of the rules for the exploitation of intellectual property.

$\sqrt{}$

3.3   Please confirm that you are prepared to accept responsibility on behalf of the institution for your project in relation to adherence to the university code of ethics.

$\sqrt{}$

3.4   Will you give all staff and students involved in the project guidance on the ethical standards expected in the project in accordance with the university code of ethics?

~~Y / N~~ / N/A

3.5   Will you take steps to ensure that all students and staff involved in the project will not be exposed to inappropriate situations when carrying out fieldwork?

~~Y / N~~ / N/A

3.6   Is the establishment of a research ethics committee required as part of your collaboration? (This is a requirement for some large-scale European Commission funded projects, for example.)

~~Y / N /~~ N/A

3.7   Does your research project involve human participants i.e. including all types of interviews, questionnaires, focus groups, records relating to humans, human tissue etc.?   (If the answer is YES, please answer questions 3.8 to 3.12.)

Y / ~~N / N/A~~

3.8   Are any of the following potential areas of ethical concern relevant to your research? If yes, have you identified the courses of action that may be necessary to address these? Please give details in the textbox below.

    3.8.1   The involvement of vulnerable participants or groups, such as children, people with a learning disability or cognitive impairment, or persons in a dependent relationship.

    Y / ~~N / N/A~~

    3.8.2   The sensitivity of the research topic e.g. the participants' sexual, political or legal behaviour, or their experience of violence, abuse or exploitation.

    Y / ~~N / N/A~~

    3.8.3   The gender, ethnicity, language or cultural status of the participants.

    Y / ~~N / N/A~~

    3.8.4   The use of deception, trickery or other procedures that may contravene participants' full and informed consent, without timely and appropriate debriefing, or that include stress, humiliation, anxiety or the infliction of more than minimal pain.

    ~~Y~~ / N / ~~N/A~~

    3.8.5   Access to records of personal or other confidential information, including genetic or other biological information, concerning identifiable individuals, without their knowledge or consent.

    ~~Y~~ / N / ~~N/A~~

    3.8.6   The use of intrusive interventions, including the administration of drugs, or other treatments, excessive physical exertion, or

techniques such as hypnotherapy, without the participants' knowledge or consent.

~~Y~~ / N / ~~N/A~~

3.8.7 The use of human cells or tissues other than those established in laboratory cultures.

~~Y~~ / N / ~~N/A~~

If yes to any part of 3.8, have you identified the courses of action that may be necessary to address these? Please give details in the textbox below.

The research will involve Year 11 (aged 15/16 years) young women living in Blackpool. The research will take part in local secondary schools, therefore will need to follow the ethical procedures of the given school.   As the research is qualitative and will involve discussion of a wide range of topics relating to their lives and experiences, it is possible that participants may disclose information relating to their status as young women living in a deprived area, and/or their involvement in sexual and/or illegal activities.

To ensure the safety of the participants, the Safeguarding procedure of the school will be adhered to. This will involve disclosing any concerns to the relevant Safeguarding officer, who will record this information, and will inform the local authorities to address any concerns, so they can be dealt with appropriately. This will be disclosed to participants. If the participants become distressed discussing their life experiences, the interview will be halted, and the researcher will give the participant time and space, and the opportunity to withdraw from the research. Pastoral support will be informed prior to the research, so that provisions are in place if any participant becomes distressed.

The well-being of the researcher will be considered and addressed in PhD supervision sessions after interviews to discuss any sensitive issues.

3.9 Will you take all necessary steps to obtain the voluntary and informed consent of the prospective participant(s) or, in the case of individual(s) not capable of giving informed consent, the permission of a legally authorised representative in accordance with applicable law?

Y / ~~N~~ / ~~N/A~~

3.10 Will you take the necessary steps to find out the applicable law?

Y / ~~N~~ / ~~N/A~~

3.11 Will you take the necessary steps to assure the anonymity of subjects, including in subsequent publications?

Y / ~~N~~ / ~~N/A~~

3.12 Will you take appropriate action to ensure that the position under 3.8, 3.9, 3.10 and 3.11 are fully understood and acted on by staff or students connected with the project in accordance with the university code of ethics?

Y / ~~N~~ / ~~N/A~~

3.13 If your work involves animals you should specifically detail this in a submission to the Research Ethics Committee. The term animals shall be taken to include any vertebrate other than man.

3.13.1 Have you carefully considered alternatives to the use of animals in this project? If yes, give details.

~~Y~~ / ~~N~~ / N/A

_____

_____

_____

_____

3.13.2 Will you use techniques that involve any of the following: any experimental or scientific procedure applied to an animal which may have the effect of causing that animal pain, suffering, distress, or lasting harm? If yes, these must be separately identified.

~~Y~~ / N / ~~N/A~~

Signature:
_____
___

Date:
_____
_____

N.B. Do not submit this form without completing and attaching the Stage 1 questionnaire.

APPENDIX 3

Please go to http://www.lancs.ac.uk/depts/research/lancaster/ethics.html to find the most up to date Stage 2 Ethics Form.

Please return the **original, signed, hardcopy** to:

Debbie Knight
Research Ethics Officer
B Floor, Bowland Main
Lancaster University
Lancaster, LA1 4YW

APPENDIX 4

Checklist for research grants involving research activity in the Department

Name: Grant funding body:
                                                  Amount:

1. If the funding body does not provide FEC, explain why you have applied to this funding body.

2a. Does the application include the cost of administrative support?	YES / NO
2b. Does the application include the cost of technical and/or computer support?	YES / NO
If no, please explain why not.	

3. Does the application include the cost of recruitment?	YES / NO

4. Have you requested a studentship in the application?	YES / NO
If no, please explain why not.	

5. Does the grant application require the allocation of new research space?	YES / NO
If yes, please specify and consult with CB.	

6a. Have you included costs for all computer equipment required for the laboratory in which the research will take place?	YES / NO
6b. Have you included costs for data backup?	YES / NO
6c. Have you included costs for dissemination?	YES / NO
If no to any of the above, please explain why not.	

7. Have you included costs for all tests and score sheets to be used in the grant, and the costs of any training required to use the tests?	YES / NO
If no, please explain why not.	

8a. Does the proposal involve non-standard procedures that may give rise to ethical concerns?	YES / NO
If so, has the ethics committee been consulted?	YES / NO
8b. Will DBS (formerly CRB) disclosure be required as part of the application?	YES / NO

9. Has a stage 1 risk assessment been undertaken?	YES / NO
Please indicate the risk.	

Signature: PI·····················. Date················   HoD························.... Date················

Departmental Ethics Application Form

Applicant Information

Name of Researcher: Melanie Haughton

Level: ~~UG, MSc,~~ PhD~~, Staff.~~

Supervisor/ PI: Dr Chris Walton

Contact details for correspondence:
9 Lynwood Avenue, Blackpool, FY3 7DG
Email: m.haughton1@lancaster.ac.uk
Telephone: 07758498813

Project Information

Project Title: The role of social identity in shaping the academic aspirations of young women living in a North West seaside town

Background to the research:

The research will use Social Identity Theory and Identity Process Theory (Brown, 1988) to examine the educational aspirations of young women living in a seaside town. In terms of educational attainment at GCSE level, young women have been outperforming young men for 25 years, with 2014 having the widest gender gap in over a decade. The percentage of young women attaining A*-C was 73.1%, compared to 64.9% in young men in 2014 (Arnett, 2014). However, in Blackpool the trend is reversed with young women underperforming; The Office of National Statistics reported that in 2013, 47.9% of young women in Blackpool achieved 5 GCSEs at grade A* to C, including English and Maths, whereas the national average was 60.6%. Moreover, only 15.5% of Blackpool residents are educated to degree level, compared to the national average of 27.3% (Office of National Statistics, 2015). Also, according to HEFCE (2015), the current Higher Education participation rate in Blackpool is between 11.3% and 34.5% dependent on the ward, with 9 out of 21 wards having participation rates at 20% and lower, and 14.5% of people of working age in Blackpool have no formal qualifications (The Centre for Social Justice, 2013). This suggests that young women from Blackpool are less likely to achieve academically at secondary school and to have lower aspirations in terms of continuing to further and higher education. Moreover seaside towns, such as Blackpool, have been identified as comparable to inner cities in terms of indices of multiple deprivation. Blackpool in 2010 was ranked the 6th most deprived authority in England and was ranked 1st for concentration of deprivation (Blackpool Borough Council, 2013). Thus young women raised in Blackpool may have low education and career aspirations and may carry the social stigma associated with being from a deprived area.

Recent research indicates that there is growing deprivation in seaside towns (Argawal and Brunt, 2006). In Great Yarmouth, 33% of people have no qualifications and in particular wards less than 30% of pupils achieved five A* to C grades at GCSE including English and mathematics in 2009 compared to 54.8% nationally. In Clacton-On-Sea 54% of residents aged 16 years and above have no formal qualifications, with only 43% of children passing five GCSEs at grades A*-C including English and Maths in 2011, below the national average in

England of 59 per cent the same year (CSJ, 2013). Furthermore, Ofsted (2013) stated that coastal towns are the most educationally deprived areas of the UK. Coastal towns also have high levels of poverty, due to the number of residents claiming benefits. In one neighbourhood in Rhyl, 67% of working-age residents claiming out-of-work benefits, and Rhyl is the most deprived area in Wales (CSJ, 2013). Similarly, in the most deprived wards of Margate 40% of working age residents are receiving out-of work benefits.

Previous research regarding gender and education, and poverty and education has been sociological in nature. For example, socioeconomic factors are identified as a key factor in terms of educational achievement (Archer, Halsall and Hollingworth, 2007). Bourdieu (1983) explained lower attendance of F.E. and H.E. in lower socioeconomic groups in terms of cultural capital and economic capital. However, since the introduction of Widening Participation (HEFCE, 2015), there is a political argument that such arguments are no longer relevant. The question needs to be raised, if young women are nationally out-achieving males, and there is now provision to enable the poorest young people to attend university, why are so many young people, including women, still without qualifications?

Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and Identity Process Theory (Breakwell, 1986) will be drawn upon to provide a theoretical framework within which the educational aspirations of young women living in seaside towns can be explored. In terms of the deprivation in Blackpool, in terms of health, education, and living conditions, there is a great deal of statistical information. However, as yet, the impact of these factors on young people and their aspirations has not been explored. Although, there is previous research that relates to similar problems in inner-cities, it must be recognized that the situations are qualitatively different, due to the geographic position of seaside towns, the nature of the deprivation and demographic differences between the two populations. Also, there is currently a lack of research regarding the impact of deprivation on UK seaside towns, therefore, assumptions cannot be made. Therefore, the analysis will proceed from the bottom-up, with themes, constructs and theories being generated from the analysis of the data. In so doing the study will be both theoretically informed and data-led. Due to the lack of current research, Grounded Theory offers an appropriate approach, which is in line with the aims of the research, as it can be used in conjunction with other qualitative approaches, which is applicable her, with the use of content analysis and ethnography. Also, it adopts the idea that individual behaviour is embedded in situations and social contexts, which pertains to this research, in that situational factors, and the social context are integral to the research, examining Social Identity within the context of socially deprived seaside towns (Charmaz and Henwood, 2010). Therefore, Grounded Theory is seen as most appropriate as the issues of low aspiration and educational attainment in young women in seaside areas are relatively new phenomena, therefore it is necessary to consider and analyse themes as they arise from the data, rather than being imposed based on an a priori theoretical framework.

Aim(s) of the research project: The objective of the research is to understand if young women in deprived areas aspire to attend University, specifically those living in seaside towns, and if so whether they place any social and/or geographical boundaries on themselves in terms of educational choices.

This research will use qualitative methods to explore the aspects of identity that may be linked to the aspirational goals of young women in seaside towns.

The research question is: How do young women from a deprived seaside town in the north-west of England conceptualise and explain their own sense of identity, in terms of young women living in a deprived area within the UK, and its impact on their educational aspirations?

Methodology and Analysis:

A username and password will be given to participants to allow participants to upload images of objects that relate to who they are, to and for them to ask any questions about the research. Also, prospective participants will be given the informed consent form so that they have the opportunity to consider whether they want to take part in the study and record their consent.

Phase 1: Generating images of objects representing the self: the aim of this is to encourage the participants use visual imagery to reflect on who they are now and who they aspire to or imagine they might be in the future. The images will also act as a frame of reference and a cue for the interviews in the following phase.

Each student will be assigned a pseudonym for the duration of the study. The nature of the study will be explained to them, they will have the opportunity to ask any questions, which will be answered, and if they are still happy to proceed then informed consent will be obtained. The researcher will then check that they all have access to a phone that takes pictures and has internet access so that participants can upload images to a secure, encrypted Dropbox account, and the images will be stored securely on the Lancaster University network. These images will not be 'selfies', but images of objects that they believe relate to who they are and who they will be as adults. If they do not have these, the participants will be given the appropriate equipment or a disposable camera. It will then be explained to them that in the following week they should collect images that represent who they are now, and who they will be in the future. They will be asked to send images to the secure email account. They will also be required to state their pseudonym on the email so that the images can be printed and given to the appropriate participant in the next phase. The images for each participant will then be printed off and stored securely in sealed envelopes prior to their use in the poster session.

The following session will take place within the educational/youth club setting. Upon entering the session, participants will be reminded of their right to withdraw, and given the opportunity to ask questions. The task will be explained to the participants, that they are to make a poster using their images and the other materials to represent who they are now and who they aspire to, or imagine they might, be in the future. They will be informed that the task will take 1 hour. The researcher will generate fieldnotes in the course of the session based on what they observe and their interactions with the participants. At the end of the session the participants will be asked to write their pseudonym on the back and the posters will be collected from them. Although the participants will work on their posters in a group situation, the participants will be working on individual posters, so there are no risks of disclosure. They will be thanked and their right to withdraw and to contact me via the email address with any queries or questions will be restated.

Phase 2: The aim of this session is to discuss their sense of self, and to what degree this is shaped by their Social Identity

Individual interviews will be organised for the participants, once they have completed Phases 1 and 2. The interviews will be audio-recorded. At the beginning of the session the informed consent form will

be read to them, to ensure they are aware of their rights. The poster will be used to ask the participants to explain who they are now, and how the images represent them. They will be asked questions regarding who they will be in the future, and how they will achieve their goals. At the end of the interview, the participants will be thanked and reminded of their rights.

The interviews will be transcribed verbatim but with identifying information removed and analysed using a Grounded Theory-based approach. The posters will be analysed using Content Analysis.

Once all the interviews are complete, all participants will be gathered together for a debriefing session in an environment which is comfortable for the participants, and the nature of each part of the study will be explained to them. Whilst the participants will be encouraged to ask questions throughout, I will also provide opportunities for participants to discuss the study or ask questions privately both after the session and via email. They will be reminded of their right to withdraw and reminded of the email address they should use and by when they would need to inform me if they wished to withdraw their data, which would be within 2 weeks of completed data collection. They will be asked for feedback on the study, and notes will be taken on their comments, and they will be encouraged to use my email or the secure Dropbox account if they have any comments they wish to add at a later date. They will be thanked for their participation. Once the study has been completed, all participants will be contacted and given a £5 Post Office voucher to thank them for their participation.

Participant Information

What participants will be used in the study? Participants will be young women attending Year 11 at secondary schools in Blackpool.

How many will be used? 36 in total, made up of 6 groups of 6 participants. As some attrition is expected between the phases of data collection (typically 25% in longitudinal research), the aim is to achieve a minimum sample of 24.

How will participants be recruited?

The participants will be recruited from schools and youth clubs, which have already given their consent for the research to take place.

A combination of self-selecting, stratified and random sampling will be used. All girls in the relevant year groups that meet the inclusion criteria will be invited to participate; dependent upon response rate and uptake, a combination of stratified (based on self-reported economic expectations (see below) and random sampling will be adopted. All potential participants will be given a questionnaire to complete, which will ask about economic expectations – career, housing, household income and purchasing power. For this part of the research, consent from the school will be gained, as well as consent from participants. Each questionnaire will have a code which will refer to the school, the class, and the participant number, based on the class register, so that those who would like to take part can be identified. Within the questionnaire, there will be a section that will ask potential participants whether they would be willing to take part in the study. From those who would be willing to take part, an equal number for each category, relating to economic expectations will be asked to take part in the study. If more than the number of participants required are willing to take part, they will be randomly selected to ensure there are equal numbers in each group.

Will a DBS (formerly CRB) check be required? Yes

How will participants give consent? The consent of the school/youth club will be sought in writing. Verbal consent has already been given from two secondary schools and one youth club in Blackpool, subject to ethical review by Lancaster University. Participants will be given an 'Invitation to Participate' letter which will explain the nature of the research and their rights for anonymity and to withdraw. Within each phase, participants will be given the opportunity to ask questions regarding the research. In terms of the youth club, parental consent will not be sought, as this is given on membership to the youth club to allow their children to take part in any research the youth club consents to. The schools will require parental consent, as parents are not expected to sign an overarching consent form, unless the school has existing policy regarding the involvement of students in research. Evidence of this will be provided.

How will participants be debriefed? At the end of the interview, all participants will be given a debrief sheet, and they will have the opportunity to discuss the research with the researcher. All participants will be given contact details for the researcher in case they wish to discuss the research project after participation.

What steps will be taken to ensure the confidentiality of the data collected?
The pre-selection questionnaire will include limited response questions, therefore no identifiable information will be collected. To further ensure anonymity, questionnaire identification will be coded using the school name, class and students number. This information will only be used to students willing to take part in the research and meeting the pre-selection criteria, for contact through the school for the organization of the research.

All audio recording will be immediately after the interview has ceased; the recording device will be secured securely and will be transferred to a Lancaster University password protected computer and network on the day of the interview. All audio recordings and transcripts will be stored on a password protected and encrypted computer. All identifying information will be removed from the transcripts at the point of transcription. No personal information from the interviews, which provided the basis for the identification of the participant, will be used in any research output. The data will be securely stored for 10 years, after which it will be destroyed.

APPENDIX 5

References

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Please complete all sections by circling the appropriate answer.

1. *Risks*

Does this study involve a risk to participants' physical well being (e.g. use of substances such as alcohol or extreme situations such as sleep deprivation)?	~~YES~~	NO
Does this study involve a psychological risk to participants (e.g. cause emotional upset, worry, stress, fatigue, or embarrassment?)	YES	~~NO~~
Does this study involve any social risk to participants (e.g. loss of privacy, status or reputation)?	~~YES~~	NO
Does this study require participants to disclose information of a personal or sensitive nature (e.g. their ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, political affiliation, or experience of violence or abuse)?	~~YES~~	NO
Does this study involve vulnerable participants or groups (e.g. prisoners, children, older or disabled people, victims of crime)?	YES	~~NO~~
Does this study require access to personal records or other sources of confidential information (e.g. medical, criminal, educational records)?	~~YES~~	NO
Does this study involve the use of intrusive interventions such as the administration of substances, or treatments such as hypnotherapy?	~~YES~~	NO
Does this study expose the participants or the researcher to any other risks different from those encountered in everyday life?	~~YES~~	NO

2. *Consent*

Will participants in this study be given written information outlining: a) the purpose of the study, b) what participants will be expected to do, c) individuals' right to refuse or withdraw at any time?	YES	~~NO~~	~~NA~~
Will participants be given the opportunity to ask questions about the study prior to agreeing to participate?	YES	~~NO~~	~~NA~~
Will permission be sought from any other source, if required, before commencing the research (e.g. from school or hospital)?	YES	~~NO~~	~~NA~~

3. *Disclosure*

Does this study involve covert methods?	~~YES~~	NO

APPENDIX 5

Does this study involve the use of deception, either in the form of withholding essential information about the study, or intentionally misinforming participants about any aspects of the study?	~~YES~~	NO

4. *Debriefing*

Does this study include an opportunity for participants to ask questions and/or obtain general feedback about the study after they have concluded their part in it?	YES	~~NO~~	~~NA~~

5. *Anonymity and confidentiality*

Is participation in the study anonymous?	YES	~~NO~~	
If anonymity has been promised, do the general procedures ensure that individuals cannot be identified indirectly (e.g. via other information that is taken)?	YES	~~NO~~	NA
Have participants been promised confidentiality?	~~YES~~	NO	~~NA~~
If confidentiality has been promised, do the procedures ensure that the information collected is truly confidential (e.g. that it will not be quoted verbatim)?	~~YES~~	~~NO~~	NA
Will data be stored in a secure place, which is inaccessible to anyone other than the researcher and members of the research team?	YES	~~NO~~	~~NA~~
If participants' identities are being recorded, will the data be coded to disguise identity before computer data entry?	YES	~~NO~~	~~NA~~

6. *Summary of ethical concerns*

If you have answered 'YES' to any of the questions in Section 1 (Risks), please tick the box	√

If you have answered 'NO' to any of the questions in Section 2 (Consent), please tick the box	
If you have answered 'YES' to any of the questions in Section 3 (Disclosure), please tick the box	
If you have answered 'NO' to any of the questions in Section 4 (Debriefing), please tick the box	
If you have answered 'NO' to any of the questions in Section 5 (Anonymity and confidentiality), please tick the box	√

7. *Further details*

If you have ticked any of the boxes above in item 6 please identify and provide an account for the particular ethical issue(s) arising out of the proposed research and outline how this (these) concern(s) will be met in accordance with departmental ethical guidelines.

Participants will not be directly asked about socially sensitive topics or distressing personal experiences. However, due to the topic and method, there is a potential that participants may discuss such issues and it must be anticipated that some young women may have had some experience, whether first-hand or through friendship groups, of the above issues. Therefore, BPS guidelines regarding participant safety will be followed. Furthermore, the named Safeguarding officer will be contacted prior to all research. If a Safeguarding issue arises during the research process, it will be immediately halted, and the Safeguarding Officer will be contacted. This is due to the legal process of Safeguarding whereby the reporting of any issue should be accurately recorded, with the school being confident that no leading questions were asked, as this may disrupt any legal process. In terms of Safeguarding, this refers to the young person being a risk to themselves or at risk from another individual. I have completed Blackpool Borough Council training on Safeguarding for both children and adults, and have to update my knowledge on an annual basis, therefore I will be able to recognize such an occurrence, and when to take action. Once the interview has been halted I will keep in touch with the Safeguarding officer, to determine when/if it might be appropriate to re-arrange the interview/focus group. The participant will be contacted and asked about their willingness to continue, and reassured that there would be no negative consequences whatever decision they come to.

If participants become distressed relating to any non-Safeguarding issue, the interview will be halted. The participant will be asked if they wish to speak to any of the professionals in the school. If they decide they need to discuss anything confidential with a member of the school support team, the interview will be halted on that occasion. The participant will be contacted and given the option of rearranging the interview. If the participant does not wish to get support from the school, the interview will

be paused, and the participant given a chance to compose themselves before
being asked whether they wish to continue with the interview.

In terms of informed consent, the consent of the school will be obtained,
then the consent of parents, before gaining the consent from the
participants. Consent from all parties must be given before proceeding with
the research. This is due to the fact that as Year 11 students,
participants will be aged between 15 and 16 years. All participants will be
debriefed fully as a group, and given the opportunity to ask questions
relating to the research.

As the research may be published, I may quote verbatim from the interviews,
which means confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. However, I will assure
anonymity. All participants will have a pseudonym on the transcripts. All
audio recordings will be stored securely, along with the transcripts. All
identifying information will be removed to ensure participant anonymity in
any extracts or outputs.

8. Declaration

Please confirm that you have read the BPS Code of Conduct and are willing to abide by it in relation to the current proposal.

Student signature   **Date**

_____   _____

Project supervisor   **Date**

_____   _____

Participant Consent Form: Questionnaire

Participant Code ___/____/____

The link between social identity and educational aspirations in young women living in a North West seaside town.

I am Melanie Haughton and currently studying for a PhD in Social Psychology, Supervised by Dr Chris Walton. You are invited to take part in research that relates to how aspects of their identity shape their educational aspirations. This research is part of my PhD thesis and will be used for this purpose, and potentially for published research.

This short questionnaire relates to what you think you will be doing in terms of work, how much you will be earning and your 'purchasing power'. This is the first part of my study and will be used to select a sample. This questionnaire is completely anonymous, you do not have to complete the questionnaire, and you can stop the completion at any time. You can also ask for your data to be withdrawn for up to 2 weeks after you have completed the questionnaire, by contacting me (details below), and your data will be withdrawn and not be used as part of this study. Also, all the questionnaires will be destroyed once the study has been completed. If you are happy to take part in this questionnaire, please complete the box below and the questionnaire.

 If at any time you have any questions regarding the research, you can contact me or my supervisor via email:

M.Haughton1@lancaster.ac.uk

If you have any concerns or complaints regarding the research, you can contact my PhD supervisor. Supervisor contact details:

Dr Chris Walton, Fylde Building, Lancaster University, Bailrigg, Lancaster, LA1 4YF

Telephone: 01524 593858

Email: c.walton@lancaster.ac.uk

If you are happy for the school to take part in this study, please complete the checklist and sign below:

Please tick the box next to each of these statements if you agree with them:

APPENDIX 5

Please tick the box next to each of these statements if you agree with them:

I agree to take part in this study	
I am taking part in this study of my own free will	
I understand I can ask questions at any point during the research, and can email Mel Haughton during and after the research if I have any concerns or questions	
I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time, and I don't have to give a reason and there will be no negative consequences	
I understand the nature of the research and what the study involves	
I have the contact details of the researcher	
I understand that my involvement in this study will be anonymous, unless I disclose anything which is a Safeguarding issue	

Signed………………………………………………………………………………………

Print Name……………………………………………………………………………………

Date…………………………………………………………..

Researcher signature……………………………………………………………………….

Questionnaire

Please follow the instructions for each of the 3 questions

1. I expect to be living in a house worth (please circle one)

    £40-68,000   £68-120,000   £120-160,000

          £160-320,000   £320,000+

2. I expect my household income to be (please circle one):

    £0- 32,000   £32-150,000   £150,000 +

3. In terms of careers I expect to be (please list up to 3):

………

………

………

Would you like to take part in the next part of my research?   Yes/No

Do you have access to the internet to upload images to a secure Dropbox account? Yes/No

Do you have a camera/way to take photos? Yes/No

School Consent Form: Questionnaire

The role of social identity in mediating the academic aspirations of young women living in a North West seaside town.

I am Melanie Haughton and currently studying for a PhD in Social Psychology, Supervised by Dr Chris Walton. Female Year 10 students are invited to take part in research that relates to how aspects of their identity shape their educational aspirations. The data from this study will be used to help me determine my sample; the sample will be involved in the second part of my research, which is for the purpose of my PhD thesis and potentially published research.

There are two parts to this research, which would include participants within the school at both stages. The first part of my study involves a questionnaire relating to young women's assumptions in relation to their future careers; the information from these questionnaires will be used to select a sample for the actual research process. The questionnaire will be distributed to all Year 10 female students and will be completely anonymous. To ensure that potential participants can be identified, each questionnaire will be coded, using the first three letters of the school name, the form code of the participant and the student number (based on the tutorial register). Once the study has been completed, all questionnaires will be destroyed. If at any time you have any questions regarding the research, you can contact me or my supervisor via email:

M.Haughton1@lancaster.ac.uk

If you have any concerns or complaints regarding the research, you can contact my PhD supervisor. Supervisor contact details:

Dr Chris Walton, Fylde Building, Lancaster University, Bailrigg, Lancaster, LA1 4YF

Telephone: 01524 593858

Email: c.walton@lancaster.ac.uk

If you are happy for the school to take part in this study, please sign below to give 'parental consent' for this part of the research process. These questionnaires will be used to help me determine my sample, which will be taken from the cohort who have completed the questionnaire. For the more in-depth part of the research, consent will be sought from the participant's parents.

Lancaster University's Research Ethics Committee has approved this study and what it involves.

Signed………………………………………………………………………………………………

Print Name…………………………………………………………………………………………

Position within the school…………………………………………………………………………..

Date…………………………………………………………..

Researcher signature……………………………………………………………………………….

Participant Information Sheet

<u>The link between social identity and educational aspirations in young women living in a North West seaside town.</u>

I am Melanie Haughton and currently studying for a PhD in Social Psychology, Supervised by Dr Chris Walton. You are invited to take part in a study on how women your age in Blackpool see themselves, the life choices that are open to them and who they think they might be in the future. Your involvement in the study is completely voluntary and you can withdraw at any point. If at any time you have any questions regarding the research you can contact me or my supervisor via email:

M.Haughton1@lancaster.ac.uk

If you have any concerns or complaints regarding the research, you can contact my PhD supervisor. Supervisor contact details:

Dr Chris Walton, Fylde Building, Lancaster University, Bailrigg, Lancaster, LA1 4YF

Telephone: 01524 593858

Email: c.walton@lancaster.ac.uk

If you choose to take part in the study then you will be asked to take part in a number of activities over a period of about 3-4 weeks. To start we will meet to discuss the study and I will explain the first activity. This activity requires you take pictures of the things that you think represent who you are now and who you think you will be in the future. This isn't something that should take up too much of your time, and is something you can do in the course of your everyday life. The second part will be a group exercise where you will make a poster, using the images you generated and other resources. The third part will be an individual interview where we will use your poster and the images you selected as the basis for a conversation about you, your interests and your ambitions. That interview will be audio-recorded and I will analyse it later.

Your involvement in the study is completely anonymous. I will give you a pseudonym and will not discuss with anyone, including the school/youth club, what you have said unless it is a Safeguarding issue, which means where you give information that you are at risk of being harmed or harming yourself or others, then I will have to disclose the information for your wellbeing. Only I will use the data from the posters and interviews, and once I have completed the study, I will destroy it and it won't be used again.

You also have the right to withdraw at any point during the study and up to two weeks after you have taken part in the final part of this study. If you do decide to withdraw, you can contact me (details above) and I will destroy all your data.

The data from this research will be used as part of my PhD thesis and potentially published research. Lancaster University's Research Ethics Committee has approved this study and what it involves.

Please tick the box next to each of these statements if you agree with them:

I agree to take part in this study	
I am taking part in this study of my own free will	
I understand I can ask questions at any point during the research, and can email Mel Haughton during and after the research if I have any concerns or questions	
I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time, and I don't have to give a reason and there will be no negative consequences	
I understand the nature of the research and what the study involves	
I have the contact details of the researcher	
I understand that my involvement in this study will be anonymous, unless I disclose anything which is a Safeguarding issue	

Signed…………………………………………………………………………………………………

Print Name…………………………………………………………………………………………

Date…………………………………………………………..

Researcher signature……………………………………………………………………….

Parent/Guardian Consent Sheet

The link between social identity and educational aspirations in young women living in a North West seaside town.

I am Melanie Haughton and currently studying for a PhD in Social Psychology. Your daughter has been invited to take part in a study on how women your age in Blackpool see themselves, the life choices that are open to them and who they think they might be in the future. Their involvement in the study is completely voluntary. Lancaster University's Research Ethics Committee has approved the study and what it involves. The data for this study will be used as part of my PhD thesis and potentially published research. If at any time you have any questions regarding the research you can contact me via email:

M.Haughton1@lancaster.ac.uk

If you give consent for your daughter to take part in the study, there will be a number of activities that your daughter will take part in, involving collecting images, making a poster and an individual interview. That interview will be audio-recorded and analysed.

Your daughter's involvement in the study is completely anonymous. I will not discuss with the school/youth club what is have said unless it is a Safeguarding issue. Only I will use the data, and once I have completed the study, I will destroy it and it won't be used again.

If you have any concerns or complaints regarding the research, you can contact my PhD supervisor. Supervisor contact details:

Dr Chris Walton, Fylde Building, Lancaster University, Bailrigg, Lancaster, LA1 4YF

Telephone: 01524 593858

Email: c.walton@lancaster.ac.uk

The role of social identity in mediating the academic aspirations of young women living in a North West seaside town.

I am the parent/legal guardian (please delete as appropriate) of _ and give consent for her to take part in the above study. I understand the nature of the research and that my daughter has the right to withdraw from the research at any time and that her part in the research is anonymous.

Signed_   Date _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

Printed Name _

<u>Participant Debrief Sheet</u>

<u>Melanie Haughton</u>

<u>The link between social identity and educational aspirations in young women living in a North West seaside town.</u>

Thank you for taking part in this study. The study is based on Social Identity Theory (SIT); SIT is a psychological theory about how our identity is shaped by the people around us, specifically the groups we belong to. I am using this theory as the basis for this study because I am interested in the identities of young women who live in Blackpool and I am interested in how those group memberships and social identities might shape young women's aspirations and beliefs about what they might achieve in the future.

There are two main parts to the research, the first is the making of posters. As you will know, I am using different methods. The poster exercise was a kind of focus group, and I used something called ethnography to make notes during this exercise. The posters will be analysed using content analysis, so I will look for different themes in the posters. The interview you took part in was a semi-structured interview where the themes were based on some aspects of my research (social identity, aspirations) and the themes from your poster. The themes I will be examining will be the influence of the image of Blackpool on your social identity, gender expectations, and your life in Blackpool and how it influences who you are and who you expect to be as an adult.

This study was approved by Lancaster University Research Ethics Committee, which means that I followed the regulations of The British Psychological Society and that the study was reviewed by a board at the university where I study.

If you are concerned about any aspect of this research, or feel that you are not happy with any part of the research process, please feel free to contact my supervisor, or the Head of Department of Psychology at Lancaster University. Thanks again for your help with my research, I really appreciate it.

Risk Assessment

The form should be written in clear language, easily understandable by a non-specialist.

The completed forms must be stored by the principal investigator/ project supervisor.

Department: Psychology

Process/Operation:

(1) Risks to the researcher

- *Potential hazards to the investigator*
  Personal distress relating to the interviews if the participants discuss sensitive issues which relate to the researcher's current circumstances

- *Control for the potential risk*
  Regular contact with PhD supervisor to discuss any issues that arise from the interviews, so that the PhD supervisor can ensure the well-being of the researcher

(2) Risks to the participants

- *Potential hazards to the participants*
  Over-disclosure by participants; discussion of socially sensitive subjects

- *Control for the potential risk*
  Participants will have contact with the researcher during and after research to withdraw any information they feel uncomfortable to have discussed; the Safeguarding team at the school/organization will be contacted prior to the research to ensure that the appropriate protocols are followed if socially sensitive information is disclosed. The local authority where the research takes place ensures that every school has access to a counselor and nurse which can also be accessed.

Therefore, is the residual risk High, Medium or Low?
Low

If High or Medium, what further action is necessary to control the risk?

Assessor:_____

Designation: _____

Date: _____

Review Date: _____

Appendix 2: Ethical Approval

Applicant: Melanie Haughton
Supervisor: Dr Chris Walton
Department: Psychology
UREC Reference: RS2015/127

20 June 2016

Dear Melanie and Chris,

Re: The role of social identity in shaping the academic aspirations of young women living in a North West seaside town

Thank you for submitting your research ethics application for the above project for review by the Department of Psychology Ethics Committee. The application was recommended for approval by the Department Committee, and on behalf of the Chair of the University Research Ethics Committee (UREC), I can confirm that approval has been granted for this research project.

As principal investigator your responsibilities include:

- ensuring that (where applicable) all the necessary legal and regulatory requirements in order to conduct the research are met, and the necessary licenses and approvals have been obtained;

- reporting any ethics-related issues that occur during the course of the research or arising from the research to the Research Ethics Officer (e.g. unforeseen ethical issues, complaints about the conduct of the research, adverse reactions such as extreme distress);

- submitting details of proposed substantive amendments to the protocol to the Research Ethics Officer for approval.

Please contact the Research Ethics Officer, Debbie Knight (01542 592605 ethics@lancaster.ac.uk) if you have any queries or require further information.

Yours sincerely,

Sarah Taylor
Secretary, University Research Ethics Committee

Cc Professor Gert Westermann (Chair, Psychology DEC); Prof Stephen Decent (Chair, UREC)

Appendix 3 – Media Analysis NVivo Report

Name	Description	Files	References
Blackpool Direct		3	3
Children		6	10
Crime		18	18
Deprivation		2	3
Domestic violence		1	1
Drugs alcohol		19	27
Economic		6	6
Funding		2	2
Health		7	8
Holiday resort		2	2
Homelessness		2	2
Housing		1	1
Transcience		2	3
urban environment		1	2
Worst		1	1
Blackpool indirect		8	9
Crime		4	4
Drugs		3	4
Exploitation		1	1
Historic		1	1
Multiple		1	1
Offenders		2	2
Sex exploitation		5	5

Name	Description	Files	References
Sexual assault		1	2
Theft		3	3
Violent crime		3	3
Dichotomy		1	1
Extreme		1	1
Humour		2	2
Informative		2	3
Relationships		1	1
Scale of problem		3	3
Social issue		3	3
Alcohol		3	3
Deprivation		1	1
Drugs		4	5
Not directly related to Blackpool		1	1
Otherness		4	4
Personal interest		1	1
Specific case		14	17
Value judgement		4	4
Statistics		10	17
Blackpool		4	4
Cost		3	5
Deprivation		1	2
Criminal		2	2
victim		1	1

Name	Description	Files	References
Uk social problem		2	2
Action_aid		5	5
Appeal for help		3	3
care system		2	2
Children		4	4
Crime		1	1
Drugs alcohol		2	2
Health		2	2
Promiscuity		1	1
Public outcry		2	2
Upbringing		1	1

Appendix 4 – Examples of Posters Produced
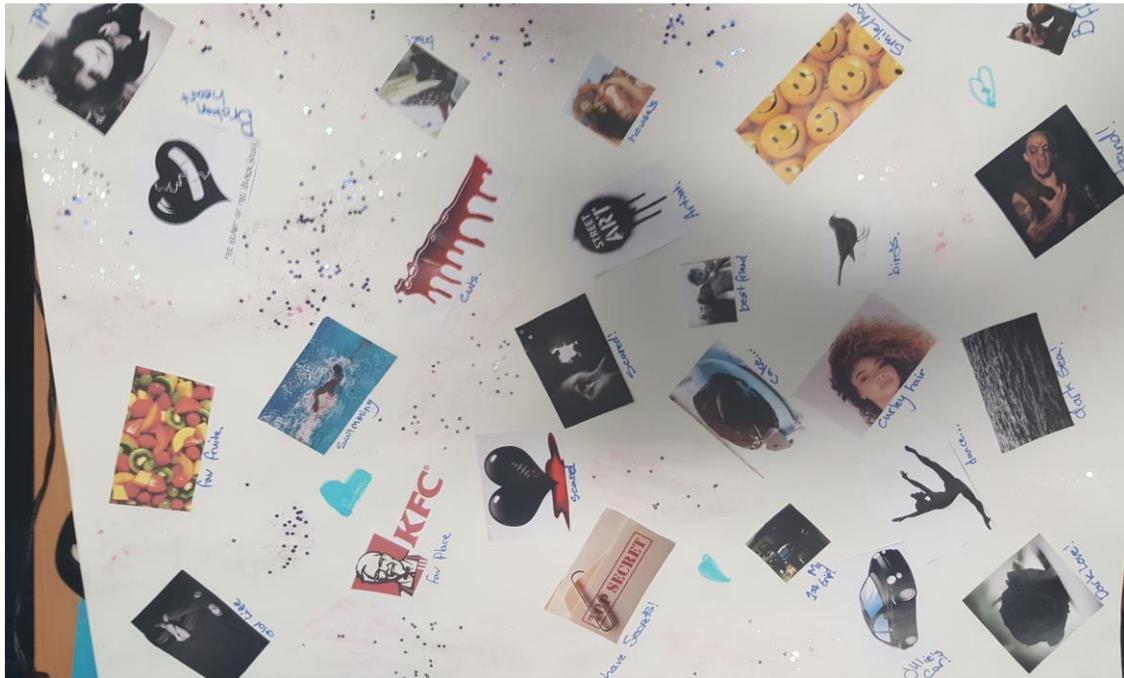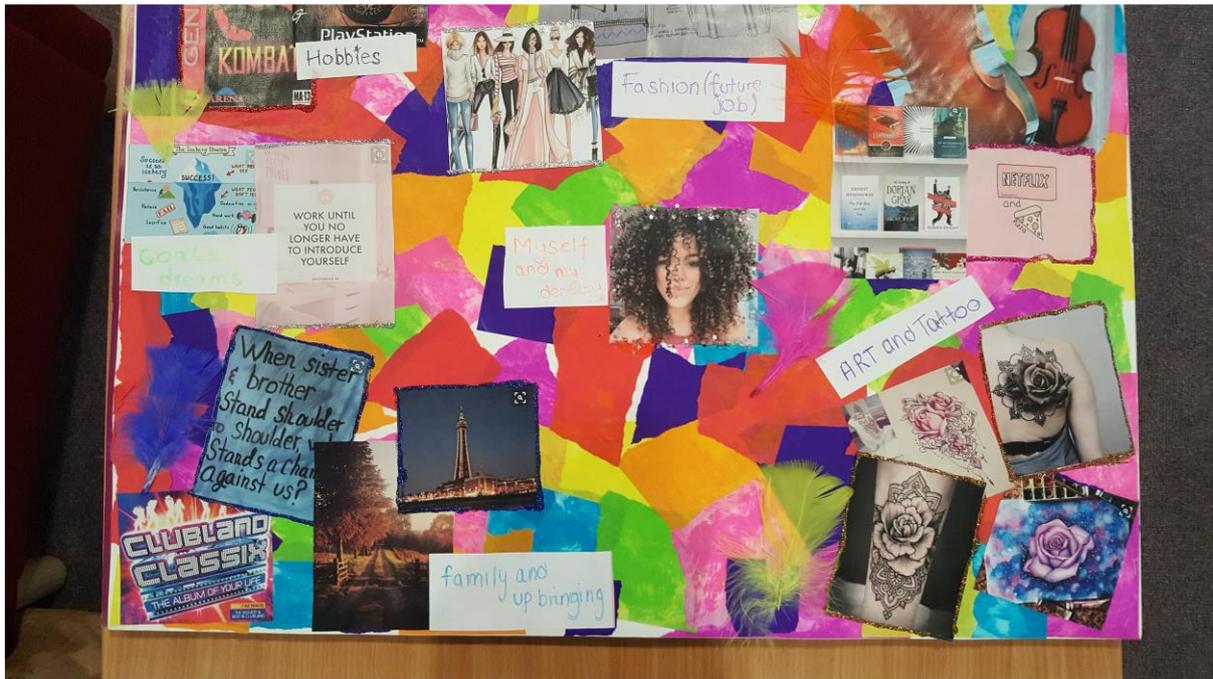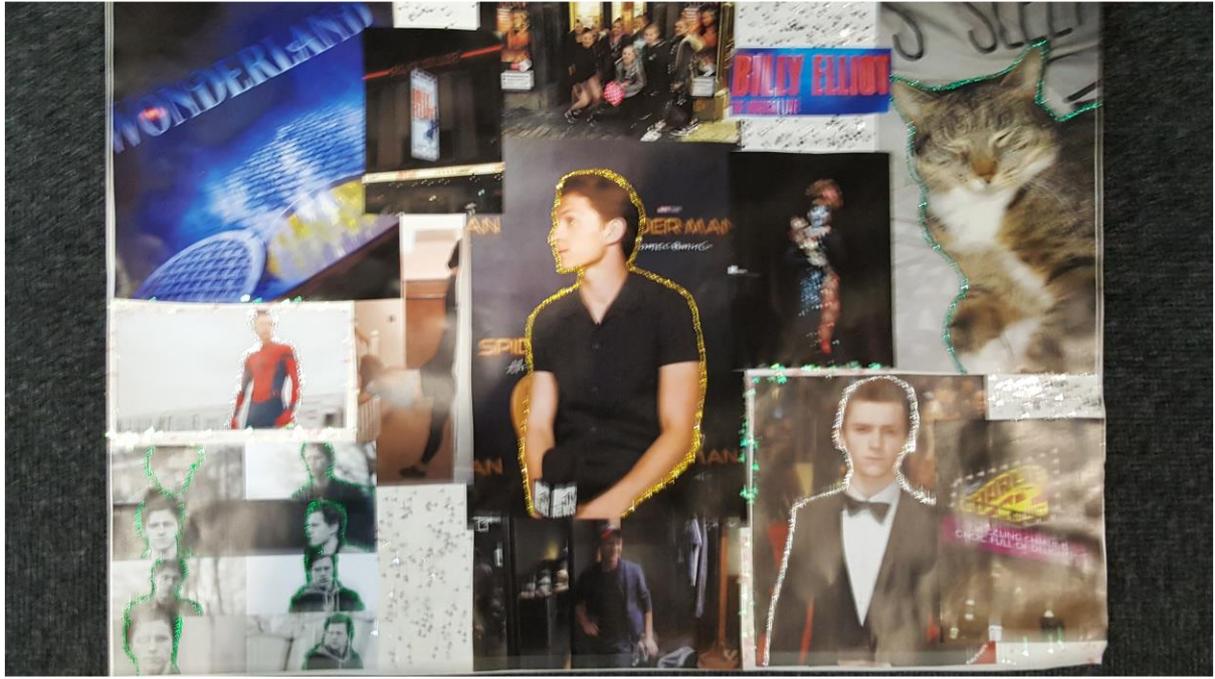
Name	Files	References	Created On	Created By	Modified On	Modi
Attributes	0	0	02/02/2018 19:44	MJH	02/02/2018 19:44	MJH
(un)Fairness & Equity	7	24	06/02/2018 13:30	MJH	27/05/2018 17:08	MJH
Achievement competencies	12	38	02/02/2018 20:04	MJH	23/05/2018 15:09	MJH
Age	5	11	08/02/2018 19:43	MJH	15/04/2018 12:02	MJH
Anxiety	8	29	06/02/2018 18:09	MJH	15/04/2018 20:11	MJH
Commitment	12	26	02/02/2018 22:14	MJH	28/05/2018 17:29	MJH
Conformity	11	30	06/02/2018 15:15	MJH	28/05/2018 17:30	MJH
Confusion	3	7	10/02/2018 15:45	MJH	28/05/2018 17:16	MJH
Coping with threats	10	75	02/02/2018 19:57	MJH	15/04/2018 20:11	MJH
Emotion	3	10	07/02/2018 12:49	MJH	27/05/2018 11:05	MJH
Femininity	8	17	02/02/2018 19:52	MJH	28/05/2018 18:37	MJH
Gender attitudes	6	29	02/02/2018 22:09	MJH	23/05/2018 15:24	MJH
Identity Objects	7	38	02/02/2018 19:56	MJH	15/04/2018 20:18	MJH
Imagination Creativity	4	16	08/02/2018 22:39	MJH	15/04/2018 12:02	MJH
Independence	2	4	05/02/2018 12:29	MJH	27/05/2018 16:12	MJH
Meritocracy	7	33	02/02/2018 19:59	MJH	28/05/2018 14:54	MJH
Obligation Responsibility	2	4	10/02/2018 16:04	MJH	14/04/2018 10:31	MJH
Pathologising Medicalising language	7	12	02/02/2018 19:58	MJH	15/04/2018 20:18	MJH
Perceived Incompetencies	7	17	02/02/2018 20:04	MJH	21/03/2018 23:33	MJH
Positive, charity, helpful	6	19	06/02/2018 13:36	MJH	15/04/2018 12:02	MJH
Presentation Appearance	15	88	02/02/2018 19:58	MJH	28/05/2018 18:37	MJH
Risk taking	11	41	02/02/2018 22:31	MJH	23/05/2018 11:41	MJH
Self esteem	9	52	02/02/2018 20:04	MJH	28/05/2018 13:58	MJH
self consciousness	6	26	06/02/2018 17:57	MJH	28/05/2018 15:00	MJH

Self-handicapping	12	38	05/02/2018 12:18	MJH	28/05/2018 17:29	MJH
Sexuality	4	26	02/02/2018 19:55	MJH	27/05/2018 15:21	MJH
Social (in)justice	6	15	02/02/2018 19:57	MJH	28/05/2018 17:30	MJH
Status	6	21	02/02/2018 19:55	MJH	15/04/2018 20:18	MJH
Trust	3	8	07/02/2018 14:06	MJH	15/04/2018 20:11	MJH
Typical	3	4	06/02/2018 16:28	MJH	21/03/2018 21:29	MJH
Unique Individuality	11	48	02/02/2018 19:55	MJH	23/05/2018 15:08	MJH
Authenticity_integrity	10	31	07/03/2018 13:28	MJH	27/05/2018 14:49	MJH
Autonomy	0	0	07/03/2018 13:17	MJH	07/03/2018 13:17	MJH
Belonging	16	67	07/03/2018 13:23	MJH	28/05/2018 18:37	MJH
Context	0	0	02/02/2018 19:46	MJH	02/02/2018 19:46	MJH
Areas of residence	12	43	02/02/2018 19:51	MJH	28/05/2018 17:25	MJH
Blackpool	18	94	02/02/2018 19:50	MJH	28/05/2018 17:25	MJH
Physical Threats	2	5	02/02/2018 20:00	MJH	10/02/2018 01:02	MJH
Risk factors	9	28	02/02/2018 20:05	MJH	23/05/2018 10:27	MJH
School	15	87	02/02/2018 19:50	MJH	28/05/2018 18:35	MJH
Social media	3	7	02/02/2018 19:52	MJH	27/05/2018 14:47	MJH
Continuity	15	43	07/03/2018 13:20	MJH	28/05/2018 17:05	MJH
Distinctiveness	0	0	07/03/2018 13:17	MJH	07/03/2018 13:17	MJH
Group Level	14	59	07/03/2018 13:19	MJH	28/05/2018 14:50	MJH
Individual Level	15	61	07/03/2018 13:18	MJH	28/05/2018 14:56	MJH
Self-enhancement processes	9	23	07/03/2018 13:19	MJH	27/05/2018 15:28	MJH
Dyadic	0	0	02/02/2018 19:46	MJH	02/02/2018 19:46	MJH
Abandonment	4	8	02/02/2018 19:49	MJH	15/04/2018 20:18	MJH
Achievement	3	5	06/02/2018 16:15	MJH	23/05/2018 11:33	MJH
Activities Leisure	12	38	06/02/2018 13:33	MJH	21/03/2018 23:33	MJH
Aggression	4	16	07/02/2018 13:02	MJH	23/05/2018 10:54	MJH
Annoyance Frustration	8	22	07/02/2018 14:03	MJH	27/05/2018 11:11	MJH

Change	7	11	06/02/2018 16:23	MJH	15/04/2018 12:02	MJH
Closeness	5	14	05/02/2018 11:37	MJH	23/05/2018 11:40	MJH
Compliance	2	8	02/02/2018 19:50	MJH	23/05/2018 11:35	MJH
Conflict	12	56	06/02/2018 14:42	MJH	27/05/2018 13:58	MJH
Difference	4	7	07/02/2018 12:50	MJH	15/04/2018 20:11	MJH
Discipline	15	47	02/02/2018 22:03	MJH	23/05/2018 12:27	MJH
Distance & Proximity	6	14	06/02/2018 16:22	MJH	15/04/2018 20:18	MJH
Emotional closeness	11	25	02/02/2018 22:28	MJH	27/05/2018 11:15	MJH
Feminine	9	20	06/02/2018 14:29	MJH	28/05/2018 15:03	MJH
Grief	8	21	02/02/2018 19:48	MJH	28/05/2018 17:04	MJH
Humour	4	14	07/02/2018 10:55	MJH	11/02/2018 04:13	MJH
Interconnection	13	73	02/02/2018 19:48	MJH	27/05/2018 12:33	MJH
Isolation	4	7	08/02/2018 19:37	MJH	27/05/2018 11:11	MJH
Longevity	12	16	02/02/2018 22:28	MJH	23/05/2018 11:17	MJH
Masculine	7	14	06/02/2018 14:46	MJH	15/04/2018 20:18	MJH
Meritocracy Finance	15	56	02/02/2018 19:59	MJH	27/05/2018 17:43	MJH
Risk taking	10	34	02/02/2018 22:21	MJH	15/04/2018 20:18	MJH
Role model	10	20	06/02/2018 14:19	MJH	28/05/2018 17:05	MJH
Similarity	12	52	05/02/2018 11:33	MJH	28/05/2018 14:50	MJH
Spontaneous	1	1	05/02/2018 11:35	MJH	05/02/2018 11:35	MJH
Support	13	66	02/02/2018 19:50	MJH	27/05/2018 17:46	MJH
Threat	4	21	07/02/2018 12:58	MJH	15/04/2018 20:11	MJH
Unique	2	2	05/02/2018 12:31	MJH	10/02/2018 16:10	MJH
Efficacy	16	76	07/03/2018 13:19	MJH	28/05/2018 18:33	MJH
Future self	0	0	02/02/2018 19:46	MJH	02/02/2018 19:46	MJH
Education	16	68	02/02/2018 19:54	MJH	23/05/2018 13:29	MJH
Family	6	10	06/02/2018 14:40	MJH	23/05/2018 15:14	MJH
Parent's input	14	29	05/02/2018 12:17	MJH	27/05/2018 16:35	MJH
Planning	15	33	02/02/2018 19:53	MJH	23/05/2018 13:30	MJH

Profession	17	53	02/02/2018 19:54	MJH	15/04/2018 20:18	MJH
Realism	14	32	02/02/2018 19:53	MJH	23/05/2018 12:25	MJH
Residence	15	34	02/02/2018 19:54	MJH	15/04/2018 20:18	MJH
Travel	3	13	02/02/2018 19:54	MJH	23/05/2018 12:25	MJH
Uncertainty_indecision	5	9	06/02/2018 14:31	MJH	21/03/2018 21:29	MJH
Group membership	2	2	07/03/2018 13:25	MJH	06/04/2018 20:22	MJH
Enmeshment	9	24	07/03/2018 13:28	MJH	23/05/2018 15:20	MJH
Esteem	12	50	15/03/2018 21:08	MJH	28/05/2018 14:50	MJH
Identification	15	50	07/03/2018 13:27	MJH	27/05/2018 17:23	MJH
Identity expression	10	58	07/03/2018 13:27	MJH	28/05/2018 13:49	MJH
Interconnectedness	16	70	07/03/2018 13:28	MJH	28/05/2018 17:05	MJH
Network	7	14	23/03/2018 12:53	MJH	23/05/2018 14:25	MJH
Personal Investment	14	41	07/03/2018 13:27	MJH	27/05/2018 17:52	MJH
Role	15	73	07/03/2018 13:26	MJH	28/05/2018 18:29	MJH
Shared emotions	14	32	07/03/2018 13:28	MJH	28/05/2018 17:04	MJH
Status	9	53	07/03/2018 13:27	MJH	28/05/2018 14:10	MJH
Identity Threats	0	0	07/03/2018 13:30	MJH	07/03/2018 13:30	TMJH
Coping_ Isolation	11	23	07/03/2018 13:31	MJH	27/05/2018 15:54	MJH
Coping_Compliance	10	33	07/03/2018 13:32	MJH	28/05/2018 17:31	MJH
Coping_Negativism	13	58	07/03/2018 13:32	MJH	28/05/2018 17:18	MJH
Coping_passing	15	68	07/03/2018 13:32	MJH	28/05/2018 14:59	MJH
Group Legitimacy	13	32	07/03/2018 13:30	MJH	28/05/2018 17:11	MJH
Individual	8	24	14/03/2018 12:52	MJH	27/05/2018 16:03	MJH
Legitimacy of group	13	49	01/04/2018 16:10	MJH	28/05/2018 14:57	MJH
Legitimacy of membership	9	72	07/03/2018 13:31	MJH	28/05/2018 17:31	MJH
Sexuality and gender identity	5	27	07/03/2018 13:31	MJH	27/05/2018 15:58	MJH
Independence	0	0	07/03/2018 13:15	MJH	07/03/2018 13:15	MJH
Alcohol	4	11	31/12/2018 09:52	MJH	31/12/2018 10:10	MJH

Meaning	6	11	07/03/2018 13:23	MJH	27/05/2018 12:43	MJH
Possible selves	0	0	07/03/2018 13:24	MJH	07/03/2018 13:24	MJH
Actions	17	40	07/03/2018 13:25	MJH	28/05/2018 15:09	MJH
Fears	16	68	07/03/2018 13:25	MJH	28/05/2018 18:35	MJH
Resistance to change	7	20	07/03/2018 13:25	MJH	28/05/2018 17:20	MJH
What they might become	11	21	07/03/2018 13:24	MJH	28/05/2018 18:35	MJH
What they would like to become	18	106	07/03/2018 13:24	MJH	28/05/2018 18:35	MJH
Relational	0	0	02/02/2018 19:46	MJH	02/02/2018 19:46	MJH
Fathers	17	84	02/02/2018 20:03	MJH	28/05/2018 17:18	MJH
Grandparents	6	11	02/02/2018 20:03	MJH	27/05/2018 12:18	MJH
Intimate relationships	8	28	02/02/2018 19:56	MJH	27/05/2018 15:58	MJH
Media_Social Media	7	36	06/02/2018 13:35	MJH	15/04/2018 20:18	MJH
Mothers	17	110	02/02/2018 20:03	MJH	28/05/2018 17:17	MJH
Peers	11	38	02/02/2018 19:51	MJH	27/05/2018 12:56	MJH
Siblings	16	57	02/02/2018 20:03	MJH	28/05/2018 17:15	MJH
Social group	18	150	02/02/2018 19:51	MJH	28/05/2018 17:25	MJH
Teachers	8	26	02/02/2018 19:51	MJH	28/05/2018 14:07	MJH
Wider family & General refs	15	66	02/02/2018 20:03	MJH	28/05/2018 17:23	MJH
Repertoires	1	1	07/03/2018 13:29	MJH	15/04/2018 19:53	MJH
Contradictions	10	44	07/03/2018 13:29	MJH	28/05/2018 18:37	MJH
Extreme language	7	16	15/03/2018 22:17	MJH	28/05/2018 17:28	MJH
Generalisations	16	77	15/03/2018 22:17	MJH	28/05/2018 14:57	MJH
Innoculations	9	15	07/03/2018 13:29	MJH	28/05/2018 13:51	MJH
Outgroup talk	18	132	07/03/2018 13:30	MJH	28/05/2018 17:21	MJH
Communication Talkative	6	17	06/02/2018 15:15	MJH	15/04/2018 20:18	MJH
Disability Illness	7	29	08/02/2018 22:36	MJH	28/05/2018 18:33	MJH
Self-consciousness	11	35	06/02/2018 16:26	MJH	27/05/2018 15:56	MJH
Sexuality	6	38	05/02/2018 11:31	MJH	27/05/2018 13:41	MJH

Transience	3	4	10/02/2018 23:39	MJH	27/05/2018 15:43	MJH
Pathologising Language	6	14	07/03/2018 13:30	MJH	28/05/2018 18:33	MJH
Self presentation	17	271	15/03/2018 23:49	MJH	28/05/2018 18:37	MJH
Risk	0	0	07/03/2018 13:22	MJH	07/03/2018 13:22	MJH
Attribution	9	26	07/03/2018 13:22	MJH	28/05/2018 14:16	MJH
Collective	12	28	07/03/2018 13:22	MJH	28/05/2018 14:16	MJH
Individual	9	23	07/03/2018 13:22	MJH	28/05/2018 17:27	MJH
Self-esteem	15	81	07/03/2018 13:20	MJH	28/05/2018 18:33	MJH
Gender	17	99	07/03/2018 13:21	MJH	28/05/2018 18:37	MJH
Self-enhancement	17	74	07/03/2018 13:20	MJH	28/05/2018 15:06	MJH
Social categories	0	0	02/02/2018 19:46	MJH	02/02/2018 19:46	MJH
Authority	2	4	02/02/2018 19:53	MJH	15/04/2018 20:06	MJH
Chavs	5	11	02/02/2018 19:52	MJH	28/05/2018 17:09	MJH
Drug takers	11	25	08/02/2018 22:54	MJH	28/05/2018 17:08	MJH
Emo	3	6	07/02/2018 13:08	MJH	27/05/2018 15:26	MJH
Female	12	40	02/02/2018 19:53	MJH	28/05/2018 17:26	MJH
Gamers	1	1	07/02/2018 14:08	MJH	15/04/2018 20:11	MJH
Girlie	4	6	07/02/2018 14:08	MJH	28/05/2018 14:11	MJH
Geek	2	2	10/02/2018 16:07	MJH	27/05/2018 12:40	MJH
Goth	1	5	11/02/2018 02:38	MJH	27/05/2018 15:28	MJH
Homeless	2	3	07/02/2018 14:22	MJH	27/05/2018 17:26	MJH
Jewish	1	6	11/02/2018 02:42	MJH	27/05/2018 15:40	MJH
Locals	9	20	02/02/2018 19:52	MJH	28/05/2018 17:10	MJH
Male	12	35	02/02/2018 19:53	MJH	28/05/2018 17:26	MJH
Older males	1	3	23/05/2018 13:08	MJH	23/05/2018 14:21	MJH
Peers	11	38	02/02/2018 22:31	MJH	27/05/2018 18:09	MJH
Posh	4	14	06/02/2018 18:13	MJH	28/05/2018 15:11	MJH
people on benefits	3	5	06/02/2018 14:35	MJH	27/05/2018 16:58	MJH
Stigma	0	0	07/03/2018 13:14	MJH	07/03/2018 13:14	MJH

Threat	0	0	07/03/2018 13:21	MJH	07/03/2018 13:21	MJH
Collective	9	29	07/03/2018 13:21	MJH	28/05/2018 17:25	MJH
Individual	15	68	07/03/2018 13:21	MJH	28/05/2018 17:10	MJH
Responses to threat	16	74	07/03/2018 13:22	MJH	28/05/2018 17:12	MJH
Uniqueness	7	13	07/03/2018 13:19	MJH	27/05/2018 14:43	MJH