

# TRANSFORMATIVE SPACE DESIGN FOR SEX WORKERS' COMMUNITY: A CASE STUDY AT LORONG HAJI TAIB 1 AND 2, CHOW KIT, KUALA LUMPUR

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## ABSTRACT

*Sex workers and their marginalised communities are often subjected to spatial marginalisation and stigmatisation. Confined to specific locales due to the nature of their activities, involuntary participants of this community who were forced or coerced into sex work through sex trafficking syndicates are essentially trapped. Stigma and social exclusion attached to sex work can further marginalise the sex workers' community, making it difficult for them to access essential services and support. Although there are many efforts and assistance programmes designed to help this marginalised community, it is essential to comprehend the specific spatial and typology of spaces that can best meet the complex needs and aspirations of sex workers and the community. The research aims to explore the potential role of transformative spaces and the impact of spatial design integration on the psychological needs of sex workers in Lorong Haji Taib 1 and 2, Chow Kit, Kuala Lumpur, with a focus on improving their well-being by promoting community empowerment and improved social cohesion. Analysis of data collected from literature review, case study, and unstructured interviews show the intricate interplay between the physical environment and the psychological well-being of sex workers. The findings unveil the*



*nuanced complexities of creating spaces that address immediate needs while empowering and uplifting marginalised communities. Design recommendations for transformative spaces that could support and improve the lives of sex workers were modelled from the needs, behaviour, and daily routine of the sex workers' community in Lorong Haji Taib 1 and 2.*

**Keywords:** *Sex workers, Sex workers community, Psychological needs, Spatial design, Transformative space design*

## INTRODUCTION

Sex work is a form of labour that involves the exchange of sexual services for money or goods. Malaysia is a popular destination for visitors as well as sex trafficking syndicates (Hussin et al., 2020). Women and children from impoverished countries are often lured and pushed into sex work due to poverty, lack of job opportunities, and economic disparities (Weitzer, 2007). Additionally, social factors such as gender inequality and marginalisation can lead individuals to engage in sex work as a means of survival.

Sex work is stigmatised and considered taboo in Malaysia because of religious beliefs, cultural values, and societal expectations surrounding sexuality and morality. This has significantly influenced how society perceives and treats sex workers. Sex workers and marginalised communities are often isolated to specific areas due to the nature of their work, resulting in negative stereotypes, social exclusion, and invisibility within urban areas (Haslanger, 2012). The failure to recognise their rights and well-being in urban planning worsens their vulnerability to exploitation and marginalisation. Stigmatisation and abuse have lasting effects, including mental illness, disease, and human rights violations (Wilson, 2014).

Additionally, sex workers face high health and safety risks due to a lack of legal protection and social stigma. They have a high prevalence of HIV (Goldenberg et al., 2021) and are more vulnerable to violence and abuse. Gender inequality and social exclusion make it difficult for them to access essential services and support (Benoit & Unsworth, 2022), leaving them more susceptible to exploitation.

Sex work has been present in various societies throughout history, with its acceptance and regulation varying over time. Although often called the "world's oldest profession," it's important to recognise this as a simplification as the phrase is used to emphasise the prevalence of sex work throughout history (Mattson, 2015). The term "sex work" has emerged to advocate for the rights and well-being of individuals in the industry, emphasising their agency and access to healthcare and support resources (Antwi et al., 2023). Approaching the topic with sensitivity and respect is crucial, as is advocating for policies that prioritise the safety, health, and human rights of those engaged in sex work (Goldenberg et al., 2021).

This research aims to investigate how design integration can impact the well-being and agency of sex workers. Using the red-light district area in Chow Kit as a case study, the study will concentrate on examining the experiences, obstacles, and traumas encountered by sex workers at Lorong Haji Taib 1 and 2. By gaining insights into these challenges, the study aims to pinpoint the psychological support required to enhance their well-being. This data will be utilised to recommend guidelines for establishing supportive environments in the form of transformative spaces that can foster positive interactions, relationships, and collaborations between sex workers and the local community. The study intends to explore deeper the distinct qualities and traits that might bring about significant and long-lasting transformation by examining the spatial configuration and typology of spaces.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Historical Context of Sex Work and Marginalisation**

Sex work has long been stigmatised, leading to discrimination and marginalisation of sex workers. Criminalisation exacerbates these issues, hindering their access to rights and support services (Weitzer, 2010). Economic hardships drive individuals to enter sex work, perpetuating vulnerability and exploitation due to low pay and exploitative conditions (Kempadoo, 2004; Sanders, 2018). In many places, sex work is either criminalised or heavily regulated, leading to marginalisation, violence, and limited access to support services (Abel et al., 2010). Sex workers

also experience discrimination based on gender identity, race, class, nationality, and other social factors. Understanding the historical context of sex work is crucial for recognising systemic factors contributing to sex workers' vulnerabilities and advocating for policy reforms and social change (Bhattacharjya, 2021).

The stigma surrounding sex work has a significant impact on the mental health and well-being of sex workers (Scambler, 2018). This stigma leads to feelings of shame, diminished self-worth, and social isolation (Lazarus et al., 2012; Earnshaw et al., 2020). It also creates barriers to accessing mental health services due to fear of judgment and discrimination (Liao et al., 2023). Efforts to address this stigma and provide inclusive mental health services are crucial for improving the well-being of sex workers (Amin, 2015). Sex workers often experience trauma, including physical violence, sexual assault, and coercion (Deering et al., 2014), leading to PTSD symptoms (Platt et al., 2018). They also face verbal and emotional harassment and societal stigma (Scambler, 2018). Understanding these traumas is crucial for developing targeted interventions to support their mental health needs. Understanding the role of social support is vital for sex workers' mental health. Peer and community support play a significant role in combating challenges such as stigma and isolation (Lazarus et al., 2012; Amin, 2015; Earnshaw et al., 2020). Recognising these aspects is crucial for developing interventions that promote resilience and empowerment within the sex work community.

## **The Role of Place**

The concept of place plays a crucial role in shaping the experiences of marginalised communities, like sex workers, within urban environments (Proshansky et al., 1983). It influences social interactions, networks, and community formation (Hetherington, 1998). Additionally, the spatial arrangement can affect the agency and choices of these communities (Pitcher et al., 2006; Degen et al., 2008). Certain places may be stigmatised, but they also have the potential for transformation and the promotion of positive interactions (Pilcher, 2019; Hubbard et al., 2023). Inclusive urban planning and design strategies are essential for creating spaces that accommodate diverse needs and foster a sense of belonging for marginalised communities, ultimately promoting social equity (Marcuse, 1997; Madanipour, 2003).

## Theoretical Frameworks Related to Transformative Space

Transformative spaces for sex workers empower individuals, provide resources for well-being and personal development, and aim to create supportive environments (Batliwala & Friedman, 2014). They play a crucial role in promoting sex workers' overall well-being and fostering social, economic, and political transformations (Sanders, 2018). Understanding their theoretical foundations and outcomes is essential for developing effective interventions and policies to support sex workers' rights and promote social justice. Figure 1 summarises three theoretical frameworks, which are Feminist Theory (Freeman, 2019), Spatial Theory (Malec, 2018), and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory (Trivedi & Mehta, 2019), that form the basis for examining transformative spaces in the study.

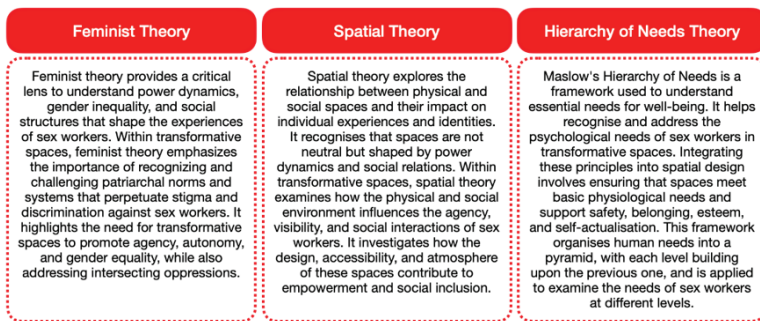


Figure 1. Summary of Theoretical Frameworks related to Transformative Spaces

## The Role of Transformative Spaces

### Promoting Agency and Empowerment

Transformative spaces are crucial in empowering sex workers. They provide support and opportunities for self-determination and challenge systemic marginalisation. These spaces offer platforms for sharing experiences, advocating for rights, and building knowledge and skills. They also tailor support services to specific needs, fostering community and solidarity. Overall, these spaces empower sex workers to make informed choices, challenge oppressive systems, and improve their well-being and social inclusion (Sanders, 2018).

## **Social Inclusion and Community Building**

Social inclusion and community building are vital for empowering sex workers. These spaces create supportive environments for sex workers to connect, challenge social exclusion, and promote well-being. By involving members of the sex workers community in decision-making and offering mutual support, these spaces help combat social isolation, stigma, and discrimination, fostering resilient communities (Shannon & Csete, 2010; Deering et al., 2014; Amin, 2015).

## **Health and Well-being**

Transformative spaces for sex workers are crucial for promoting their health and well-being. They offer tailored health services, harm reduction programs, and mental health support. These spaces empower the sex workers' community to make informed decisions and contribute to positive health outcomes for individuals and communities in the sex work industry (Scorgie et al., 2012; Vuylsteke, 2012; Rekart et al., 2017).

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study utilises qualitative methodological triangulation, including literature analysis, case studies, and unstructured interviews. This approach will enable a comparative analysis of the issue's theoretical and practical aspects. However, it should be noted that the research may be limited by the availability and willingness of the sex workers' community and marginalised individuals to participate, potentially leading to a skewed representation of experiences and perspectives.

### **Literature Analysis**

The first stage of the study was the literature analysis. This stage involves a systematic examination of various forms of literature, scholarly works, and documentaries that discuss the psychological aspects of individuals engaged in sex work and the influence of the built environment on their well-being. By identifying recurring themes, challenges, and proposed solutions within the academic discourse, this analysis will assist in informing the study about established knowledge and gaps in understanding the psychological needs of sex workers. The insights from the literature analysis will be synthesised to develop a conceptual framework that guides

the exploration of psychological needs in transformative spaces. This framework will serve as a scaffolding for the subsequent qualitative data collection, allowing for a focused and informed investigation into the lived experiences of sex workers in Lorong Haji Taib 1 and 2.

## **Case Study**

Based on the parameters established through the literature analysis, a case study through observation was conducted to determine the spatial dynamics influencing the well-being of sex workers within the area of Lorong Haji Taib 1 and 2 in Chow Kit. A comprehensive observation checklist outlining the key elements and factors believed to influence the psychological needs of sex workers was used. The four parameters observed are spatial layout, safety features, accessibility, and presence of amenities.

The observational methods include identifying physical spaces and critically analysing how these spaces influence the psychological well-being of sex workers in the area. The observed data will also be analysed against established theories, including Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and environmental psychology principles, to draw connections between the observed spatial dynamics and the psychological experiences of sex workers.

## **Unstructured Interview**

The interview adopts a trauma-informed approach, acknowledging the potential impact of trauma on individuals' lives. Questions were designed to allow participants to recount their experiences in an empowering way without re-traumatisation. With the help of a non-governmental organisation (NGO) active in the area, Feeding the Needy (FTN), emphasis will be placed on understanding coping mechanisms, resilience, and how transformative spaces may serve as both sources of support and potential triggers for trauma (Alessi & Kahn, 2023).

Participants will be encouraged to discuss how the design and features of transformative spaces contribute to or mitigate trauma experiences. This exploration includes examining the role of spatial elements, such as safety measures, privacy considerations, and community support structures, in shaping the psychological well-being of sex workers who have experienced

trauma.

Participant Selection

Due to the sensitive nature of the study’s context, the number of participants is limited to only three. The three participants were assumed to represent the sex workers’ community at Lorong Haji Taib 1 and 2 in Chow Kit. Diversity is maintained across age, gender identity, and duration of engagement in sex work, ensuring a comprehensive representation of the community’s varied perspectives. Each participant contributes a unique lens to the exploration of transformative spaces. The parameters of the interview questions were based on the findings from the literature analysis. Each participant was asked questions reflecting on one of the three elements in Table 1.

Table 1. The Parameters of Questions used during the Unstructured Interviews

| Participant | Parameter of questions              | Description                                                                                                                                                        |
|-------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| A           | Navigating Safety Dynamics          | Examines the participant's reflections on safety within transformative spaces, shedding light on the impact of design elements on perceptions of security.         |
| B           | Daily Routines and Support Services | Explores the participant's daily experiences and routines within transformative spaces, unravelling the subtle ways in which spatial design shapes daily life.     |
| C           | Reflections on Empowerment          | Explores the participant's journey within transformative spaces, focusing on moments of empowerment and the role of spatial design in fostering a sense of agency. |

Source: Author, 2025

RESULTS

Literature Analysis

Transformative spaces are designed to have a positive impact on the psychological needs of sex workers by creating safe, secure, empowering,



and supportive environments. This requires careful consideration of the physical environmental factors that influence these needs. Physical environmental factors are the elements within a specific setting that affect spatial behaviours. According to Zeisel (2006), these factors can be categorised into three main groups: Space quality, parameters, and design elements.

## Space Quality

Safety, support, and empowerment are essential elements of high-quality space for individuals and communities alike. When these elements are present, people feel more secure, connected, and capable of achieving their goals (Grittner & Sitter, 2020). Table 2 describes the characteristics of the three space qualities for creating transformative spaces and how their presence can foster the psychological needs of sex workers and their communities.

**Table 2. Characteristics of Space Quality for Transformative Spaces**

| Space Quality | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Safety        | <p><b>Physical safety:</b> Includes freedom from violence, crime, and accidents. Safe spaces are designed to be well-lit, well-maintained, and accessible to emergency services.</p> <p><b>Emotional Safety:</b> Involves feeling protected from discrimination, harassment, and intimidation. Safe spaces are inclusive and welcoming to people of all backgrounds and identities.</p>                                                                                                                              |
| Support       | <p><b>Social support:</b> This refers to having access to networks of friends, family, and other individuals who provide emotional and practical assistance. Supportive spaces offer opportunities for people to connect and build relationships.</p> <p><b>Institutional support:</b> This includes access to services and resources that meet people's basic needs, such as food, shelter, healthcare, and education. Supportive spaces advocate for policies and programs that promote well-being and equity.</p> |
| Empowerment   | <p><b>Personal empowerment:</b> This involves developing the skills, knowledge, and confidence to make decisions about one's life. Empowering spaces provide opportunities for learning, growth, and leadership.</p> <p><b>Collective empowerment:</b> This refers to working together to create positive change in communities and societies. Empowering spaces foster collaboration, activism, and civic engagement.</p>                                                                                           |

Parameters

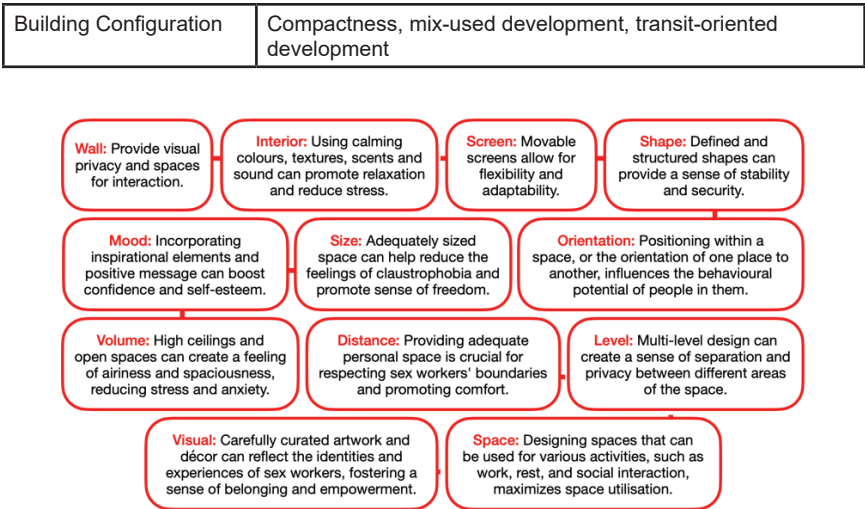
Key parameters for designing transformative spaces that address the psychological needs of sex workers include shelter, greenery, layout configuration, barriers, building design, spatial integration, open area, inside-out connection, functional space, and building configuration. By implementing these parameters thoughtfully, transformative spaces can be created that promote sex workers' community well-being, safety, and empowerment (Grittner & Sitter, 2020). Table 3 shows the simplified description of each design parameter.

Design Elements

By considering design elements such as walls, interiors, screens, and ambience, it is possible to create spaces that promote the well-being, safety, and empowerment of sex workers. Carefully implementing calming colours, natural light, and privacy-enhancing features can contribute to creating safe and empowering spaces. Furthermore, the space's size, shape, volume, distance, and orientation can further contribute to a welcoming environment. Additionally, integrating artwork, positive messaging, and providing accessible spaces with storage can promote well-being and inclusivity (Grittner & Sitter, 2020; Nasrul et al., 2023). Figure 2 describes the 12 elements that can be implemented into the design of transformative spaces.

Table 3. Design Parameters for Designing Transformative

| Parameters           | Description                                                                     |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Shelter              | Physical protection, safety and security, privacy                               |
| Greeneries           | Stress reduction, enhanced aesthetics                                           |
| Layout Configuration | Accessibility, flow, and connectivity, multifunctional                          |
| Barriers             | Safety, privacy                                                                 |
| Building Design      | Natural light, aesthetics                                                       |
| Spatial Integration  | Connecting indoor and outdoor spaces blurs boundaries, maximizes natural light. |
| Open Area            | Flexibility, large gatherings, a sense of freedom                               |
| Inside Out           | Brings the outdoors in, connects to the surrounding environment                 |
| Functional Space     | Meet the needs, adaptability, and multifunctional space.                        |



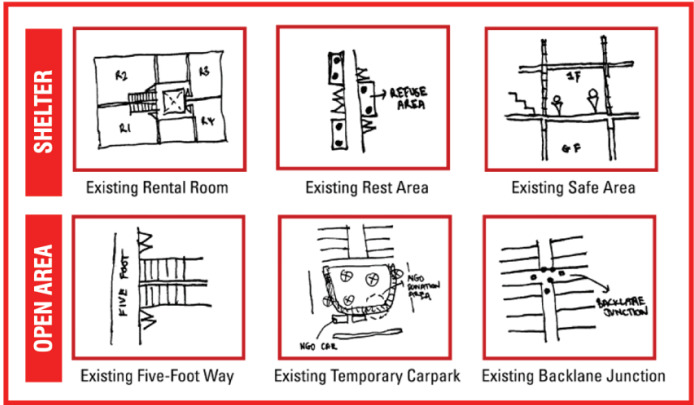
**Figure 2. Design Elements for Transformative Spaces**

Source: Author, 2025

### Case Study

The case studies at Lorong Haji Taib 1 and 2 present a detailed examination of the existing spaces and their impact on the site's safety, support, and empowerment. The studies analyse the spatial dynamics, community engagement, and the effect on the mental well-being of sex workers, providing valuable insights. The findings reveal the intricate challenges of creating spaces that meet immediate needs and empower marginalised communities. This case study looks at how these spaces function in practice. The insights gained form the basis for understanding the practical implications and difficulties of establishing transformative spaces.

Figure 3 showcases the existing territory at Lorong Haji Taib 1 and 2, highlighting several key space quality parameters and their impact on the sex workers' community. The assessment identified safety, support, and empowerment as the primary parameters influencing the spatial experience in this area. Safety is observed in locations such as staircases, refuse areas, bedrooms, and communal spaces on the first floor, where these spaces provide a refuge for sex workers against discrimination, harassment, and intimidation. These areas offer a semblance of shelter and protection, fostering a sense of security within a hostile environment.



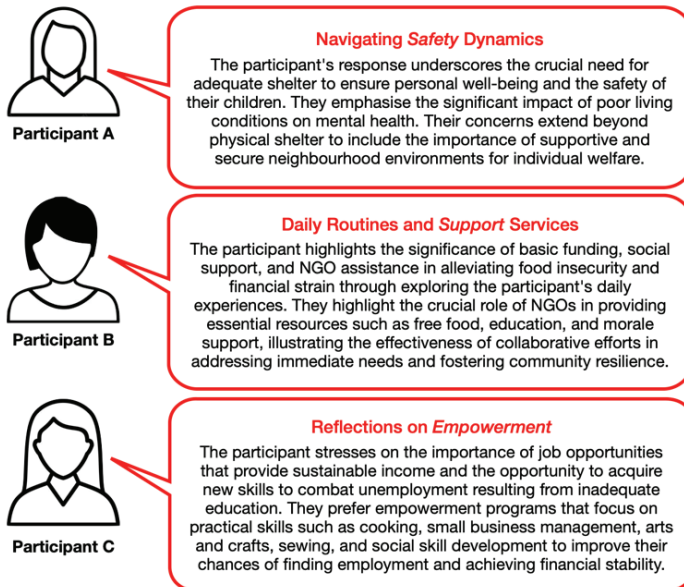
**Figure 3. Existing Territories and Spaces for Safety and Support at Lorong Haji Taib 1 and 2**

Source: Author, 2025

Support mechanisms are found in open areas like temporary parking spots and roadside spaces, which are repurposed by NGOs to deliver essential services such as food and healthcare. However, a notable deficiency in properly designated social support spaces indicates a gap in sustained and organised assistance for the community. Empowerment opportunities are minimal, with the roadside areas occasionally serving as venues for sharing and educational activities facilitated by NGOs. Despite these efforts, there is a lack of structured avenues for job improvement or personal development, resulting in a community that remains vulnerable and easily demotivated by its surroundings. NGOs act as temporary rescuers rather than providing long-term solutions, highlighting the necessity for more comprehensive and empowering functional spaces to facilitate positive community changes and growth. Overall, while some efforts are being made to support the sex workers at Lorong Haji Taib 1 and 2, the current spatial configuration and available resources fall short of providing a transformative environment that can significantly uplift and empower the individuals within this marginalised community.

**Unstructured Interview**

Figure 4 provides the findings for each parameter of question from the interview sessions with the three participants representing the sex workers’ community in Lorong Haji Taib 1 and 2 in Chow Kit.



**Figure 4. Summary of Findings from the Unstructured Interviews**

Source: Author, 2025

The participant highlights the need for adequate shelter to ensure both personal and family safety, noting the negative impact of poor living conditions on mental health. They stress the importance of living in supportive and secure neighbourhoods for overall well-being. Daily routines are shaped by basic funding, social support, and NGO assistance, with NGOs playing a vital role in providing food, education, and emotional support. The participant also emphasises the need for job opportunities and empowerment programs focused on practical skills like cooking, business management, and arts to improve employment prospects and financial stability.

## DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The concept of transformative spaces for sex workers and communities is founded on understanding the distinct needs, challenges, and aspirations unique to these groups. The goal is to create supportive environments that foster agency, empowerment, and social inclusion. These spaces are designed through a holistic, participatory, and inclusive approach to

address systemic barriers and advocate for social, legal, and policy changes surrounding sex work. Figure 5 pinpoints the aspects that could contribute to understanding the conceptual framework of transformative spaces.



**Figure 5. Contributing Aspects to Understanding the Conceptual Framework of Transformative Spaces**

Source: Author, 2025

Based on the conceptual framework of transformative spaces and the needs of sex workers and their community in Lorong Haji Taib 1 and 2, the design recommendations in Tables 4, 5, and 6 aim to create environments that address the immediate physical and safety needs of sex workers while also supporting their psychological and self-actualisation needs. Integrating Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs into the design of spaces for sex workers in Lorong Haji Taib 1 and 2 involves recognising and addressing their fundamental needs for safety, support, and empowerment.

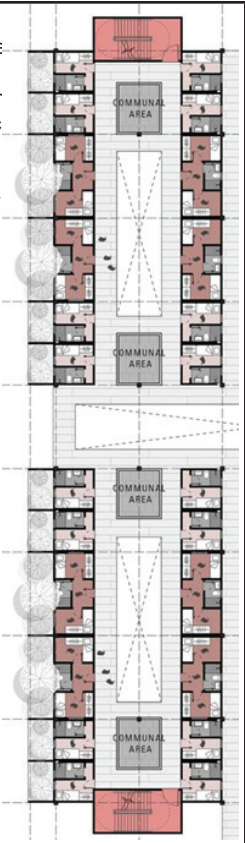
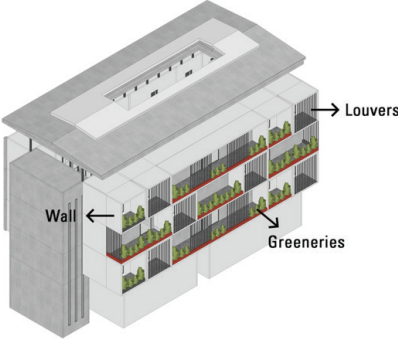
**Table 4. Design Recommendation and Integration of Transformative Space for Safety**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Existing Space</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Lack suitable, dedicated spaces for basic needs like sleep and rest; absence of natural spaces highlights the absence of natural barriers and their potential well-being benefits; missing social spaces and their potential value for community interaction. |
| <b>Design Recommendation</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

The optimal use of barriers is needed as they provide a sense of security and inclusivity in-between the space especially at private zones area. The use of walls, louvres or greeneries can provide different levels of visual connectivity and visibility. The application of these design elements was found to encourage extended soc interaction among sex workers within these spaces.

**Description:** Sense of security and privacy to create a space for women to socialize and interact. Proper place to sleep, rest and socialize with one another.

**Application of Barriers:** Walls louvres greeneries



**Table 5. Design recommendation and integration of Transformative Space for Support**

**Existing Space**

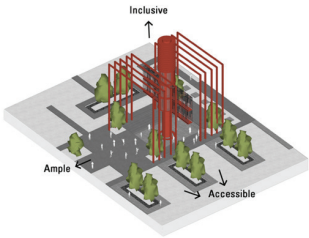
Due to limited proper social support spaces, some essential services for sex workers, including basic needs provision, are currently happening in a roadside area. In the absence of a dedicated haven, sex workers rely on a temporary parking area for basic needs support provided by an NGO. Roadside supplies offer a glimpse into the limited options available.

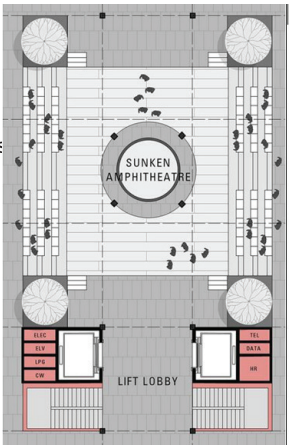
**Design Recommendation**

Orientation of a setting is critical in providing a community engagement space for sex workers with NGOs and community within an outdoor environment. The size of a setting can affects the visual perception of a space and create an inclusive environment. Ample spaces provide sex workers within an outdoor environment that encourages extended social interaction with NGOs and community within these spaces.

**Description:** Social support spaces for interactions with the public and NGOs.

**Application of Orientation and Size:** Accessible, ample size, inclusive.





**Table 6. Design Recommendation and Integration of Transformative Space for Empowerment**

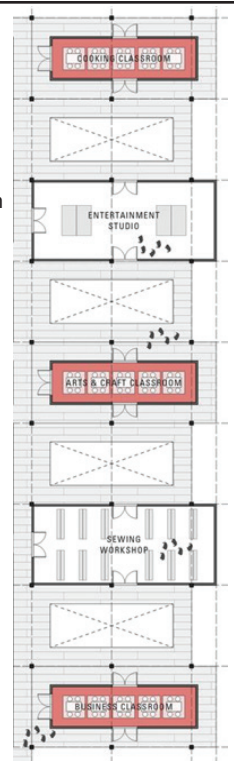
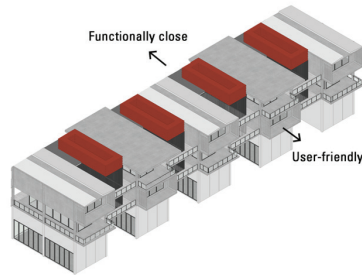
| Existing Space                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Roadside area for knowledge exchange highlighting the limitations while acknowledging the effort. Limited access to upskilling opportunities with a more neutral and collaborative term, emphasizing partnership. Vulnerable to environmental discouragement in a more sensitive and empowering way, focusing on external factors that could hinder success. |
| Design Recommendation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |



The activities in each space are preferably within functional distances from others, either visually or audibly inclusive to other spaces and activities. The goal is to contribute to the transformative space for the sex workers, making the functional spaces more accommodating and user-friendly.

**Description:** Upskill programs as alternative to generate income and readiness like Community spaces, Health facilities, Education area, Vocational training, and Counselling services.

**Application of Functional Distance:** User Friendly, functionally close.



## CONCLUSION

The research objectives were answered through the qualitative methodological triangulation of data from the literature analysis, case study, and unstructured interview. Through the unstructured interviews conducted, the experiences, obstacles, and trauma encountered by the sex workers' community at Lorong Haji Taib were discovered. Specific questions revolving around the issue of safety, support, and empowerment were asked to understand the problems faced by the sex workers' community. It was discovered that adequate shelter, supportive neighbourhoods, NGO assistance, and empowerment programs such as skill classes, business management, and arts are crucial to ensure improved employment prospects and financial stability.

Identifying the psychological support required to enhance the sex workers' community well-being was done through the analysis of data from the unstructured interview and the case study of Lorong Haji Taib 1 and 2. The assessment identifies safety, support, and empowerment as critical factors in the area, with some spaces offering refuge for sex workers and NGOs providing temporary aid like food and healthcare. However, there is a lack of organised support and empowerment opportunities, leaving the community vulnerable and without long-term solutions for growth or development.

After carefully analysing the needs of the sex workers' community in Lorong Haji Taib 1 and 2, recommendations for transformative design were developed using the conceptual framework of transformative spaces identified through the analysis of literature and related theories. The design recommendations and integrations aimed to address the inadequacy of the existing spaces, focusing on improving safety, support, and empowerment. Specific design descriptions for transformative spaces, through distinct design applications, were also outlined. Transformative spaces aim to positively impact the psychological needs of sex workers by creating safe, supportive, and empowering environments. This requires careful consideration of the physical environmental factors that influence these needs.

The findings unveil more than just a scholarly exploration—they serve as a testament to the transformative potential embedded within urban design. The transformative spaces explored here are not static entities but living experiments that require ongoing refinement, adaptation, and innovation. While this study strives to provide valuable insights into the transformative role of place for the sex workers' community, the findings of the research might be more contextually specific to Lorong Haji Taib 1 and 2, Chow Kit, Kuala Lumpur. Further discussion is needed to ensure the design recommendations can be transferable to other urban contexts with differing socio-cultural dynamics and spatial arrangements. This calls upon stakeholders to engage in a sustained conversation, recognising that the journey toward inclusive urban design is a dynamic and collective endeavour. This research is hoped to illuminate the path toward creating environments that transcend mere functionality, emerging as beacons of safety, support, and empowerment for the sex workers' community.

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## AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Muhammad Haziq Abdul Naser conceptualised and conducted the research and penned the paper's original draft. Nurul Amira Abd Jalil supervised the early stages of the study and reviewed, revised, and edited the idea into the final version of this manuscript. Mohd Syafiq Azmy reviewed the idea and supervised the research. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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