

# “Getting stuck in”: body work and physical capital in non-traditional occupations

Non traditional  
occupations  
and body work

113

Caroline Murphy

*Department of Work and Employment Studies, University of Limerick,  
Limerick, Ireland, and*

Aoife O'Meara

*University of Limerick, Limerick, Ireland*

Received 5 July 2021  
Revised 15 June 2022  
27 July 2022  
Accepted 27 July 2022

## Abstract

**Purpose** – Drawing on Bourdieu's conceptualisation of physical capital, this article explores the experiences of male and female employees in non-traditional occupations where body work is an integral part of the role. Specifically, the authors examine how being an underrepresented gender in this context impacts the experience of work, including challenges faced and perceptions for future opportunities in the role.

**Design/methodology/approach** – The research is based on two in-depth case studies undertaken in the social care and security/door work sector. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with male social care workers and female security workers in the night-time hospitality sector. Management representatives were also interviewed in each case. The interviews examined how the nature of the work in these roles impacted on the underrepresented gender's perceptions of various aspects of their working lives.

**Findings** – The findings illustrate how many of the challenges associated with non-traditional occupations are experienced differently in body work roles, either being amplified or instead presenting opportunities for the role holder with implications for the day-to-day and longer-term experience of work. The findings illustrate how the actions and behaviour of management and colleagues can exacerbate the extent to which underrepresented gender feel accepted within their role and organisation.

**Practical implications** – Organisational decision makers need to be aware of the importance of reviewing practices regarding hiring, promotion and the allocation of tasks and duties for non-traditional role holders engaged in body work.

**Originality/value** – The article contributes to understandings of “body work” and physical capital in non-traditional occupations, illustrating how gender-based assumptions can restrict individuals in these roles to a greater extent than in other forms of work where the body is salient to the performance of the role.

**Keywords** Non-traditional occupation, Body work, Physical capital

**Paper type** Research paper

## Introduction

The nature of work or is changing, including who performs work, where it occurs and how workers experience it (Cohen, 2019). With these changes, many roles are becoming more diverse regarding the gender performing them; however, many occupations remain deeply segregated. The concept of “non-traditional occupation” refers to an individual being employed within an occupation traditionally associated with the opposite gender, where they are underrepresented numerically (Christie, 1998). Despite changes in many sectors, the overall structure of employment remains polarised (Brinkley *et al.*, 2013). The association between occupational segregation and the body has long been evident, for example Anker (1998) refers to the exclusion of women from occupations requiring physical strength



© Caroline Murphy and Aoife O'Meara. Published by Emerald Publishing Limited. This article is published under the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY 4.0) licence. Anyone may reproduce, distribute, translate and create derivative works of this article (for both commercial and no commercial purposes), subject to full attribution to the original publication and authors. The full terms of this licence may be seen at <http://creativecommons.org/licences/by/4.0/legalcode>

Employee Relations: The  
International Journal  
Vol. 44 No. 7, 2022  
pp. 113-128  
Emerald Publishing Limited  
0142-5455  
DOI 10.1108/ER-07-2021-0296

where average strength was taken as a proxy for role suitability. More contemporaneously, occupational segregation is strongly evident in roles associated with body work. The concept of body work, while initially taken as referring to the work which people are expected to do on their own bodies (Halford *et al.*, 1997), has expanded to now include work which involves the care, adornment, pleasure, discipline, or cure of other's bodies (Wolkowitz, 2002). However, as Wolkowitz *et al.* (2013) assert, there has been a lack of attention paid to service sector employment involving body work. Furthermore, while the experience of individuals in "non-traditional occupations" has been discussed in terms of stigma, prestige and motivation (Simpson, 2004; Pruitt, 2017), there remains a dearth of research examining how physicality and body work affect non-traditional workers experience of their work. Thus, there is a need to deepen our understanding of worker experience in these roles. This article seeks to address this lacuna by examining the experience of male social care workers and female security workers (bouncers) in the night-time sector in Ireland, both of which meet the definition of roles involving both body works. Our central research question asks how the nature of these roles impacts non-traditional employees experience and perceptions of work. In doing so, we develop a greater theoretical understanding of the salience of physical attributes in non-traditional occupations, examining how this contributes to altering the experience of work for employees in body work roles. The article is structured as follows. We begin with an overview of the literature pertaining to physicality, body work and occupational segregation, outlining how these different elements combine to alter the experience of work. We then provide contextual material on the two sectors examined, before presenting an overview of our methodological approach and findings. We conclude with a discussion of our findings, illustrating what these mean for those in non-traditional occupations.

### **Physicality, physical capital and body work**

Shilling (1991, p. 653) challenged the "marginal status of the body in sociology" in understanding the production of gender and social inequalities, with implications for study of work. Bourdieu (1978) is regarded as having strongly contributed to the sociology of the body, mainly through his conceptualisation of embodied capital as a subset of cultural capital that is a cultural resource invested within the body. However, Shilling (1991, p. 654) argued that "the physical" is too important to be seen as merely as subset of cultural capital, pointing out the importance of the body to human agency and the production of cultural capital in the first instance. Shilling (1991) developed on Bourdieu's notion of physical capital, capturing the importance of the body as a form of capital in its own right. Bourdieu argued that physical capital (in the form of body shape, gait and posture) is largely socially produced. The production of physical capital refers to the social formation of bodies by individuals through a range of activities (including sporting and leisure) which express a class location and are which afforded a symbolic value (Shilling, 1991, p. 654). Physical capital can then be converted into economic, cultural and social capital but opportunities to do so are not equally accessible. It has also been pointed out that although beneficial in some respects, physical capital can be limiting in several regards, for example the risks associated with it (e.g. short length of careers reliant on physical capital). Bourdieu's work highlights the relationship between physical capital and social inequality, with respect to gender, for example how viewing female bodies as weak contributed to lower social status for women. Shilling (1991, p. 661) asserts that a poststructuralist view deviates from such naturalistic, biological essentialism, instead focussing on meaning the body is given through language and other forms of representation, while the dialectical view situates the body as a material object that is subject to social change. Marx and Engels (1970) acknowledged the body as a bearer of labour power, with the importance of the body both facilitated and limited by cultural, political and economic developments, perhaps particularly evident as technology

alters work. As [Shilling \(2004\)](#) later illustrates, irrespective of technological change or otherwise, an array of concepts account for the body as a resource in employment. For example, aesthetic labour is substantive in service sector employment, where perceived attractiveness, rather than just physical capabilities are considered important. In contrast, in the sectors examined here, it is the requirement for both physicality and body work within the roles that is of interest.

All work involves the deployment of a mix of physical, mental and emotional capacities to greater or lesser degrees ([Brook, 2009](#)). In some roles, for example body work, the physical element is more overt. Physicality can be understood using a “framework of embodiment”, which examines the lived experiences of individuals by viewing all aspects of the human body including size, shape, strength, gender, sexuality etc. as “a representation of the self” with the body itself conveying messages of the person such as their value, social power and competency ([Westmarland, 2017](#)). Achieving recognition for both physical and non-physical skills remain an embodied, gendered and contested process ([Woodfield, 2016](#)). In roles where physicality matters, the issue of body capital comes to the fore. Body capital comprises of two main dimensions; the first relates to build characteristics (e.g. weight and height), while importantly in this context, the second relates to techniques of the body (e.g. ability to physically restrain others) ([Monaghan, 2002](#)). Body capital can therefore be deployed as an asset, to signal skill and occupational competency ([Monaghan, 2002](#), p. 337).

The body is central to work in the performance of body work roles which are defined by requiring workers to interact with or touch other bodies, and as such, co-presence is often a fundamental aspect of the work ([Wolkowitz et al., 2013](#); [Wolkowitz, 2006](#)). Body work is a form of labour that can coexist within a job, for example a nurse will perform body work but also emotional labour ([Cohen, 2019](#)). It is described as work which involves assessing, caring, diagnosing, handling, treating, manipulating, controlling and monitoring bodies such that they become objects of the workers labour ([Twigg et al., 2011](#); [Cohen, 2019](#)). This contrasts emotional labour which refers to the suppression of true feelings to create a caring and safe atmosphere for clients ([Hochschild, 1983](#)). [Korczynski \(2013\)](#) assert that different kinds of body work have differing contextual meanings assigned to the body, for example as [Cohen \(2019\)](#) describes the body can be an object of medical rationality, adornment, or violence, therefore body work produces different tensions between workers and those they work on. A gender dimension creates additional complexities and tensions. Research from [Cohen and Wolkowitz \(2018\)](#) found that body work is inherently gendered, while 18% of women perform body work, only 6% of men do. Furthermore, [Twigg et al. \(2011\)](#) argue that body work is performed differentially by women and men, with associations of body work being feminised where touch is viewed as comforting or healing. Such connotations can then be exploited by employers when hiring ([Cohen, 2019](#)), for example male health care workers are clustered in jobs providing less intimate forms of touch. It is argued as individuals progress through occupational hierarchies, they often move from “dirty work” to “clean” work that involves little or no body work ([Twigg et al., 2011](#)). [Simpson \(citing Bolton, 2005\)](#) outlines that forms of dirty work have been under examined are they are “out of step” with notions of modern “clean” work that offers intrinsic rewards such as job satisfaction, engagement and opportunity for career advancement. In the care and security sectors, elements of the work align not only with bodywork but also with classifications of dirty work put forward by [Simpson et al. \(2012\)](#).

A final aspect of body work which is of fundamental importance here is the nature of the bodies worked upon. As [Cohen \(2019\)](#) points out, the close symbolic relationship between the bodies worked upon and the worker’s body means that changes in the bodies worked upon creates possibilities for new groups of workers. This is particularly relevant for non-traditional occupations, where demands for a particular gender have increased the need for gender diversity in certain body work roles.

### Non-traditional occupations

Lupton's (2000) argued that the process of desegregation of labour markets requires that women enter male-dominated occupations, but that men enter largely female work domains. Lupton illustrates how men in non-traditional occupations address their under representation either by redefining the job to fit more closely with an accepted conception of masculinity, or by adapting their own masculinity within the role. Interestingly, Lupton's (2006) later work argued that men's entry to female-concentrated occupations may best be approached, not as an issue of "masculinity" but as one of social mobility operating within a gendered labour market. This is significant in the context of increasing labour market polarisation where jobs at the top of income distribution are typically white-collar jobs, with manual or physical based role dominate at the lower end (Goos *et al.*, 2009). The roles examined here are typically associated with the latter. While non-traditional occupational holders' experiences of work have been examined regarding working conditions, experience of stress, interpersonal relationships, treatment and prospects including access to development opportunities (Williams, 1993; Simpson, 2005; Whittock, 2018; Wright, 2013), there has been a lack of focus on these aspects in the roles involving body work.

Both sectors examined here involve both body work and a degree of physicality from workers, partly to manage challenging behaviours in these contexts. Wolkowitz *et al.* (2013) have highlighted the various forms that body work takes in these sectors, from touch and adjustments in care provision, to pat-downs and control in security. Both sectors have diversified their staff in recent years, with recognition of the importance of accommodating clients' needs for specific genders (Hussein *et al.*, 2016; Wilson *et al.*, 2011; Hobbs *et al.*, 2007).

### *Social care*

Rising demand for long term care provision, particularly that which promotes independent living in the community has led to the rapid expansion of the social care sector (Schwiter *et al.*, 2018). Though, technically classed as service sector employment, Meagher *et al.* (2016) argue care work has specific characteristics that distinguish it. Work tasks are designed around assisting others with the basic activities of daily living and personal care, often over an extended period of time as well as basic medical care in residential settings (the focus in this paper). In home care settings, the work can involve a more diverse range of tasks (Hussein *et al.*, 2016). In their review of body work in social care, Twigg *et al.* (2011, p. 175), point to the intimate labour involved in these roles and argue that "body care" is a central activity in both residential and home care settings. The relational aspects that affect the quality of the service depend on workers' capacity to develop caring relationships with service users. Cramm *et al.* (2013) argue that employees in these roles are persistently under pressure in their work environments to meet competing demands, impacting their ability to focus on relational aspects of their roles, amid a heightened emphasise on cost curtailment in the sector. In terms of employment, Spasova *et al.* (2018) contend that the sector is associated with poor working conditions including low income, lack of training, high workloads and high levels of stress. Recruitment is a challenge in the sector (Murphy and O'Sullivan, 2021). Social care services are encouraged to recruit male staff, where service users express a preference for 'same-gender intimate care supports', yet the ratio of female to male staff in residential settings remains typically 9:1 (Wilson *et al.*, 2011), which is largely reflective of front-line care roles in Europe (Boniol *et al.*, 2019). The role requires staff to manage challenging behaviour that may place individuals at risk of harm (Hastings *et al.*, 2021). Recruitment of male carers has been viewed as a means of reducing risk of potential injury to female staff since service users are found to display fewer challenging behaviours in the presence of men (McConkey *et al.*, 2007). Male staff members are therefore sometimes viewed as protectors and in turn feel obligated to act as such (McConkey *et al.*, 2007). The literature points to several expectations of male staff in care that can be problematic, such as managing incidents of aggression and engaging in the bulk of patient manual handling (Whittock and Leonard, 2003).

Security/doorwork

“Doorwork” describes the work of security staff in the night-time economy working in bars and clubs, commonly referred to as “bouncers.” This terminology was found to be adopted by the group examined; hence, the term is used here. Employment in the sector tends to be precarious in nature. Doyle *et al.*’s (2017) examination of the sector in Ireland found that it was characterised by low pay for the work and risks involved and was insecure and unstable (for example, loss of working hours depending on venue attendance). For that reason, many of those performing this work also hold other employment. Core to the job is the need to anticipate or manage challenging behaviours that may necessitate the use of physical intervention when dealing with intoxicated and “unruly” guests (Monaghan, 2002). The Private Security Services Act, 2004, established the Private Security Authority as the national regulatory and licencing body for the private security industry in Ireland. The Authority specifies standards to be observed in the provision of security services and manages compliance of persons providing security services, therefore the role is considered to be well regulated in regard to who can perform it. The work involves instrumental physicality and requires workers to develop a range of practical and bodily techniques to manage the threat of violence in the role (Hobbs *et al.*, 2007; Tutenges *et al.*, 2015). Females have been increasingly employed in recent years to facilitate same-gendered searching of customers who may feel threatened by physical contact with male bouncers (Johnston and Kilty, 2014). They are also hired to encourage a “non-aggressive approach to doorwork” as they have been shown to diffuse situations without physical means (Hobbs *et al.*, 2007). However, the presence of women has been considered by male counterparts as increasing the risk of injury to the team, as they believe females are unable to deal with incidents of violence due to being physically weaker (Johnston and Kilty, 2014). Female bouncers describe being bothered by the language used by male colleagues, such as “sexist humour” (Johnston and Kilty, 2014) and social exclusion to subordinate women, (Powell and Sang, 2015). Although female bouncers may experience a more hostile environment at work, females reported fewer injuries than men within the previous six months of their work (Tutenges *et al.*, 2015) (see Table 1).

Methodology

One of the authors had previously worked in front line roles within both sectors of interest, allowing for an organisational ethnography approach. Such a stance is summarised well by Gaggiotti *et al.* (2016) who describes this where a researcher studying their own social context can “acquire the distance necessary for critical reflection and change”. This ethnographic element provided an advantage as the researcher had an existing understanding of the roles and comprehension of participant language use and ethos, which would otherwise be important to research prior to conducting interviews. Given the aims of study, a qualitative approach was deemed most appropriate to explore participant experiences in detail (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2018). Taking a purposive sampling approach, eight participants from each occupation of interest were interviewed. Most interviewees were known by the interviewing author (female), though none closely. While the gender of the interviewer may have impacted on the level of detail disclosed by participants, it did not overtly appear to influence responses.

Body work in care work	Body work in security/door work
Assessing	Assessing
Handling	Handling
Treating	Monitoring
Touching	Controlling

Table 1.  
Sample body work  
related tasks in each  
sector

Observations on the work context, terminology and colloquialisms used within the locations were utilised alongside the literature to formulate questions seeking to understand how interviewees experienced the physical aspects of their jobs, and how this manifested in how they experienced work. Interviews were conducted at the site of work, or close to it, usually prior to a work shift. The questions centred on physical aspects of the role, work tasks, role expectations, day to day working conditions, and finally, interpersonal relationships with colleagues. The participants were seven female bouncers and seven male social care workers. A manager of a residential care unit and a security manager were also interviewed to investigate management perspectives. Interviews were recorded and on average lasted 40 minutes (see Table 2).

Thematic analysis was used to identify, analyse and report patterns and themes within the data. To complete the analysis transcripts were originally printed and read multiple times before a more in-depth analysis is conducted using NVivo software. The software was employed to sort and chart the material according to key issues. Across both occupations three central themes emerged. These were (1) employability and conditions (including future prospects), (2) job-related risks and (3) interpersonal relationships. On further analysis, subthemes for each group were further broken down to capture the essence of their discrete experiences more accurately.

## Findings

### *Employability and working conditions*

Both male carers and female bouncers were aware that they were highly sought after by employers due to legal requirements or client preferences around gender. One female bouncer stated that she “*never had to look for work for fourteen years*” (Participant 14, female, 30, nightclub security) while another noted: “*it’s easier for me to pick up shifts because I’m female . . . we’re in demand*” (Participant 1, female, 21, nightclub security). This was also the experience described by male participants of the social care group. A manager stated, “*male social care workers are so highly sought after, that they are seen like a treasure*” (Participant 2, female, 32, social care team leader). Male social care workers echoed this in describing a confidence in selection over female applicants for work; “*if it just came down to me or a female, I suppose I’d be picked*” (Participant 10, male, 41, support worker). This meant the underrepresented gender was able to use their gender to an advantage in securing employment, one male carer admitted he was hired over female applicants though he lacked the necessary qualifications; “*technically I am underqualified, but the Team Leader here, she pleaded her case for having me . . . I do not think there is any way [that would have occurred] if I had been female with no qualification.*” (Participant 16, male, 48, care worker).

While access to employment was noted as being relatively easy, securing additional hours or overtime was also considered easier which can make a substantial difference to income in low paid or part-time employment. Female bouncers explained their hours are “guaranteed” as females while male care workers also described greater the availability of additional shifts, relating to management’s choice to have an additional male presence in case of physically challenging behaviours from service users: “*you could work all the hours you want. There’s plenty of work there for a male.*” Participant 12 (Male, 39, support worker)

However, while male care workers described advantage in selection and working hours, they perceived greater challenges in terms of progression: “*in general, getting on in this job as a male is probably harder . . . purely because it is females that are associated with management.*” (Participant 15, male, 58, support worker). A manager also explained that throughout social care females “*dominate management*”. This is where the nature of body work really was felt to impact on underrepresented gender. Crucially males feel they are employed unofficially to manage challenging behaviours, as one highlighted:



Participant	Gender	Age	Nationality	Qualification	Years of experience	Sector	Job title	Location
Participant 10	Male	41	Irish	Healthcare Level 5	4	Residential Social Care	Support Worker	Midlands
Participant 9	Male	25	Irish	BA Applied Social Studies in Social Care	4	Residential Social Care	Support Worker	Midlands, rural
Participant 13	Male	36	Irish	Healthcare Level 5	7	Residential Social Care	Support Worker	Midlands, rural
Participant 16	Male	48	Irish	(no relevant course yet completed)	<1	Residential Social Care	Support Worker	Midlands, rural
Participant 15	Male	58	Irish	(no relevant course yet completed)	31	Residential Social Care	Support Worker	Midlands, rural
Participant 12	Male	34	Irish	Healthcare Level 5	4	Residential Social Care	Support Worker	Midlands, rural
Participant 4	Male	39	Irish	Healthcare Level 5	10	Residential Social Care	Support Worker	Midlands, rural
Participant 2	Female	32	Irish	BA Applied Social Studies in Social Care	8	Residential Social Care	Team Leader	Midlands, rural
Participant 6	Female	26	English	PSA licence	6	Security	Bouncer	Midwest, urban
Participant 8	Female	26	Irish	PSA licence	6	Security	Bouncer	Midwest, urban
Participant 1	Female	21	Irish	PSA licence	3	Security	Bouncer	Midwest, urban
Participant 14	Female	30	Bulgarian	PSA licence	11	Security	Bouncer	Midwest, urban
Participant 11	Female	40	Irish	PSA licence	4	Security	Bouncer	Midwest, urban
Participant 3	Female	33	Irish	PSA licence	2	Security	Bouncer	Midwest, urban
Participant 7	Female	40	Irish	PSA licence	10	Security	Bouncer	Midwest, urban
Participant 5	Male	51	Irish	PSA licence	34	Security	Head of Security/Bar Owner	Midwest, urban

Non traditional  
occupations  
and body work

**Table 2.**  
Participant  
profile table

when you're a minority and you're male, there is also the aspect of not promoting a male from that area, I mean these are very challenging behaviours we are talking about . . . if you take a male [off the frontline] who are you going to replace him with?. There's no equality . . . management in this area, it's totally top [female] heavy, (Participant 12, Male, 39, support worker).

Female bouncers also describe management being associated predominately with the opposite sex. One stating it is *"unusual to see a woman rise up in the job"*; while another believed, *'the only way you'd progress is if you set up your own company'* (Participant 11, female, 40, bouncer). And that the only way a woman can progress is 'if you have yourself proved.' This notion of having to prove themselves to male colleagues came up repeatedly. Participant 11 (female, 40, bouncer) explained; *'It's only the exceptional woman that will go places because it is considered a male job, and women are not generally as strong physically'*. The participant in the position of Head of Security in a large nightclub felt *'if I was not a girl, I would've probably progressed much quicker.'*

#### *Job-related risks*

In looking at the job-related risks in body work two subthemes for non-traditional occupation holders - physical risk (associated with actual or potential physical injury) and "allegation risk" (risk of being falsely accused of wrongdoing by clients or colleagues). Male social care workers largely described feeling more at risk of being the centre of allegations, due to their gender. A long serving employee recalled that he could once work alone service users, but now protects himself by having other staff witness his interactions. Other males working on a lone basis echoed this concern; *'you're in the house alone working, you have chance of allegations'* (Participant 9, male, 25, support worker). When participants were asked to elaborate on this fear, all provided a similar rationale citing the risk of suspension during an investigation process. Contrastingly, female bouncers felt confident to work with any gender, without risk of allegation; *'in reality, it tends to be girls accuse male staff of being inappropriate, females working in this job seem to have less risk of those allegations.'* (Participant 3, female, 33, bouncer).

Male social care workers downplayed instances they were physically assaulted, but also described being expected to take over during incidents of patient aggression to protect female co-workers. They described feeling they were used to contain aggressive outbursts, even just serving as a "male presence" to deter behaviours. Participant 9 (male, 25, support worker) referred to males as *"the more physical gender"* and feeling *"guilty"* if he is not present if a female colleague was hurt. Similarly, one male stated that;

No-one wants to get attacked coming into work. But I'd rather it [were me], than think the females were getting hurt. If I'm dealing with one of the other Service Users, then I'm basically just a bodyguard [to] make sure that the female staff did not get attacked (Participant 13, male 36, support worker).

However, some participants expressed feeling at odds with the expectation to act as protector using their physical strength, viewing it as conflicting with their identity as a care worker; *'It was never explained as part of your role. [. . .] you're in it for the caring. Unfortunately, in this line of work, a lot, kindness and weakness are mixed up'.*

In contrast female bouncers spoke of being less likely to be targets of aggression by customers, attributing male reluctance to hit female bouncers as protection of their own sense of masculinity.

They get macho with male bouncers. But there's no clap on the back from their buddies if they hit a girl. Even in a physical fight, being a woman I think can diffuse a situation . . . they do not want to hit a girl.

In contrast, body work involving female clientele did bring violence for female bouncers: *"getting a slap off a young girl there a few weeks ago. She bit me as well, I had to get a tetanus*



---

*shot. So yeah, it can be fairly risky. . . . which is to be expected. I mean, you do not go in there expecting to just look pretty and not get involved in anything? You have to get stuck in"* (Participant 3, female bouncer, 33)

The participants spoke about incidents where they were chosen to intervene specifically because of their gender but found the intimate nature of body work was still challenging in certain situations. One female bouncer described an incident where *"a girl got up on stage and she took off her top and her bra . . . I had to take her off the stage and dress her in the middle of the hall, and you're conscious of people's cameras . . . they're snapchatting it. She did not know what she was doing . . . because the girl is unclothed, and you need to be so careful putting your hands on her"*

### *Interpersonal relationships at work*

We examined how interactions with colleagues, management, clients and the public impacted participants, we identified several factors for unrepresented genders including their sense of credibility and feeling part of the team. It was noted that even within genders, the physical aspects of the body were a factor, for example in whether or not a female was perceived by colleagues as capable to do the job, one female bouncer noted: *"I think it's because I would be a bigger girl, and I'm tall, the other security were not afraid I could not handle myself [laughs]"*.

When asked about their relationship with their colleagues, male care workers stated things like *"I fit in as a good team player"* (Participant 10, male, 41, support worker) or that they perceived themselves as *"Valuable"* to their colleagues (Participant 15). As a result of managing challenging behaviour and protecting female colleagues, some males felt this contributed to them being considered effective in their roles; *"it's probably reassuring for the female staff to know that somebody's there that has your back as well"* (Participant 16). Although describing themselves as equal contributors, some respondents felt they missed out on opportunities to engage in broader tasks compared to female team members. Participant 4 explained that because males take on more physical roles, they are often not trained in administrative tasks that female colleagues complete; *"I really want to learn [other things] but I do not want to let anyone down, so I sit beside [Service User name] all day doing nothing, so he does not get up and try hit someone."*

The female bouncers spoke about feeling the need to prove themselves physically equal to male colleagues. Participant 11 (female, 40, bouncer) stated that females in this role had to *"prove themselves all the time"* to male colleagues and management in terms of being able to physically *"handle themselves"* when breaking up a fight because *"the lads need to know that they do not have to be minding you as well"*. She further explained that this same rite of passage was not generally experienced by male colleagues to the same extent; *"For a man, they know he's going to be able to handle it, whereas for a woman . . . especially of my size, I'm only five-four"*.

Physical capital emerged as an issue for female bouncers. Many female bouncers described involvement in some form of physical training outside of work to build confidence and improve credibility in terms of strength and prowess, but it also mentioned that this was noted by the employer;

I'm playing rugby, I'm fairly tough, you need to have something like that to have some sort of confidence with your physical strength going into this job, it helps when you need to get stuck in. Employers like seeing security staff do boxing, or mixed martial arts, or weights (Participant 3, female, 33, bouncer)

Female bouncers described feeling superior to males in managing potentially aggressive situations without utilising physical strength; *"we diffuse a lot of situations more so than men because we take the approach of talking to someone before going in like a bull in a China shop"* (Participant 14, female, 30, bouncer).

Many female bouncers described male colleagues being “protective” of them during physical altercations involving men; *‘when there’s a fight after breaking out, and its males fighting, they prefer I do not get involved [. . .] they are a bit protective’* (Participant 1, female, 21). Although this was generally viewed as being benevolently motivated, several participants described this practice as something that *‘undermines your authority.’*

Female bouncers widely perceived a social stigma associated with being a woman in the occupation, remarking having their appearance and sexual orientation regularly remarked upon. One participant noted customers would subject them to questions like: *‘you must be a lesbian because you’re a female bouncer’* or *‘most female bouncers are lesbians, are not they?’* Another (female, 26, bouncer) stated she is regularly told she is *‘too good looking to be a bouncer’*, as female bouncers should be ‘stocky’ and ‘masculine.’ Another referred to being sexually harassed by male customers, with management’s solution was to suggest she make efforts to *‘look more masculine at work’*.

Unlike male social care workers, female bouncers described experiencing blatant sexism from colleagues. Participant 14 (female, 30, bouncer) stated; *‘I’ve had men refuse to work with me, “oh, I do not work with women”*. Others spoke about instances where male colleagues would ignore them if they asked for help with routine tasks, if the task was viewed as “women’s work”:

I would be standing over a spillage, men have just walked away purely because I’m female, I should clean it up. (Participant 8, female, 26, bouncer)

Views such as this indicate that for women in the security sector, bias and stereotyping continue to be barriers to career entry and progression. In an interview with one manager, he spoke of how female staff facilitate the work of male staff and how he would prefer not to “have to” hire them at all but is compelled to under regulations; *‘ideally speaking, you’d prefer have four guys on, but due to the sexist thing, you have to have a girl.’ “You’re bringing in a girl just to accommodate girls, but you’re actually compromising your numbers for the simple reason . . . a girl is just not going to be as good as a guy . . . . they want the job, but when push comes to shove, they do not want the black eyes or the swollen jaw, or the kick into the stomach but they still want the eighteen euros an hour equal pay. So, you do your share.”* (Participant 5, Male, 51, Head of Security).

## Discussion

Our findings reveal some interesting nuances in how physicality and body work affect those in non-traditional occupations. Being the underrepresented gender appeared to increase employability in both cases, directly relating to the physicality and body work aspects of the role. Female bouncers understood their gender proved an advantage in selection for work in part due to codes of best practice which state that “searches of patrons should only be conducted by searchers of the same gender as the individual” ([British Security Industry Association, 2015](#)). While male care workers were able to secure additional shifts, thus allowing them to earn more than females in the same role. In contrast, gender and more specifically physicality was found to impede perceptions of progression, effectively leaving non-traditional occupation holders feeling “stuck in” entry level or client facing roles, unable to progress. The security sector continues to be considered a masculine occupation,’ with senior positions predominantly held by men associated with greater confidence in their physical ability than female counterparts ([Monaghan, 2002](#)). The glass elevator refers to a set of invisible factors that facilitate the professional advancement of men in female-dominated jobs ([Casini, 2016](#); [Hultin, 2003](#)). For male care workers, no ‘glass elevator’ effect was perceived within the present study, indeed the opposite emerged where men described being overlooked for promotion as management sought to retain males in challenging front-line

roles. This unofficial practice described by participants aligns with a study by [McConkey et al. \(2007\)](#) who highlighted that increasing numbers of men are employed to manage clients with aggressive behaviours posing additional risks to female staff. This indicates that body work requirements in care roles have the potential to constrain progression for men given their physical presence is sought and valued by both colleagues and management. Male care workers stated that while they can be hired over female applicants even without the necessary qualifications, this was not replicated in promotions. Participants were consciously aware of this and discussed it in terms of 'inequality' pointing out that management is almost exclusively female in the sector.

Both groups described additional stressors due to their minority status. Some male care workers felt they experienced more stress and physical strain than female colleagues. They described the expectation to be stern and exude a "presence" discouraging challenging behaviours. It could be argued that what the organisation is expecting of male carers is an "assumed authority effect" referred to by [Simpson \(2004\)](#) as a heightened sense of authority endowed by virtue of male status. Simpson argues however that there are some disadvantages associated with the assumed authority effect, for example resentment at being given more difficult tasks or being expected to be more vocal and assertive. Participants contrasted their "care role" with this stern persona, indicating the potential for "role strain" ([Simpson, 2004](#)). We argue that the need to adopt a persona of heightened authority, or act in a manner which contradicts a desire to take a less dominant approach represents a form of emotional labour for underrepresented genders in body work.

The challenge of negotiating a masculine identity within a feminised care occupation, while also running a greater risk of allegations of abuse from clients has previously been explored in the literature ([McConkey et al., 2007](#)). In contrast, female bouncers felt that their gender proved an advantage, making them less of a target for aggression by male customers. This aligns with research by [Tomkins \(2005\)](#) who found the "real men do not hit women ethos" means females are generally not challenged by these customers, though instances of female client aggression were noted here. While feminine characteristics may not traditionally be associated with doorwork, they proved advantageous in this instance. Thus, female bouncers may use "gender essentialism" by embodying traditional feminine characteristics as a strategy to improve their status and "achieve parity" with males ([Pruitt, 2017](#)). Despite this, females described feeling an initial pressure to "prove" to male colleagues that they were equally capable physically and engaging in intense physical training to so. [Monaghan \(2000\)](#) argues that "bodily capital" is central to the understanding of power relations in this sector, as individuals seek to "embody" hegemonic masculine attributes such as 'competence, force and assertiveness.'

While both categories believed they had positive relationships with colleagues. Female bouncers appeared to allow male colleagues to dictate aspects of their work, such as what incidents to become involved in. Such a power differential is supported by the existing literature, with female bouncers' function being considered as facilitating male counterparts in carrying out aspects of the role ([Tomkins, 2005](#)). In care, while both genders completed mainly the same tasks, males felt that management did not afford them the same respect as females within the role, expecting them to act as "bodyguards" for female staff. They described facilitating the work of female colleagues by physically intervening in incidents and being left to manage incidents alone. There was a sense that management were disinterested in their concerns about safety relative to female counterparts. They perceived management as disregarding the impact incidents of aggression have on male staff. Male care workers painted a picture of work where their physical traits were valued, while 'subordinating' more feminine aspects of the work such as providing intimate care. Given the context, we argue this aligns with [Lupton's \(2000\)](#) findings in relation to men creating a work identity which resonates with more masculine traits while working in non-traditional

occupations, though in this case not necessarily by choice. Our findings reveal that this approach has implications for males in their endeavour to engage in a wider variety of tasks within the occupation. [Twigg et al. \(2011\)](#) found that workers themselves may obscure the extent to which body work forms part of their role, attempting to professionalise their image, emphasising the intellectual and emotional aspects of their roles instead. For male care workers, this proved more challenging as they felt their physical attributes tended to leave them being relied upon for certain tasks, particularly where the control or manipulation of bodies during instances of challenging behaviour were expected.

Our findings from female bouncers revealed the stigmatised identity they experienced within the role when interacting with the public. Research by [Johnston and Kilty \(2014\)](#) found that females who possess physical “aesthetic symbols” of hegemonic masculinity have greater success in their role than females who present as overtly feminine, especially when attempting to ensure compliance from customers. Females spoke about perceptions of occupying a lower status to males, trying to fit in by allowing males to direct their activities at work. However, while describing a lack of independence compared to male peers, most participants described the team they belonged to as “protective”, attempting to shield females from potential risk of injury. This dynamic may be understood using the lens of “benevolent sexism.” While behaviour to protect females may be well meant, it has the potential to impact perceptions of female bouncers’ ability to diffuse issues or to physically protect themselves. It also undermines the female’s ability to display the behaviours and competencies, physical or otherwise, for which they have been hired. While male colleagues may display benevolent sexism due to compassion, the practice of not allocating demanding tasks or access to challenging experiences has been shown to have negative career impacts.

Overall, our findings study points to the under theorised role of physicality and body work within the literature on non-traditional occupations. While existing theories and frameworks acknowledge gender as a contributing factor to differences in work experiences, the focus is often human and social capital differences relating to gender and on sexuality at work rather than more general acknowledgement of the body as a factor accounting for differing experiences of work. Human and social capital attributes still play a role in body work since it involves communicative as well as bodily interaction with clients, even where forming a relationship is not the aim ([Toerien and Kitzinger, 2007](#)). However, we argue gender and the body, are more pronounced for non-traditional occupations, where body work is central. Research on service sector occupations and gender representation within them, has left level body work occupations undertheorized. We argue that [Bourdieu’s \(1978\)](#) conception of the body as a form of physical capital has been overlooked in the development and understanding of work in contemporary organisations that do not fit with the more widely studied middle-class occupations and sectors. As [Shilling \(2004\)](#) asserts [Bourdieu’s \(1978\)](#) work illustrated the significance of the body to the acquisition of other resources, including the accumulation of other forms of capital. This conception of physical capital enables an appreciation of how physical attributes are implicated in the acquisition of resources. We argue that the manner in which value is extracted in the body work roles examined here remains highly related to physical attributes, and that this can be amplified for the non-traditional role holder. Physical capital can become a valuable asset and may be recognised as such within these contexts, where possessed by a limited cohort of workers. Thus, we argue the salience of physical capital is heightened in non-traditional occupations.

[Warhurst et al. \(2017\)](#) argue that in contemporary service organisations, aesthetic labour guides managers’ decision in hiring and training its workforce. In our study, this was contrasted with a perception that selection into the roles was less focused on normative expectations of aesthetic but ceded greater dominance to physical capital. In the context of care and security, we find that the preferences of clients/customers have a role in dictating the organisation of labour, in some cases, creating a form of consumer driven tokenism within

occupations which may not otherwise have been receptive or open to the underrepresented gender. Across both sectors studied, workers physical capital is a useful explanatory mechanism for segregation and unequal outcomes in how they perceive their experiences of work. Our work contributes to the existing literature around the positives that males experience in non-traditional roles but also found that physical attributes bring negatives such as limiting progression, effectively leaving them stuck in client facing roles. We find that physicality also has negatives for female bouncers, as they seem unable to overcome perceived physical limitations despite their efforts and being valued for other skills. Like any role the level of skill required in the labour process in body work is not static, but changes with technological developments or changes in the discipline (Wolkowitz *et al.*, 2013). Our findings suggest that management in both sectors need to look more closely at the breadth of skills possessed by non-traditional occupation holders. More research too is needed on career management for underrepresented genders in body work roles.

Several theoretical questions remain. If physical capital is recognised as altering the subjective and objective experience of work for non-traditional occupation holders, this poses a number of challenges for organising work and valuing the contribution of both genders. Body work poses a challenge to the commodification of labour since commodification involves standardisation. Standardisation of bodies worked upon and indeed the workers bodies is not as readily achievable as standardisation in other forms of service work. Coupled with this, non-traditional occupation holders may be viewed as further exacerbating problems in the standardisation of the service offered and the labour processes surrounding that. Unpredictability is an inherent aspect of body work, this coupled with requirements in worker body ratios means that labour process re-organisation can be problematic (Cohen, 2011). This may serve to disadvantage the underrepresented worker as requirements to be available for frontline are given precedence. More comparative research on the body work in non-traditional occupations is needed to consider the conditions under which the physical capital of each gender is valued equally.

A limitation of this research is that it lacks contrasting viewpoints, as interviewees were members of the underrepresented gender only, thus we lack the majority genders viewpoint. Future research could include members of the majority gender also to compare both perceptions of the dynamics at play. The case studies, though in-depth were restricted and so results may not be generalisable, though the study prompts avenues for further research. Furthermore, it is possible that national culture may have influenced attitudes and experiences of participants, and so it would be interesting to compare experiences in other countries.

## Conclusion

Pruitt (2017) has argued that increased efforts should be made to recruit numerical-minority genders into occupations that are highly segregated, as increasing their presence alone contributes to “undoing” gender by “challenging the underlying norms” segregating jobs. This paper has examined this challenge in non-traditional occupations, where physicality and body work form a significant part of the role. Our findings suggest that gender, physicality and bodywork have a triadic relationship, which is experienced differently in non-traditional occupations. While many interventions put forward to address gender inequalities in the workplace are aimed at creating psychological or cognitive changes in work design, to address issues in these sectors, changes must take into account how these more physical related issues can be overcome. We find that both categories experienced additional challenges and stress within their roles due to expectations relating to their physicality. While employers recognise the need to employ both genders, employees themselves perceived that factor relating to their physicality affected their experience of work and curtailed opportunities for development in their roles. Kukkonen (2021) argues that

Bourdieu's conceptualisation of the body and its appearance (using the metaphor of capital), has been adopted by scholars to make sense of appearance-related social inequalities. Bourdieu's macro level view of the corporeal as a form of currency that contributes to inequality is reflected in this research at the organisational level for non-traditional occupation holders. The existing literature illustrates the overt role of body capital and aesthetic labour in many roles in the service sector, where the body is commodified and the management and maintenance of this is recognised (Shilling, 2003). However, our research in body work roles suggests that physical capital can be latent rather than overt, drawn upon as required but not necessarily described as a differentiating factor in acquiring or progressing in employment. Physical capital while drawn up, is perhaps not openly valued by organisations, concomitantly the possession of physical capital has the capacity to reinforce the minority status of the worker in non-traditional occupations.

## References

- Anker, R. (1998), *Gender and Jobs: Sex Segregation of Occupations in the World*, International Labour Organization, Geneva.
- Bolton, S. (2005), "Women's work, dirty work: the gynaecology nurse as other", *Gender Work and Organization*, Vol. 12 No. 2, pp. 169-186.
- Boniol, M., McIsaac, M., Xu, L., Wuliji, T., Diallo, K. and Campbell, J. (2019), "Gender equity in the health workforce: analysis of 104 countries", Working paper 1, World Health Organization; 2019 (WHO/HIS/HWF/Gender/WP1/2019.1), Geneva.
- Bourdieu, P. (1978), "Sport and social class", *Social Science Information*, Vol. 17, pp. 819-840.
- Brinkley, I., Jones, K. and Lee, N. (2013), *The Gender Jobs Split: How Young Men and Women Experience the Labour Market*, Trades Union Congress, London.
- British Security Industry Association (2015), "Code of practice on searches", available at: <https://www.bsia.co.uk/zappfiles/bsia-front/pdfs/231-security-searches-cop.pdf> (accessed 16 August 2022).
- Brook, P. (2009), "In critical defence of 'emotional labour' refuting Bolton's critique of Hochschild's concept", *Work, Employment and Society*, Vol. 23 No. 3, pp. 531-548.
- Casini, A. (2016), "Glass ceiling and glass elevator", in *The Wiley Blackwell Encyclopedia of Gender and Sexuality Studies*, pp. 1-2.
- Christie, A. (1998), "Is social work a 'non-traditional' occupation for men?", *British Journal Of Social Work*, Vol. 28 No. 4, pp. 491-510.
- Cohen, R.L. (2011), "Time, space and touch at work: body work and labour process (re) organisation", *Sociology of Health and Illness*, Vol. 33 No. 2, pp. 189-205.
- Cohen, R.L. (2019), "Types of work and labour", in *Handbook of the Politics of Labour, Work and employment*, Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Cohen, R.L. and Wolkowitz, C. (2018), "The feminization of body work", *Gender, Work and Organization*, Vol. 25 No. 1, pp. 42-62.
- Cramm, J.M., Strating, M.M. and Nieboer, A.P. (2013), "The influence of organizational characteristics on employee solidarity in the long-term care sector", *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, Vol. 69 No. 3, pp. 526-534.
- Doyle, K., O'Brien, J. and Maguire, N. (2017), "Precarity in the night-time economy", *Irish Journal of Anthropology*, Vol. 20 No. 2, pp. 39-54.
- Easterby-Smith, M., Thorpe, R., Jackson, P. and Jasperson, L. (2018), *Management Research*, 6th ed., SAGE, Los Angeles.
- Gaggiotti, H., Kostera, M. and Krzyworzeka, P. (2016), "More than a method? Organisational ethnography as a way of imagining the social", *Culture and Organization*, Vol. 23 No. 5, pp. 325-340, doi: [10.1080/14759551.2016.1203312](https://doi.org/10.1080/14759551.2016.1203312).



- 
- Goos, M., Manning, A. and Salomons, A. (2009), "Job polarization in Europe", *American Economic Review*, Vol. 99 No. 2, pp. 58-63.
- Halford, S., Witz, A. and Savage, M. (1997), *Gender, Careers and Organisations*, Macmillan, Basingstoke.
- Hastings, R., Gillespie, D., Flynn, S. and Kukkonen, I. (2021), "Physical appearance as a form of capital: key problems and tensions", in *Appearance as Capital*, Emerald Publishing Limited.
- Hobbs, D., O'Brien, K. and Westmarland, L. (2007), "Connecting the gendered door: women, violence and doorwork", *The British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 58 No. 1, pp. 21-38.
- Hochschild, A.R. (1983), *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*, University of California Press, Berkeley, CA.
- Hultin, M. (2003), "Some take the glass escalator, some hit the glass ceiling? Career consequences of occupational sex segregation", *Work and Occupations*, Vol. 30 No. 1, pp. 30-61.
- Hussein, S., Ismail, M. and Manthorpe, J. (2016), "Male workers in the female-dominated long-term care sector: evidence from England", *Journal of Gender Studies*, Vol. 25 No. 1, pp. 35-49.
- Johnston, M. and Kilty, J. (2014), "You gotta kick ass a little harder than that: the subordination of feminine, masculine, and queer identities by private security in a hospital setting", *Men and Masculinities*, Vol. 18 No. 1, pp. 55-78.
- Korczynski, M. (2013), "Touching moments: an analysis of the skilful search for dignity within body work interactions", *Body/Sex/Work: Intimate, Embodied and Sexualised Labour*, Palgrave, London, pp. 28-43.
- Kukkonen, I. (2021), "Physical appearance as a form of capital: key problems and tensions", in *Appearance as Capital*, Emerald Publishing.
- Lupton, B. (2000), "Maintaining masculinity: men who do 'women's work'", *British Journal of Management*, Vol. 11 S1, pp. 33-48.
- Lupton, B. (2006), "Explaining men's entry into female-concentrated occupations: issues of masculinity and social class", *Gender, Work and Organization*, Vol. 13 No. 2, pp. 103-128.
- Marx, K. and Engels, F. (1970), in Arthur, C.J. (Ed.), *The German Ideology*, New York: International.
- McConkey, R., McAuley, P., Simpson, L. and Collins, S. (2007), "The male workforce in intellectual disability services", *Journal of Policy And Practice In Intellectual Disabilities*, Vol. 4 No. 3, pp. 186-193.
- Meagher, G., Szebehely, M. and Mears, J. (2016), "How institutions matter for job characteristics, quality and experiences: a comparison of home care work for older people in Australia and Sweden", *Work, Employment and Society*, Vol. 30 No. 5, pp. 731-749.
- Monaghan, L. (2000), "Hard men, shop boys and others: embodying competence in a masculinist occupation", *The Sociological Review*, Vol. 50 No. 3, pp. 334-355.
- Monaghan, L. (2002), "Embodying gender, work and organization: solidarity, cool loyalties and contested hierarchy in a masculinist occupation", *Gender, Work And Organization*, Vol. 9 No. 5, pp. 504-536.
- Murphy, C. and O'Sullivan, M. (2021), "Running to stand still? Two decades of trade union activity in the Irish long-term care sector", *Transfer: European Review of Labour and Research*, Vol. 27 No. 3, pp. 383-397.
- Powell, A. and Sang, K. (2015), "Everyday experiences of sexism in male-dominated professions: a Bourdieusian perspective", *Sociology*, Vol. 49 No. 5, pp. 919-936, doi: [10.1177/0038038515573475](https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038515573475).
- Pruitt, A. (2017), "Redoing gender: how women in the funeral industry use essentialism for equality", *Gender, Work and Organization*, Vol. 25 No. 2, pp. 144-158.
- Schwiter, K., Berndt, C. and Truong, J. (2018), "Neoliberal austerity and the marketisation of elderly care", *Social and Cultural Geography*, Vol. 19 No. 3, pp. 379-399.
- Shilling, C. (1991), "Educating the body: physical capital and the production of social inequalities", *Sociology*, Vol. 25 No. 4, pp. 653-672.
- Shilling, C. (2003), *The Body and Social Theory*, 2nd ed., Sage, London.
- Shilling, C. (2004), "Physical capital and situated action: a new direction for corporeal sociology", *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, Vol. 25 No. 4, pp. 473-487.



- Simpson, R. (2004), "Masculinity at work: the experiences of men in female dominated occupations", *Work, Employment and Society*, Vol. 18 No. 2, pp. 349-368.
- Simpson, R. (2005), "Men in non-traditional occupations: career entry, career orientation and experience of role strain", *Gender, Work and Organization*, Vol. 12 No. 4, pp. 363-380.
- Simpson, R., Slutskaya, N., Lewis, P. and Hopfl, H. (Eds) (2012), in, *Dirty Work: Concepts and Identities*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke.
- Spasova, S., Baeten, R. and Vanhercke, B. (2018), "Challenges in long-term care in Europe", *Eurohealth*, Vol. 24 No. 4, pp. 7-12.
- Toerien, M. and Kitzinger, C. (2007), "Emotional labour in action: navigating multiple involvements in the beauty salon", *Sociology*, Vol. 41 No. 4, pp. 645-662.
- Tomkins, K. (2005), "Bouncers and occupational masculinity", *Current Issues in Criminal Justice*, Vol. 17 No. 1, pp. 154-161, doi: [10.1080/10345329.2005.12036344](https://doi.org/10.1080/10345329.2005.12036344).
- Tutenges, S., Sogaard, T., Krøll, L., Bloomfield, K. and Hesse, M. (2015), "Violent work environments", *International Journal Of Workplace Health Management*, Vol. 8 No. 2, pp. 129-141.
- Twigg, J., Wolkowitz, C., Cohen, R.L. and Nettleton, S. (2011), "Conceptualising body work in health and social care", *Sociology of Health and Illness*, Vol. 33 No. 2, pp. 171-188.
- Warhurst, C., Tilly, C. and Gatta, M. (2017), "A new social construction of skill", *The Oxford Handbook of Skills and Training*, pp. 72-91.
- Westmarland, L. (2017), "Putting their bodies on the line: police culture and gendered physicality", *Policing: A Journal Of Policy And Practice*, Vol. 11 No. 3, pp. 301-317.
- Whittock, M. (2018), *Feminising the Masculine?: Women in Non-traditional Employment*, Routledge.
- Whittock, M. and Leonard, L. (2003), "Stepping outside the stereotype. A pilot study of the motivations and experiences of males in the nursing profession", *Journal Of Nursing Management*, Vol. 11 No. 4, pp. 242-249.
- Williams, C. (1993), *Doing Women's Work: Men in Non-Traditional Occupations*, Sage, London.
- Wilson, N., Stancliffe, R., Parmenter, T. and Shuttleworth, R. (2011), "Gendered service delivery: a masculine and feminine perspective on staff gender", *Intellectual And Developmental Disabilities*, Vol. 49 No. 5, pp. 341-351.
- Wolkowitz, C. (2002), "The social relations of body work", *Work, Employment and Society*, Vol. 16 No. 3, pp. 497-510.
- Wolkowitz, C. (2006), *Bodies at Work*, Sage, London.
- Wolkowitz, C., Cohen, R.L. and Sanders, T. (2013), *Body/Sex/Work: Intimate, Embodied and Sexualised Labour*, Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Woodfield, R. (2016), "Gender and the achievement of skilled status in the workplace: the case of women leaders in the UK Fire and Rescue Service", *Work, Employment and Society*, Vol. 30 No. 2, pp. 237-255.
- Wright, T. (2013), "Uncovering sexuality and gender: an intersectional examination of women's experience in UK construction", *Construction Management and Economics*, Vol. 31 No. 8, pp. 832-844.

**Corresponding author**

Caroline Murphy can be contacted at: [caroline.murphy@ul.ie](mailto:caroline.murphy@ul.ie)