

THE UNIVERSITY OF HULL

Enacting Sport Policy: Towards a Micropolitical and
Emotional Understanding of Community Sports Coaching
Work

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Abstract

State agencies in many Western nations have utilised sport and physical activity as a means of facilitating various sporting and non-sporting policy outcomes. Surprisingly, however, there remains a dearth of empirical research addressing the working lives of those community sports coaches who are responsible for enacting such initiatives. This includes not only what community sports coaches consider to be the everyday challenges, tensions, and dilemmas that they experience in their work, but also how and why they attempt to navigate these issues in the ways that they do. Similarly, little consideration has been given towards understanding how the employment demands of community sports work impacts upon their health and well-being. To partially address the situation, this thesis provides an insight into the micropolitical and emotional challenges faced by two community sports coaches, Greg and James, when enacting a government-funded initiative to increase young people's participation in sport and physical activity. Data for this study were collected in two interrelated phases. Phase I entailed the use of participant observations to explore the behaviours and interactions of Greg and James as they sought to realise the programme outcomes in practice. Following the observations, Greg and James participated in a series of in-depth, one-to-one, informal interviews. The fieldnotes and interview transcripts were subjected to an iterative and recursive process of analysis that occurred alongside data collection and writing. Several interrelated themes were identified across Greg's and James's career stories and were principally understood in relation to the work of Kelchtermans (e.g. Kelchtermans, 2005; 2011; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002a, 2002b), Goffman (1990 [1959]), Hochschild (2012 [1983]), Bauman (2007), Burke and Stets (2009), and Stryker (2002 [1980]). I contend that the inherent structural vulnerabilities of their

community coaching jobs, as well as their determination to protect and advance their respective careers in order to fulfil various non-workplace ambitions, meant that Greg and James had to learn to act micropolitically. It is believed that by recognising the ambiguity, pathos, and dynamic complexity of Greg's and James's community sports work this investigation offers a more reality grounded understanding of this topic area.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	ii
Abstract	iii
Table of Contents	v
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
1.1. My story	1
1.2. Academic background	11
1.3. Aim of the study	16
Chapter 2: Review of literature	17
2.1. Introduction	17
2.2. Positivistic investigation of sports coaching	17
2.3. Interpretive investigation of sports coaching	34
2.4. Poststructuralist investigations of sports coaching	52
2.5. Sport development: From policy to practice	59
2.6. Conclusion	70
Chapter 3: Methodology	71
3.1. Introduction	71
3.2. An interpretive approach	71
3.3. Theoretical approach: Symbolic interactionism	75
3.4. Methodological approach: Ethnographic research	78
3.5. The participants	81
3.5.1. Selection of participants	81

3.5.2. <i>Participant background information</i>	82
3.5.3. <i>The government-funded scheme</i>	84
3.5.4. <i>Gaining access</i>	84
3.6. Data collection	85
3.6.1. <i>Participant observations</i>	85
3.6.2. <i>Fieldnotes</i>	91
3.6.3. <i>Interviews</i>	100
3.7. Data analysis	109
3.8. Theoretical framework: Micropolitics, impression and emotional management, multiple identities, and consuming life	116
3.9. Representation: A modified realist tale	121
3.10. Judging the story	123
3.11. Summary	127
Chapter 4: Results	128
4.1. Introduction	128
4.2. Greg's story	128
4.2.1. <i>Targets, vulnerability, and self-interest</i>	128
4.2.2. <i>Anti-social behaviours? I ignore them. I have to</i>	144
4.2.3. <i>Peers, motivations, and non-work relationships</i>	154
4.3. James's story	169
4.3.1. <i>Targets and tactics</i>	169
4.3.2. <i>Misbehaving participants, emotions, and personal goals</i>	190

4.3.3. <i>Workplace enjoyment? It is not enough</i>	204
4.4. <i>Summary</i>	222
Chapter 5: Discussion	224
5.1. <i>Introduction</i>	224
5.2. <i>It is all about impressing significant others</i>	224
5.3. <i>Vulnerability is endemic</i>	231
5.4. <i>Play the game to achieve your goals</i>	236
5.5. <i>Coach education is far from optimal</i>	256
5.6. <i>There is more to life than community sports coaching</i>	262
5.7. <i>Summary</i>	274
Chapter 6: Conclusion	276
6.1. <i>Introduction</i>	276
6.2. <i>Summary of major findings</i>	276
6.3. <i>Suggestions for future research</i>	290
6.4. <i>Summary</i>	297
Chapter 7: Reflections on my experiences as a PhD sports coaching researcher	298
7.1. <i>Introduction</i>	298
7.2. <i>Purpose and background</i>	298
7.3. <i>The role of emotions in the PhD experience</i>	300
References	312

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. My story

The aim of this research study was to examine the everyday experiences of community coaches enacting sport policy initiatives at the coal face of practice. My determination to explore this topic area was principally driven by my previous experiences. The following short stories illustrate how my experiences as a community sports coaching practitioner and undergraduate student informed my decision to investigate issues relating to community sport coaching work and policy enactment.

22nd November 2010: University canteen

We had a fascinating lecture this morning. The lecturer talked about some of the more 'cronied' realities of his coaching experiences in a high-performance soccer programme. He informed us, the final year Sports Coaching and Performance Undergraduate Degree students at the University of Hull, about how the performance coaching world is a far cry from the cooperative and collaborative environment that is often presented at coach education courses. He described how it is not an environment where sport-specific techniques and tactics rule, but rather where personal agendas dominate. He discussed how stakeholders often focussed on individual interests and objectives, how he implemented various micropolitical actions in an attempt to persuade the players, coaches, and chairman to buy into his coaching practices, and how he always experienced feelings of vulnerability because he never felt in complete control of his working environment. It was a compelling insight into the 'real' realities of professional sport. Thinking about it, my previous experiences as a community sports coach were very similar. Obviously, it was a different kind of 'politics' to the high-performance world the lecturer

talked about, but it was very similar all the same – it was an environment where personal agendas dominated and where I was held accountable for outcomes beyond my control ...

15th June 2007: The realities of my community coaching experiences

It's a bright summer's morning. The June sun is already streaming through my cream-coloured bedroom curtains. I roll over to turn my 06:30am alarm off, but I am already awake. I have been for some time. I am nervous yet excited. Scared yet eager. Today is a big day. I have been charged with the responsibility of facilitating a fundraising sports day at Park Grove Primary School. These events are normally a 'win, win' for both the school and Fun Sport, the community coaching service provider who I work for. We organise, advertise, and deliver the event on behalf of the school and in return we take 50 per cent of the proceeds. It's what my boss calls an "easy moneymaker". I have delivered many of these events before, but today is really important. My boss has told me that I can personally take 70 per cent of our profits. I need that 70 per cent to equate to a minimum of £350 (or the fundraiser to make £1000 in total). I have to pay the final instalment of my summer holiday to Bulgaria in two weeks. Without making at least £350 I won't be able to afford to pay it.

I momentarily daydream about how Lizzie, my girlfriend, would react if I told her that I couldn't afford to go on our summer holiday. My stomach instantly ties up into a thousand knots as I picture her angry reaction ... *"Ben, you're an idiot. I can't believe you've let me down ... again. How many meals and holidays have we missed out on because you refuse to get a proper job that pays good money? How many times do I need to tell you that you're not going to be Jose Mourinho? I just wish you would see that and get a real job; a job that allows us to afford to do the things that every other couple does. I just want to go out for meals and*

on holidays; it's not much to ask for, is it?! Why do you keep doing this to me? Am I not more important to you than your stupid job?" I can't let that situation materialise. I feel like this is the last straw. I fear that not being able to pay for our holiday to Bulgaria would be the final nail in the coffin. Something would surely have to go, either my relationship with Lizzie or my community coaching job. I don't want to be put into that situation. I don't want to have to give up either of them. I have to deliver on this promise.

"Ben, I am off to work. Make sure you hang the washing out before you leave... Ben? Answer me." My mum's voice has that edge of anger and annoyance. It barges through the Oasis album I have just put on my sound system. "Yes, Mum," I snap back. "Don't you shout at me, boy," she commands. "Sorry, Mum." "Just tell me what you need to do before you go to work, Ben." "Hang the washing out, Mum," I respond. "Good." I can tell she was surprised that I got it right. The front door slams shut as I walk towards the bathroom.

As I shower my thoughts drift off to the presentation I gave in Park Grove's school assembly last week. Was it good enough? Were the pupils excited? Did they buy into it? Did they rush home and tell their parents to donate lots of money? I tried my hardest to sell the event. I got the pupils cheering, shouting, and clapping. I had some of them performing various skills. And I did my trademark trick – doing a push-up and taking my jumper off with the soccer ball on the back of my neck. But was it enough? I was full of cold and feeling off colour. Did that affect my performance? Did that make my delivery dull and boring? I tried to put a brave face on. I tried to cover up how I really felt – tired and achy. But did I manage to hide it from the pupils and staff? Did they see through my act? The knots in my stomach return as I ponder the thought. I suddenly realise that I have been in the shower for over 20 minutes and I am running late. I quickly dry, put

on my 'smartest' Fun Sport coaching attire, style my hair, and leave the house. As I drive off, I remember that I forgot to hang the washing up. Sh*t. Mum is going to kill me!

I park in the school car park at 7:47am. There are only a few cars in the car park. I quickly scan the area to see if any of them belong to my part-time, zero-hours contract colleagues. They are not here. I look at the clock on my car's dashboard. It reads 7:51am. I suddenly start to panic. Where are they? I told them to be here for 7:45am. I frantically grab for my mobile phone, which is situated in my left trouser pocket. As I pull it out of my pocket, it slips from my hand and falls down the side of my seat. I punch the steering wheel of my clapped-out Ford Ka in frustration. I take another quick look at the clock. 7:53am. My heart rate rises another few beats. Where the hell are they? As I try to grasp my phone from under my seat, a rickety old red Peugeot 106 pulls into the car park. It's them. I instantly breathe a sigh of relief.

I walk across the car park to greet my colleagues. I give them a firm handshake and crack a few light-hearted jokes about punctuality. They seem to go down well. I brief them about the day ahead and repeatedly check for understanding. Their responses fill me with confidence. It helps to reduce the anxiety that is pumping through my veins. They seem to have taken on board everything I have said. They seem prepared and ready to go. They seem to know exactly what is expected of them. It's now time for the final point, the point I have been rehearsing over and over on the way to the school. "Guys, Jay (our boss) wants me to observe your performance today and provide him with a report on the quality of your coaching. He is currently in the process of constructing the rota for the summer holiday camps. And, well, your performance today will very much determine how many hours you are allocated ..." They instantly stand a little bit taller and their eye contact is

attentive as I continue. “So I need you to do a fantastic job. I need you to ensure that the pupils have a brilliant time. I need you to give everything you’ve got. I want to tell Jay you’re the best coaches I have ever worked with and that we need to employ you for every camp we run in the summer holiday. But for me to do that I need you to step up and show me exactly how good you are.” They both nod in recognition.

As they start to unload the equipment from the cars, a wave of guilt hits me smack in the face. Everything I have just said was a lie. Jay has not asked me to evaluate their practices and I have no control over the summer camps rota. My speech was purely for private gain. I pause for a moment to try to convince myself that I did the right thing. *You had to lie to them. There was no other option. You need them to give the performance of their coaching careers. You know your holiday hinges on these things. You only did it to get the best from them. Think about how Lizzie will feel if you tell her that you can’t afford to go on holiday. Your lies will stop that from happening. You know you’ve done the right thing.* These thoughts instantly squash my feelings of guilt as I realise that looking after me is my number one concern.

It’s lunchtime. I am sitting in the staffroom trying to digest my jam sandwich and the head mistress’s comments. She has just calculated the running total of the donations. We have currently made £650. I try to convince myself that we are in a good position: *You only need to make another £350 this afternoon and you’ve done it.* But the positive self-talk fails to provide the relief I was searching for. In fact, it only serves to further compound the truth of the situation. I am £122.50 short of my personal target. A sickening feeling develops in my stomach as I picture the anger and disappointment on Lizzie’s face.

As I ponder defeat, suddenly, out of nowhere, an idea flashes into my mind: *The relatives have been invited to watch this afternoon’s*

session. I can use that to my advantage. My two assistant coaches can lead the sporting activities while I individually ask each of the on-lookers parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and childminders to dig into their pockets and give further donations. In fact, I can get the head mistress to help me. I am sure her presence will help to encourage, cajole, or even bully the relatives into donating additional funds. A sense of hope and optimism rushes through my body. I jolt up from my chair, quickly vacate the staffroom, and track down the head mistress ... "Mrs Jones, do you have any donation buckets?" "Of course we do, Ben. We are a school." Her response brings a smile to my face. "Well in that case, I might just have an idea for how we can raise additional funds ..."

The pupils, relatives, and staff gather in the assembly hall for the closing ceremony. The afternoon couldn't have gone better. My assistant coaches did fantastically. The pupils seemed to thrive off of their upbeat and enthusiastic personas. My decision to redeploy me and Mrs Jones as face-to-face fundraisers also seems to have paid dividends. Everyone was so keen to donate that the pennies soon became pounds and I finished the collection with a heavy bucket. But is it heavy enough? I can't be sure if there is enough money in the bucket. I need to use this closing ceremony to secure further donations. It could make all the difference. It could dictate whether I do or do not board the plane to Bulgaria.

With everyone in position, Mrs Jones opens the closing ceremony. The noise in the room evaporates. The silence is respectful. Her delivery is clear and informative. It oozes self-confidence. I am jealous at how easily words roll off her tongue. It's an effortless performance. Eventually, on her say so, I take centre stage. All eyes turn on me. I remind myself of the need to talk clearly yet with enthusiasm, with passion and meaning; and to be informative yet not to ramble. I need to give the impression that their donations, no matter how large or small, can really make a difference.

Suddenly, I become very aware of the importance of this speech. Self-doubt and anxiety floods my body. My stomach muscles tighten and a golf ball sized lump fills my throat. *I can't do this. I can't speak. I just can't do it.* I try to fight back. *You can do this, Ben. You've done this so many times before.* I open my mouth. No words come out. I force myself to try again. The words still elude me. I can't win this fight. I have to regather myself. I have to start over. I take a few steps to my left and simultaneously scan the room. Some of the relatives look towards the ground, seemingly embarrassed, others start to whisper, and a handful of pupils begin to laugh. Their responses tell me that they know something is wrong. With their respect slipping from my grasp I suddenly receive a jolt: *I can do this.* I quickly scramble for my coaching mask and make light of the situation. "You'd never think that I talk to large groups of people for a living, would you?" It's a poor attempt to cover up the disruption, but it does just enough. They laugh and I smile. The tension instantly exits the room. My face cools and the golf ball sized lump in my throat starts to dissipate.

I scan the room again; everyone's eye contact is attentive. It's time to win back their respect. I start to talk; the delivery is slow and controlled. "First, I would just like to thank all of the pupils at Park Grove Primary School. You have not only contributed to the success of this event, but perhaps more importantly you have been an absolute pleasure to coach. You have been fun, energetic, and polite. Your parents and teachers should be extremely proud of the way you have conducted yourself today." My comments were greeted with applause and cheers. The damage is being undone. I am regaining their respect.

I am now talking quickly and enthusiastically. The speaking block seems a distant memory; a mere speed bump in the performance. It's now time for the final point. "I am now going to stand over there by the exit. As

you walk past me, I need you to dig deep into your pockets and donate as much money as you possibly can. It doesn't matter if it is one pence or £20. It all counts. Every donation can make such a difference." I purposely pause before my closing sentence. "Just think of it this way, you're investing in the future of every pupil sat in this room. Surely, that is a worthy and important cause?" The relatives and staff nod their heads in agreement, their approval. The talk finishes with another round of applause. Was my performance convincing enough? The bucket will soon provide the answers.

It's 4:30pm. Everyone has left the school apart from me, Mrs Jones, and the school secretary. I am nursing a cup of coffee in the staffroom, eagerly waiting for Mrs Jones to return. She is currently in her office counting up all of the donations. With every passing minute my heart beats a little bit quicker. I am full of nervous energy. At 4:48pm Mrs Jones returns to the staffroom. I rise to my feet. "So, Ben ..." My stomach and throat muscles immediately tighten. "... we have made a total of £1112.47." I quickly do the maths in my head. *I have personally made over £350 (£389.36 to be exact)*. Relief floods in. The weight that has been crushing my shoulders for the past two weeks is instantly removed. I thank Mrs Jones for her efforts and she thanks me for mine. As we walk to the car park she asks me what I am doing this evening. "Buying some new swimming shorts for my holiday," I reply.

23rd November 2010: What about community coaching?

Intrigued by yesterday's lecture, I spent the day in the library reading journal articles and book chapters addressing the micropolitical nature of sports coaching. While extremely interesting, I am just not sure how applicable these accounts are to the working environments I will potentially seek employment in upon completion of my undergraduate studies. All the

research is about performance sport, particularly professional soccer, but I doubt I will coach in these settings. If I embark on a coaching career after my undergraduate studies it will most likely be in a community based environment. I wonder why scholars have yet to explore the everyday realities of community sports coaching. It certainly would have been useful to learn about these issues before I embarked on my previous job at Fun Sport. Indeed, National Governing Body Coach Education courses never seemed to completely prepare me for the 'real' realities of my community coaching experiences. I learnt a lot about the technical and tactical aspects of sport and how to implement drills to improve these aspects in participants, as well as their physiological abilities, but I was never educated about the interpersonal features of being a coach. Instead, I had to learn about these underpinning aspects 'on the job'. For me, this is a situation that must be addressed if scholars and coach educators wish to more adequately prepare neophyte community sports coaches for their working environment.

9th August 2011: A PhD addressing community coaching?

Dr Lee Nelson: So, Ben, you've decided to do a PhD. What do you want to do it in?

Me: I am not sure, I have a few ideas like barefoot running and a nutrition based cycling project, but I think I would like to do a PhD in sports coaching.

Dr Lee Nelson: Okay, well, what topic areas were you thinking?

Me: I think that more research needs to be done addressing coaches working in community settings.

Dr Lee Nelson: Go on.

Me: During our undergraduate studies we often talked about the social and micropolitical side of performance coaching. While very informative I don't feel that this body of research adequately represents the types of issues community coaches face on a daily basis. For me, performance coaching and community coaching are not the same thing. Community based practitioners have to interact with different types of people and achieve different goals to those who work in performance environments. So surely we need to conduct research into community coaching?

Dr Lee Nelson: That's interesting, Ben, because Paul [Professor Paul Potrac] and I think exactly the same thing. In particular, we think that future research should endeavour to explore the everyday realities of community sports coaching. Would you be interested in helping us with this research agenda?

Me: Certainly, it makes perfect sense and sounds fantastic.

Dr Lee Nelson: Brilliant, let's go and have a chat with P [Professor Paul Potrac] and get some ideas down. Your PhD journey has begun ...

1.2. Academic background

Traditionally, sports coaching research has principally been underpinned by the positivistic paradigm (Cushion, Armour & Jones, 2006; Gilbert & Trudel, 2004; Gratton & Jones, 2004; Jones, Bowes & Kingston, 2010; Lyle, 1999; Mallett & Tinning, 2014). While this rationalistic conceptualisation of sports coaching has unquestionably improved our understanding of practice, scholars have increasingly criticised this body of work for not adequately reflecting the complex nature of the activity (Cassidy, Jones & Potrac, 2009; Cushion, 2007; Cushion et al., 2006; Jones, 2000; Jones, Armour & Potrac, 2002; Jones & Wallace, 2005). In response, coaching scholarship has increasingly argued for the need to put the person back into the study of sports coaching (e.g. Denison, 2007; Jones, 2006, 2009, 2011; Jones, Armour & Potrac, 2004; Toner, Nelson, Potrac, Gilbourne & Marshall, 2012). This stance has stemmed from both a practical and a theoretical dissatisfaction with the tendency to represent coaching as an unemotional, apolitical, and rational endeavour underpinned by tactical, technical, and bio-scientific methods and knowledge (e.g. Cassidy et al., 2009; Cushion, 2007; Jones, Potrac, Cushion & Ronglan, 2011a; Potrac & Jones, 2009a, 2009b; Potrac, Jones, Gilbourne & Nelson, 2013a; Potrac, Jones, Purdy, Nelson & Marshall, 2013b).

In an attempt to go some way towards redressing this situation, numerous coaching scholars have begun to demonstrate the potential of the interpretive paradigm for exploring the “nuances, mysteries, and complexities of human interaction in coaching” (Potrac & Jones, 2009b, p. 564). Such inquiry has not only started to illuminate how coaching practice is characterised by ambiguity and pathos (e.g. Jones et al., 2004; Jones & Wallace, 2005), discourse (e.g. Cushion & Jones, 2006, 2012), resistance (e.g. Purdy & Jones, 2011; Purdy, Potrac &

Jones, 2008), and trust and respect (e.g. Jones, Glintmeyer & McKenzie, 2005; Potrac, Jones & Armour, 2002; Purdy & Jones, 2011; Purdy et al., 2008; Purdy, Potrac & Nelson, 2013), but also how coaching is primarily a power-ridden social activity that requires coaches to use a variety of strategies to manipulate both the context and those around them in an effort to reach desired goals (e.g. Huggan, Nelson & Potrac, 2014; Nelson et al., 2013a; Potrac & Jones, 2009b; Potrac et al., 2013a; Purdy & Jones, 2011; Thompson, Potrac & Jones, 2013).

In this respect, a growing body of research (e.g. Booroff, Nelson & Potrac, 2015; Huggan et al., 2014; Potrac & Jones, 2009b; Potrac et al., 2013a; Purdy & Jones, 2011; Thompson et al., 2013) has illustrated how, similar to practitioners' experiences of the day-to-day realities of organisational life in other environments (e.g. Buchanan & Badham, 2008; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002a; 2002b; Lindle, 1994), coaches (and athletes) invest a considerable amount of energy and time to impressing significant others in order to safeguard and advance their position, standing, and status. Importantly, such work has suggested that coaches need to engage in strategic micropolitical actions to fulfil these goals and objectives (e.g. Booroff et al., 2015; Huggan et al., 2014; Potrac & Jones 2009b; Potrac et al., 2013a). Arguably, then, "coaching could be better served through more 'reality grounded' projects; where an attempt to grasp the nuanced uncertainties, dilemmas, and micropolitical actualities that coaches deal with is undertaken" (Thompson et al., 2013, p. 3).

In more recent times, some scholars have recognised that the tensions, dilemmas, and challenges that coaching practitioners face are not just socio-political in nature, but are also very much emotional phenomena and need to be understood as such (e.g. Nelson et al., 2013a; Potrac et al., 2013b; Potrac & Marshall, 2011). For example, the work of Nelson et al. (2013a) has

demonstrated how a semi-professional soccer coach frequently concealed his 'real' emotions and enacted others to achieve his desired ends. While such accounts (as cited above) are to be applauded for extending our understanding of coaching practice, published literature has so far largely ignored the emotional nature of coaching practice (Jones, Ronglan, Potrac & Cushion, 2011b; Potrac et al., 2013b; Potrac & Marshall, 2011; Thompson et al., 2013). Indeed, save for a few notable examples (e.g. Jones, 2006, 2009; Nelson et al., 2013a; Purdy et al., 2008), existing accounts of coaching have tended to be devoid of emotions, with coaches (and athletes) principally portrayed as dispassionate, rational, and calculating beings (Potrac & Marshall, 2011). For some (Jones et al., 2011b; Potrac et al., 2013b; Potrac & Marshall, 2011), this neglect is "unfortunate, as no doubt both coaches and athletes experience a variety of strong emotions as they strive to navigate the challenges and opportunities of their dynamic sporting world" (Potrac et al., 2013b, p. 236). These scholars have increasingly suggested that we will not be able to adequately prepare coaches for the complex realities of their work until we develop a multi-layered understanding of emotion in coaching (Jones et al., 2011b; Nelson et al., 2013a; Potrac et al., 2013b; Potrac & Marshall, 2011).

While interpretive inquiry has enabled coaching literature to move beyond inhuman accounts of coaching, a large proportion of this research has been conducted from a single method perspective (Cushion, 2014). Although such work has indisputably extended our understanding of coaching by, for example, recognising the undoubted ambiguity, pathos, and dynamic complexity inherent within the activity (e.g. Huggan et al., 2014; Jones & Wallace, 2005; Potrac & Jones, 2009b; Potrac et al., 2013a), various scholars (e.g. Cushion, 2014; Jones, 2009) have urged for future inquiry to move beyond a single method perspective

and towards a combination of methods. While not a panacea for all coaching methodology ills, they contend that the employment of multiple methods, such as participant observations and interviews, will produce a more comprehensive understanding of the social complexity of coaching practice (Cushion, 2014; Jones, 2009). This is because it will allow the “capturing of routine everyday activity of participants, the hierarchies involved, understanding the meaning of activities from the participants’ point of view, and going beyond thin surface appearances to produce ‘thick’ description” (Cushion, 2014, p. 172).

In addition to there being an over-reliance on single method approaches (Culver, Gilbert & Trudel, 2003; Cushion, 2014), there is also a dearth of empirical research addressing the working lives of those community coaching practitioners who are charged with the responsibility of enacting policy initiatives at the micro (face-to-face) level of practice (Cronin & Armour, 2013; Ives, Gale, Nelson & Potrac, 2016). This is perhaps surprising, given that successive governments have utilised sport and physical activity as a means of achieving a variety of sporting and non-sporting policy outcomes (Bergsgard, Houlihan, Mangset, Nodland & Rommetvedt, 2007; Bloyce & Smith, 2010; Coalter, 2007; Houlihan & Green, 2008). For example, the Coalition Government’s Youth Sport Strategy saw Sport England allocated a budget of in excess of £1 billion to reduce the number of young people dropping out of regular participation in sport and physical activity (DCMS/SE, 2012). Yet, despite the investment in, and value attached to, sport and physical activity initiatives by policymakers, there has been little detailed empirical research addressing the work and lives of the community sports coaches who are often charged with facilitating these various policy objectives.

Unlike those employed in other forms of caring and pedagogical work (e.g. teachers, nurses, and social workers), we know very little about many aspects of community sports coaches' work and its interconnections with their wider lives (Cronin & Armour, 2013; Ives et al., 2016). This not only includes 'how' and 'why' community sports coaches attempt to achieve desired policy goals in the ways that they do, but also their understandings of the everyday demands and dilemmas that they experience in their work (Ives et al., 2016; Potrac & Marshall, 2011). Similarly, researchers have also given little consideration to exploring how community sports coaches experience wider contemporary employment trends, such as reduced funding and organisational rationalisation, 'flexible' working hours, vulnerability in the form of zero-hours or short-term employment contracts, increased scrutiny and measurement of workplace performance, and unclear career pathways (Ives et al., 2016; Purdy & Potrac, 2014).

The acquisition of such knowledge would seem important as we cannot assume that the understandings from the body of research addressing micropolitics and emotions in performance coaching can be naturally and unproblematically applied to the community coaching arena, but also because (sport) policies are not simply implemented but are, instead, actively translated, interpreted, reconstructed, and enacted by a range of social actors and stakeholders that includes community sports coaches (cf. Ball, Maguire & Braun, 2012). Indeed, it is perhaps important to recognise that community coaching practitioners are not merely automatons or technicians engaged in the linear and straightforward delivery of particular policy goals, objectives, and initiatives (Ball et al., 2012). Instead, like all the social actors involved in the enactment of policy, they have aspirations, hopes, fears, and worries and are bound up in networks of relations that are influenced by economic and social forces, institutions, people

and interests, and, sometimes, pure chance (Ball et al., 2012; Taylor, Rizvi, Lingard & Henry, 1997). Unfortunately, the scholarly understanding of community sports coaching work has yet to adequately consider and explore these realities.

1.3. Aim of the study

In order to partially address the situation described above, this thesis seeks to provide a micropolitical and emotional analysis of community sports coaching work. Specifically, this investigation sought to examine some of the everyday demands and dilemmas that two community sports coaches, Greg (a pseudonym) and James (a pseudonym), experienced when implementing a government-funded initiative aimed at increasing young people's participation in sport and physical activity. In order to achieve this aim, a combination of participant observations and in-depth, one-to-one informal interviews were utilised, within an interpretive framework, to explore the following research questions:

- i. How did Greg and James enact health and social policy directives at the micro-level of community sport?
- ii. Why did they act as they did to achieve these outcomes?
- iii. What did Greg and James consider to be the everyday challenges, tensions, and dilemmas that they experienced in their work?
- iv. How and why did they attempt to navigate these issues in the ways that they did?
- v. How did they understand the employment demands of community sports work to impact upon their health and well-being, as well as their interpersonal relationships with others both inside and outside of the workplace?

Chapter 2: Review of literature

2.1. Introduction

This chapter aims not only to provide an in-depth review of the existing sport coaching research, but also to critically analyse the paradigms and methodological approaches that have informed such inquiry. After this brief introduction, a discussion of the coaching literature underpinned by the positivistic paradigm is presented. The chapter then provides a comprehensive review of the published coaching research aligned to the interpretive paradigm, before considering the coaching inquiry which has been informed by poststructuralism. Within those sections, I outline the underpinning assumptions of the particular paradigm, present some of the key findings from coaching work subscribing to that position, and identify some gaps and limitations associated with such work. Following this, the chapter turns its attention towards examining the body of research which has explored the implementation and enactment of sports policy and sports development work in the UK. Finally, a concluding section summarises the main points of the chapter.

2.2. Positivistic investigation of sports coaching

Scholars of coaching science have utilised different research traditions in their work (Gilbert & Trudel, 2004; Gratton & Jones, 2004; Mallett & Tinning, 2014). As will be demonstrated, these traditions represent different paradigmatic positions for thinking about and doing research (Mallett & Tinning, 2014; Sparkes & Smith, 2014). A *paradigm* is, according to Guba and Lincoln (1994), a “set of *basic beliefs* ... and a *worldview* that defines, for its holder, the nature of the ‘world’, the individual’s place in it, and the range of possible relationships to that world and its parts” (p. 107). As with any belief system, the values and assumptions of a paradigm are learnt via the processes of socialisation (Sparkes, 1992; Sparkes

& Smith, 2014). At the core of this socialisation process is the researcher's assumptions regarding questions of *ontology* and *epistemology* (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Sparkes, 1992). For Sparkes (1992), "ontological assumptions revolve around questions regarding the nature of existence, that is, the very nature of subject matter of the research", whereas epistemological assumptions "refer to questions of knowing and the nature of knowledge" (p. 12). A researcher's response to questions of ontology and epistemology have methodological implications for the choices made regarding research designs, types of analysis, the interpretation and representation of findings, and the way the quality of research is 'judged' (Sparkes, 1992; Sparkes & Smith, 2014).

A large proportion of sports coaching research to date has been underpinned by the *positivistic* paradigm (e.g. Chelladurai, 1984; Conroy & Coatsworth, 2004; Smith & Smoll, 1990). This research tradition adopts realist-external ontology, an objectivist epistemology, while preferring a nomothetic methodology, and tends to employ quantitative methods (Mallett & Tinning, 2014; Sparkes, 1992; Sparkes & Smith, 2014). In other words, positivism postulates that the social world is made up of hard and relatively fixed facts that can be observed, measured, and understood (Sparkes, 1992). Positivists also believe that the aim of research is to generate impartial and unbiased objective knowledge that has not been influenced by the researcher (Willig, 2013). Finally, positivistic inquiry typically employs systematic protocol and technique, which focus on testing hypotheses in accordance with the canons of scientific rigour (Burrell & Morgan, 1979; Sparkes, 1992).

Coaching scientists aligned to the positivistic paradigm have, for the most part, observed and analysed coaching behaviour in an effort to design and test coach behaviour interventions aimed at enhancing athlete outcomes (Cushion &

Lyle, 2010; Mallett & Tinning, 2014; Myers & Jin, 2013). Arguably, the most comprehensive body of empirical research that reflects this agenda is the work of Smith, Smoll, and colleagues (e.g. Smith & Smoll, 1990, 2014). Their work began in the 1970s with the development of a theoretical model based on the findings from previous research about the factors that influence coaching behaviours and their effects on young athletes (Smoll, Smith, Curtis & Hunt, 1978). The major components of the model are coach behaviour, player perception and recall, and player evaluative reaction (Smoll et al., 1978). The model assumes that athletes' evaluative reactions to what the coach does are mediated by their recall of the coach's actions and behaviours (Smith & Smoll, 2014). The model also stipulates that other situational and individual difference variables will influence children's reactions to their athletic experiences (e.g. attitudes towards the sport, their experience, and team-mates).

Smith, Smoll, and colleagues developed numerous measures of the variables included in the conceptual model. For example, Smith, Smoll, and Hunt (1977) developed the Coaching Behavior Assessment System (CBAS) to measure the actual behaviours engaged in by the coach. This empirically derived coding system classifies coaching behaviour into 12 different categories, attributed as either reactive behaviours in response to designated situations or spontaneous ones which are initiated by the coach (Smith & Smoll, 2014). Smith and Smoll (e.g. Curtis, Smith & Smoll, 1979; Smith, Zane, Smoll & Coppel, 1983) also developed corresponding rating scales [self-report measures] to assess both coach and player recall of how frequently the 12 CBAS behaviours occurred, as well as a battery of personality measures to assess the children's reactions to the coach and their team-mates, enjoyment of their athletic experience, and self-esteem.

Having developed measures that met acceptable scientific standards, Smith and Smoll (e.g. Curtis et al., 1979; Smith, Smoll & Curtis, 1978; Smith et al., 1983) conducted a series of large-scale observational studies to examine the actual behaviour of coaches and to discover how it impacted on young athletes. For example, Curtis et al. (1979) used the CBAS to code the behaviours of male Little League Baseball coaches during league games across the 1976 (N = 51) and 1977 (N = 31) seasons. At the end of each season, trained research assistants interviewed and administered questionnaires to the children who had played for the coaches, to measure how their sport experience had affected them (541 boys in 1976 and 325 boys in 1977). The results of the statistical analysis indicated that the most frequently observed coaching behaviours were general encouragement, general technical instruction, and reinforcement, and the least frequently observed behaviours were punishment, keeping control, and punitive technical instruction. The players also perceived that the coaches engaged in punitive technical instruction, punishment, ignoring mistakes, and non-reinforcement less often than other overt behaviours. The results also suggested that the players liked the coach less when they perceived them to engage in higher levels of punitive behaviours. Finally, coaches of winning teams were more reinforcing and engaged in more spontaneous behaviours, whereas coaches of losing teams were perceived to be more punitive towards mistakes (Curtis et al., 1979).

Smith and Smoll used the findings from the abovementioned research studies (e.g. Curtis et al., 1979; Smith et al., 1978; Smith et al., 1983) as a scientific basis for deriving behavioural guidelines for coaches that could be used in providing a better sports experience for youngsters. Alongside this, Smith and Smoll developed a psychoeducational intervention programme called Coach

Effectiveness Training (CET) to transmit these guidelines to coaches and promote their utilisation. CET, now known as the Mastery Approach to Coaching (MAC) (Smith & Smoll, 2014), is administered as an educational workshop that typically lasts less than two hours. The intervention is delivered in both written and verbal formats (e.g. handouts and role play) and emphasises five core principles: (1) the primary focus of youth sport is to have fun, learn sport skills, derive satisfaction from being on a team, increase self-esteem, and reduce the fear of failure; (2) employ a positive approach to coaching; (3) establish norms that emphasise athletes' mutual obligation to help and support one another; (4), involve athletes in decisions regarding team rules, roles, and responsibilities; and (5) obtain behavioural feedback and engage in self-monitoring.

To examine how effective the intervention was in producing its intended effects, Smith, Smoll, and colleagues (e.g. Barnett, Smoll & Smith, 1992; Smith, Smoll & Cumming, 2007; Smith, Smoll & Curtis, 1979) compared trained (CET/MAC) and untrained (control group) coaches and their athletes in a series of experimental outcome studies. For example, Smith et al. (1979) examined the effects of the intervention on Little League Baseball coaches. They hypothesised that there would be a positive change in trained coaches' overt behaviours and that the "differences in attitudes toward trained versus untrained coaches would be most pronounced for low self-esteem children" (Smith et al., 1979, p. 61). A total of 18 coaches were randomly assigned to an experimental group and 13 to a no-treatment control group. The participants had an average of 8.37 ($SD = 6.11$) years of coaching experience and their mean age was 36.10 years ($SD = 9.99$). The experimental group attended a 2-hour CET intervention conducted by the authors. The overt coaching behaviours of both the experimental and control groups were observed and numerically coded via the CBAS (Smith et al., 1977).

The 16 observers for the investigation were extensively trained over a 4-week period, demonstrating an inter-rater reliability coefficient of 0.94 in their field codings (Smith et al., 1979). The players' perceptions and recall of the coaches' behaviours, as well as their attitudes towards the coaches and their own participation, were examined through structured interviews conducted at the end of the season. Each of the male Little League Baseball players ($n = 325$) aged 10-15 years were asked questions by trained interviewers and had to record their answers using 7-point scales. The players were also required to complete an adapted version of Coopersmith's (1967) Self-Esteem Inventory. This scale, which consists of 14 descriptive statements rated on a 5-point scale and has adequate interim (alpha coefficients between 0.63 for 10 to 12 year olds and 0.70 for 13 to 15 year olds) and test-retest reliability (coefficients over 12 months were .60 for 10 to 12 year olds and .74 for 13 to 15 year olds), allowed the researchers to measure the post-season self-esteem of the players.

Post-season, control, and experimental group comparisons revealed no significant difference in observed CBAS coaching behaviours across the 12 categories. That said, the results of the univariate F test did indicate that the experimental group provided significantly more reinforcement ($p < 0.05$). Interestingly, reinforcement was the most highly emphasised behavioural guideline of the training programme, with coaches being encouraged to "increase their reinforcement rate to 25% of their responses" (Smith et al., 1979, p. 64). The univariate ANOVAs (analysis of variance) of the players' perceptions of coaching behaviour indicated significant differences between the control and experimental groups, with the players rating the experimental group coaches as more frequently engaging in general technique instruction ($p < 0.05$), mistake-contingent encouragement ($p < 0.01$), and reinforcement ($p < 0.01$), and as less frequently

engaging in punishment ($p < 0.01$), non-reinforcement ($p < 0.01$), and punitive technical instruction ($p < 0.05$). The F tests of the players' evaluative reactions to their coaches and team-mates also demonstrated significant differences between the groups. The children who played for the experimental group coaches experienced greater liking for the coach ($p < 0.01$) and a stronger desire to play for them next season ($p < 0.01$), and experienced a better relationship with their team-mates ($p < 0.01$).

Post-season evaluations of the players' perceptions of their own baseball ability revealed no difference between the athletes who played for the experimental or the control group coaches. However, the one-way ANOVAs did demonstrate that the athletes who played for the trained coaches felt that both their coaches ($p < 0.05$) and peers ($p < 0.02$) evaluated their skills more highly. A post-season group comparison revealed no significant differences in players' measures of self-esteem between those who played for the trained or the untrained coaches. However, when the authors drew upon baseline measures of self-esteem for the athletes who had participated in a previous study ($n = 189$) (see Smith et al., 1978), t tests for correlated means revealed a significant increase in self-esteem scores in children who played for trained coaches ($p < 0.05$), whereas the control group players demonstrated no significant change. Interestingly, Smith et al. (1979) also reported that athletes with low baseline self-esteem displayed the greatest difference in attitudes and perceptions when coached by coaches who were trained to be highly encouraging and reinforcing. While the authors believed that the pre-season CET programme was the cause of this change, they concluded that these results are best viewed as suggestive rather than conclusive, as a large number of variables were combined and the study used a relatively small sample (Smith et al., 1979).

Following this investigation, Smith and Smoll continued to conduct positivistic studies, with similar experimental research designs, to further assess the effects of the MAC. For example, Barnett et al. (1992) assessed the impact of the MAC programme on the attrition rate of Little League Baseball players (n = 188). A total of 18 coaches were recruited for the study and were distributed into either an experimental (n = 8) or a control group (n = 10). The experimental group coaches attended a pre-season MAC workshop and player attrition was examined at the beginning of the subsequent pre-season. A chi-square analysis demonstrated significant differences in attrition between the children who played for trained and untrained coaches, with a 5 per cent dropout rate in the experimental group players and a 26 per cent dropout rate in the control group athletes. To explain why these differences occurred, Barnett et al. (1992) administered a revised version of the Sport Participation Questionnaire (Seefeldt, Ewing, Hylka, Trevor & Walks, 1989) to those individuals who had chosen not to play baseball again. Due to the small number of children dropping out of the experimental group (n = 4), no statistical tests could be applied to the data set to determine whether the reasons for not returning differed between groups (i.e. trained vs. untrained). However, the mean scores for each group suggested that players from the trained group discontinued due to a conflict of interest, whereas the control group athletes often attributed their dropout to stress, a lack of fun, or unsatisfactory interpersonal evaluation. Barnett et al. (1992) concluded that the aforementioned findings indicate that the implementation of the MAC reduces the number of players who drop out of sport because of a bad experience.

Using research participants who were involved in one of their previous investigations (e.g. Barnett et al., 1992), Smoll, Smith, Barnett, and Everett (1993) explored the impact of the MAC programme on athletes' self-enhancement

processes. They reported that the children who played for trained coaches perceived their coaches to more frequently engage in the behaviours that were emphasised in the MAC training programme. The mean group differences indicated that the players of trained coaches were exposed to more reinforcement, encouragement, and technical instruction, and less non-reinforcement, punishment, and punitive instruction. The athletes who played for the trained coaches also reported that they had a greater liking for both their coaches ($p < 0.01$) and their team-mates ($p < 0.05$), preferred their coaches' teaching ability ($p < 0.05$), had more fun playing baseball ($p < 0.05$), and felt that their coaches liked them more ($p < 0.01$). Self-esteem was measured pre- and post-season through the Washington Self-Description Questionnaire (WSDQ) (Smoll et al., 1993). *T* tests for correlated means demonstrated significant positive change for low-self-esteem children who were coached by the trained coaches ($p < 0.01$), whereas the boys with low self-esteem in the control group reported no significant change. In keeping with previous research (e.g. Smith et al., 1979), Smoll et al. (1993) suggested that these results indicate that children with low self-esteem have the most to gain from coaches who are exposed to the MAC programme. That said, they also highlighted that the exact cause of increase in self-esteem remains unclear, as it could have resulted from interaction and increased support, or all factors (Smoll et al., 1993).

Continuing with their positivistic line of inquiry, Smith, Smoll and Barnett (1995) also examined the effectiveness of the CET programme in relation to sport performance anxiety over the course of a baseball season. Using a similar research design to their previous studies (e.g. Barnett et al., 1992; Smoll et al., 1993), Smith et al. (1995) measured player anxiety using the Sport Anxiety Scale (SAS) (Smith, Smoll & Schutz, 1990) and the Sport Competition Anxiety Test

(SCAT) (Martens, 1977). An ANCOVA (analysis of covariance) of the SAS data set revealed that the children who played for trained coaches had significantly less ($p < 0.05$) sport performance anxiety compared to the control group players. *T* tests for correlated means supported these findings by demonstrating a significant decrease ($p < 0.01$) in sport performance anxiety for the players of the trained coaches, compared to a non-significant decrease in anxiety occurring in the control group players. The authors concluded that the differences in anxiety reduction between experimental group and control group players can be attributed to the MAC training programme, but the relative importance of each element of the behavioural guidelines remains unknown (Smith et al., 1995).

The impact of the MAC programme on sport performance anxiety was also measured by Smith et al. (2007). They tested the impact of the intervention on 145 basketball players' motivational climate and somatic and cognitive performance anxiety over the course of a season. These facets were measured via the Sport Anxiety Scale-2 (SAS-2) (Smith, Smoll, Cumming & Grossbard, 2006), which was administered before the MAC training and in the final stages of the 12-week season, and the Motivational Climate Scale for Youth Sports (MCSYS) (Smith, Cumming & Smoll, 2008), which was issued at the end of the season. Hierarchical linear modelling analysis revealed that the players who played for the trained coaches reported significantly higher ($p < 0.03$) levels of perceived mastery-climate coaching behaviours, and lower, but non-significant ($p < 0.07$), levels of ego climate. The anxiety scores on all subscales of the SAS-2 for MAC-trained players decreased from pre-season to late season, with significant effects on the worry and somatic subscales. The control group athletes, however, reported increases in anxiety over the duration of the season.

Smith et al. (2007) tentatively concluded that the MAC intervention can be related to lower anxiety levels in athletes.

While a large proportion of positivistic coaching inquiry has employed quantitative methods, there is also a body of work which has attempted to identify generalisable truths through the use of qualitative methods. The systematic investigations by Jowett and colleagues (e.g. Jowett, 2003; Jowett & Cockerill, 2003; Jowett & Meek, 2000) of the coach-athlete relationship provide several good examples of this approach. To examine, and subsequently explain, these dyads, Jowett and Meek (2000) initially devised a conceptual model of the coach-athlete relationship that was based on Kelley et al.'s (1983) definition of interpersonal relationships. Kelley et al. (1983) defined a dyadic relationship as the situation in which "two people's behaviours, emotions, and thoughts are mutually and causally interdependent" (as cited in Jowett & Meek, 2000, p. 158). Three constructs, namely closeness, co-orientation, and complementarity (3 Cs), were then selected from previously published interpersonal and behavioural research and incorporated into a conceptual model. Closeness makes reference to the emotional tone that athletes and coaches express and experience in describing their relationships. Co-orientation occurs when athletes and coaches have developed a common frame of reference such as shared beliefs, expectations, goals, and values. Complementarity refers to the type of interaction relationship that members engage in, as well as motivations for developing an athletic relationship.

Jowett and Meek (2000) used their conceptually based model (3 Cs) to investigate the coach-athlete relationship in four married couples. The participants, who were involved in the Greek national track and field athletics team, had a minimum of 2-year coach-athlete relationships, with the length of

marriage time ranging from a few months to 10 years. All four coaches were male, had the mean age of 36 ($SD = 3.96$), and an average of 22 years of coach and athlete experience. The athletes' mean age was 29 years ($SD = 2.16$) and their involvement in sport spanned 17 years ($SD = 2.08$). Jowett and Meek (2000) hypothesised that the 3 Cs would be evident in the coach-athlete relationship in married couples, as "sport settings provide an opportunity for both coach and athlete to develop an interpersonal relationship" (p. 159).

Jowett and Meek (2000) collected data through in-depth interviews with each participant. An interview schedule which was based on empirical and theoretical evidence involving the 3 Cs was used for all interviews. The interview schedule comprised 85 open-ended questions, with 48 related to the athletic facets of the coach-athlete relationship and the other 37 to marital aspects. While the interview schedule was different for the coaches and athletes, the content was very similar, and all participants were asked the same sequence of questions with probes being used as necessary. Once the data had been collected and transcribed verbatim, Jowett and Meek (2000) used content analysis to systematically quantify the data. This comprised two phases, the categorisation of themes and the interpretation of coders. Within the first phase, the raw data themes from the interview transcripts were grouped into a priori categories (i.e. co-orientation, closeness, and complementarity). Data in these categories were then grouped into themes (e.g. first-order, second-order, and general categories), before frequency analysis was applied to determine the percentage of participants who cited a theme within each of these second-order themes and general categories (Jowett & Meek, 2000). In terms of the interpretation of coders, the authors determined face validity of correspondence between the thematic categories and the constructs that they represent as well as the reproducibility of

inter-coder consistency of interpretation, through inter-coder agreement. The four coders, who were all trained in qualitative methodology, reached triangular agreement (75%) at each level of analysis.

Jowett and Meek's (2000) analysis revealed that personal (raw data (RD) = 37.3%) and generic feelings (RD = 64.4%) are key indicators of closeness. All of the participants expressed how they felt comfortable and confident about the feelings that they transmitted to each other, and also that feelings of love and trust were important in fostering successful intrapersonal and interpersonal aspects. Shared knowledge (RD = 38.9%) and understanding (RD = 56.1%) were pronounced themes related to the construct of co-orientation. The authors suggested that this enabled the coaches to employ the correct training tactics at the right moment which, in turn, resulted in efficient training and competition procedures and a healthy coach-athlete partnership. The analysis also revealed that the participants described their complementarity behaviours, which consisted of the coach being in charge and the athlete conforming without resistance, as cooperative. Finally, Jowett and Meek (2000) demonstrated that a lot of interactions between the 3 Cs occurred. A total of 86 statements related to the interaction category of closeness/co-orientation (23), complementarity/closeness (28), or co-orientation/complementarity (34). The combination of these results not only led Jowett and Meek (2000) to conclude that the 3 Cs are key components in married coach-athlete relationships, but that these constructs and their interrelationships will probably be applicable to all coach-athlete relationships.

To further examine the utility and substance of the 3 Cs in understanding the coach-athlete relationship, Jowett and Cockerill (2003) investigated 12 former Olympic medallists' perceptions of their athlete-coach relationship. The researchers employed a qualitative research design that was similar to the

previous study (e.g. Jowett & Meek, 2000). Results suggested that the coach-athlete relationship in elite Olympic sport plays an important role in an athlete's development. More specifically, relationships which are underpinned by trust, care, mutual respect, support, shared knowledge, understanding, open communication, and concern, as well as clear, corresponding tasks and roles, might assist in an athlete's development as a performer and as a person. Results also indicated potential associations between closeness, co-orientation, and complementarity; however, the direction of causality between the constructs was not discerned. Based upon these findings, Jowett and Cockerill (2003) suggested that coach education provision should provide coaches with information that will help them to develop effective relationships with their athletes.

Philippe and Seiler (2006) also used the 3 Cs to study the quality of the athlete-coach relationship. The authors employed a qualitative research design similar to the earlier studies of Jowett and colleagues (Jowett & Cockerill, 2003; Jowett & Meek, 2000) to examine five male elite swimmers' perceptions of the quality of their relationship with their coach. Results indicated that the quality of the coach-athlete relationship played a central role in the performance of the elite athletes. The swimmers revealed that they placed significant emphasis on maintaining good relations with their coach. They also suggested that the type of relationship formed was personal and caring, and played an important role in improving performance (Philippe & Seiler, 2006).

Since the publication of the abovementioned studies, Jowett (2007a, 2007b) further developed the 3 Cs model into the 3+1Cs. The constructs of complementarity (behavioural component), closeness (affective component), co-orientation (perceptual component), and commitment (cognitive component) now represent the model. The 3+1Cs is also accompanied by the Coach-Athlete

Relationship Questionnaire (CART-Q) (Jowett & Ntoumanis, 2004). The CART-Q is a measurement tool that assesses the constructs of the model. There is an athlete and coach version and it can be administered to measure athletic relationships from a direct perspective (e.g. "I like my coach/athlete") and/or a meta-perspective (e.g. "My coach/athlete likes me"). Jowett and colleagues have utilised the 3+1Cs model and the CART-Q to explain and predict behaviour in sports settings. These positivistic studies, which have typically employed quantitative research designs, have sought to examine the link between the coach-athlete relationship and other important psychological factors such as achievement goals (Adie & Jowett, 2010), empathic accuracy (Lorimer & Jowett, 2009), passion in sport (Lafreniere, Jowett, Vallerand, Donahue & Lorimer, 2008), relationship satisfaction (Jowett & Ntoumanis, 2004), satisfaction with sport (Jowett & Nezelek, 2012), and team cohesion and coach leadership (Jowett & Chaundy, 2004).

Although the aforementioned positivistic approach to coaching research has undoubtedly made an important contribution to the development of our understanding of the activity, in more recent years this body of research has been heavily criticised for the simplifying nature of its 'efficient' research design (Cushion et al., 2006; Cushion & Lyle, 2010; Jones et al., 2010; Jones & Wallace, 2005). These scholars (as cited above) have argued that while this line of work is in some part useful, it has limited potential for guiding practitioners or for a theoretical understanding of coaching, as it reduces the complexity of the coaching process by presenting the activity in unproblematic and overly systematic ways. For example, Kahan (1999) contended that "due to its nomothetic pursuit," positivistic coaching research is "incongruous with, and

insensitive to, the peculiarities of coaching and the unique conditions under which coaches act” (p. 42).

More recently, Jones and Wallace (2005) argued that the fundamental problem with the positivistic based coaching research is that it has pursued *knowledge-for-action* at the expense of a thorough grasp of practice itself. That is, the issue with this body of coaching knowledge, and its accompanying reductionist perspective, is that knowledge producers have attempted to identify good coaching practice and prescribe how to attain it before taking the time to acknowledge the complex nature of coaching. Jones and Wallace (2005) then go on to discuss how “oversimplification of the phenomenon and over-precision of prescriptions is the unfortunate price paid” for this knowledge-for-action approach, as it has produced models of, explanations of, and recommendations for ‘good practice’ before fully exploring the complexity of coaching (p. 123).

Furthermore, several scholars (Cushion, 2007; Cushion et al., 2006; Jones & Wallace, 2005), in their critiques of various empirically based work (e.g. Cote, Salmela, Trudel, Baria & Russel, 1995; Lyle, 2002), argue that plotting hierarchical relationships and proposed interactions in a model of coaching without generating an understanding of the functional complexity that lies between and behind them does very little to highlight the complex actions and precursors which actually underpin the activity. This is because such an approach has little consideration for the moral, cultural, and social influences on behaviour, thus disenfranchising the coach (Cushion, 2007; Cushion et al., 2006). The problem, therefore, with coaching knowledge that has utilised a positivistic approach is that it has left many coaches disillusioned and frustrated because they consider these representations to be ‘fine in theory’ but divorced from reality (e.g. Cushion, Armour & Jones, 2003; Gilbert & Trudel, 1999; Saury & Durand,

1998). As Jones and Wallace (2005) noted, “the advice given is simply not considered actionable as it ignores the many tensions and social dilemmas which characterise their practice” (p. 121).

Drawing upon ideas from organisational theory and educational change, Jones and Wallace (2005) argue that the rationalistic conceptions of coaching practice ignore several underpinning features of the activity. They believe that coaching is a ‘tough’ job; “goals are inherently challenging, variables within the coaching process are many and dynamic, and intended outcomes can never be a foregone conclusion”, and, as such, “the goal of outright ‘success’, however so defined, is logically unobtainable for most, if not all, coaches” (Jones & Wallace, 2005, pp. 119-120). They refer to this seemingly unbridgeable gap between the lofty and often contradictory goals that drive and inspire coaches and their capacity to attain them as the “inherent pathos” of coaching (Jones & Wallace, 2005, p. 120). In addition to contending that a degree of pathos is endemic, Jones and Wallace (2005) advocate that coaching practice is typified by ‘ambiguity’, whether deriving from the novelty of each coaching situation which is unique in its details, the limited control that coaches have over their charges, or their limited comprehension of where each participant is coming from. As Jones and Wallace (2005) summarised, “the extent of this ambiguity may vary from context to context, but it is always there in some measure, contributing to the pathos of unattainable official goals” (p. 127). It would appear, then, that pathos and ambiguity are inherent features of the practical and social world of coaching. Such a position further problematises many of the rationalistic assumptions that have underpinned our traditional understanding of coaching and how we go about researching it; hence the contribution to coaching has been useful but limited

(Cushion, 2007; Cushion et al., 2006; Cushion & Lyle, 2010; Jones et al., 2010; Jones & Wallace, 2005).

Acknowledging the various scholarly critiques of traditional coaching literature (e.g. Jones, 2000; Jones et al., 2002, 2004), Jones and Wallace (2005) urged scholars of coaching science to engage in seeking *knowledge-for-understanding*; that is, “to understand the phenomenon from a relatively impartial standpoint” (p. 122). In other words, a call arose to develop coaching research from the ‘what’ and ‘how’ to coach to include the related question of ‘who’ is coaching (Jones, 2006, 2009, 2011; Jones et al., 2004). In this respect, it makes the case to put the person back into the study of sports coaching (Jones, 2009). For example, Jones (2011) outlined the potential contribution of a problematic epistemology of sports coaching. He advocates ways of thinking and knowing about coaching that do not limit “how we feel, speak, and behave” or “simplify, stereotype, or dull individual experience” (Jones, 2011 p., 634). Such a viewpoint is grounded in both a practical and a theoretical dissatisfaction with the way the traditional didactic conceptualisation of coaching has largely represented the activity as an unemotional, apolitical, and rationalistic endeavour underpinned by tactical, technical, and bio-scientific knowledge and methods (e.g. Cushion, 2007; Jones, 2006, 2009, 2011; Jones et al., 2004; Potrac & Jones, 2009a; Potrac et al., 2013a, 2013b).

2.3. Interpretive investigation of sports coaching

In an attempt to go some way towards redressing the situation outlined above, numerous sports coaching researchers have adopted more interpretive approaches (e.g. Cushion & Jones, 2006, 2012; Jones, 2006; Jones et al., 2002, 2004; Nelson et al., 2013a; Potrac & Jones, 2009b; Potrac et al., 2013a; Purdy et al., 2008). Like positivism, interpretivism provides a particular belief system for

thinking about and doing research. Coming from the social sciences, the interpretive paradigm adopts an “internalist-idealist/relativist ontology (i.e. there is no reality independent of perception), a subjectivist epistemology (i.e. knowledge is subjective and socially constructed), and an idiographic methodology (i.e. the focus is on the individual case)” (Potrac, Jones & Nelson, 2014, p. 32). Interpretive researchers, then, believe that there is no reality independent of perception (Potrac et al., 2014). They contend that reality is constructed by the individual and, as such, the research process should endeavour to unearth and interpret the meaning that individuals ascribe to an event or happening (Sparkes, 1992). While interpretive researchers subscribe to the idea that individuals make sense of their experiences in unique ways, they also acknowledge that an individual’s interpretation of the social world may be influenced by a range of social, political, and cultural factors (Howell, 2013; Potrac et al., 2014; Stryker, 2002 [1980]). In an attempt to better understand an event or happening interpretive inquiry will consider not only how people make sense of their experiences, but also what underlines that meaning-making (Sparkes, 1992). An interpretive researcher also assumes multiple subjective realities and may give voice to an array of research participants’ subjective experiences (Mallet & Tinning, 2014). Finally, the interpretive research tradition typically utilises qualitative methods (e.g. participant observations and interviews) to understand the subjective experiences of individuals and groups (Mallet & Tinning, 2014).

To date, a large proportion of the interpretive coaching research has positioned the activity as an everyday, power-ridden, contested and negotiated social endeavour where practitioners often use various strategies and tactics to manipulate others’ impressions of them in order to realise desired goals. For

example, the interpretive work by Jones et al. (2004) found that elite coaches use strategic actions to manipulate other stakeholders' perceptions and circumstances to their advantage. The study used in-depth interviews with eight practising elite coaches, who were operating at the very top of their sport (i.e. football, rugby, swimming, netball, and athletics), to better understand the ways in which career experiences, private lives, and personal beliefs about 'good' coaching influenced the practice of expert coaches. These interviews were reflexive in nature, with each participant encouraged to discuss relevant themes with the interviewer. The data from the interviews were analysed through numerous sociological theoretical frameworks, such as Goffman's (1990 [1959]) writings on the *Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* and French and Raven's (1959) typology of social power. By using these frameworks to interpret what the coaches said, Jones et al. (2004) attempted to generate meaning and insight. In keeping with their interpretive stance, the authors' objective was "not to search for universal truths with regard to coaching or to generalise these accounts into what coaches should do", but rather to provide the reader with the opportunity to "understand these coaches and their philosophies, and then generalise them into the context of their own practice and wider lives" (Jones et al., 2004, p. 8). Acknowledging that the published findings were a creation of their own theoretical analysis and representation, Jones et al. (2004) did not want their work to be judged in relation to issues of objectivity, reliability, generalisability, and validity. Rather, they asked readers to judge the quality of their work through criteria such as 'does it extend our understanding of social life?', 'is the text enjoyable to read?', and 'does it affect me intellectually and/or emotionally?' (Jones et al., 2004).

Using Goffmanian (1990 [1959]) concepts such as the front, impression management, regions, and dramaturgical discipline, the authors' interpretation of the data revealed, among other things, that these elite-level coaches consciously manipulated their physical and verbal displays to engineer their athletes' impressions of them (Jones, 2004). The coaches believed that such approaches were necessary to make their athletes believe in them and their coaching practices. That is, the coaches engaged "in a number of impression 'games' to gain and maintain the respect of their athletes, as they all considered this crucial to success in the coaching endeavour" (Jones, 2004, p. 149). These strategies, which aided the presentation of an idealised coaching image, ranged from trying to relate to their athletes as best as they could by occasionally presenting humorous friendly personas to always trying to maintain an impression of being in control of events, while generally trying to maintain some social distance between them and their athletes.

Previous interpretive work by Potrac et al. (2002) also highlighted how an expert coach (Brian, an elite English soccer coach) often managed his impressions to establish a strong social bond between himself and his players. The study utilised a combination of systematic observations and in-depth, semi-structured, interviews to explore Brian's pedagogical strategies. Using Goffman's (1990 [1959]) dramaturgical theory to analyse the data, the authors suggested that Brian's coaching behaviours were strongly influenced by his determination to present an 'appropriate' coaching image to establish, maintain, and safeguard the respect and admiration of his players. Specifically, they explained how Brian, through his skilful and purposeful use of demonstration, instruction, scolding, and praise, attempted to create an idealised image of himself in the eyes of his athletes. This coaching persona largely comprised an authoritarian approach

where his athletes had minimal input into the decision-making process. Brian legitimised this style by the need for him to portray his “knowledge of the game” (Potrac et al., 2002, p. 192). He perceived it to be too risky for him to ask his charges for input as it held the potential for his players to view him as a coach who is lacking knowledge; as a coach who does not know his subject (Potrac et al., 2002).

Further interpretive work by Jones (2006) also evidenced how impression management is an underpinning feature of coaching work. Here, the author presented an auto-ethnographical account of his experiences as a semi-professional soccer coach. Grounded in Goffman’s (1969, 1990 [1959]) work on front, impression management, and presentation of the self, his tale highlights how coaching is not necessarily about content knowledge, but rather about providing a performance that successfully manages the impressions of others. In this regard, it adds further value to the contentions that manipulating one’s image to accomplish desired goals lies at the heart of coaching practice (e.g. d’Arrippe-Longueville, Fournier & Dubois, 1998; Jones et al., 2004; Potrac et al., 2002). For example, Jones (2006) illustrates how, through the use of various strategies, he consciously attempted to conceal his shyness and speech impediment from his charges. This included a purposely slower delivery when giving his team talk, positive self-talk, and the use of humour. Jones (2006) felt that such acts were necessary to manipulate his athletes and colleagues into thinking that he was a confident coach who was sure of his judgement and in complete control of events and, as such, should be unquestionably respected. His work, then, adds further credence to the notion that coaching is as much, if not more, about who is coaching and how they manage their relationships with key contextual

stakeholders as it is about the mechanics of what or how to coach (Jones, 2006; Jones et al., 2004; Potrac et al., 2002).

The interpretive research studies conducted by Cushion and Jones (2006, 2012), which drew upon qualitative data (e.g. participant observations and interviews) derived from a season-long ethnography of two senior professional youth soccer teams, also hinted at the political nature of sports coaching. Utilising a Bourdieusian framework, the authors demonstrated how coaching practices were almost exclusively coach-led and heavily authoritarian in nature. Cushion and Jones (2006) suggested that the coaches' actions and authoritarian discourse stemmed from their belief that these coaching behaviours were a requirement of the job. Similar to the coach in Potrac et al.'s (2002) study, the coaches perceived that they had to act in this way, as to do otherwise would put the players' trust and respect at risk (Cushion & Jones, 2006, 2012). Cushion and Jones (2006, 2012) also suggested that the players were not completely without power. They evidenced how they engaged in acts of resistance to exercise a degree of control over their environment and a harsh coaching discourse. These strategic actions included withdrawing best effort and also competing against each other for a higher position in the order of hierarchy (Cushion & Jones, 2006). Thus, the study highlighted how the coaches and players were involved in constant political action as they attempted to maintain or advance their positions of sway and influence (Cushion & Jones, 2006).

In a similar vein, the work of Purdy and colleagues (e.g. Purdy, Jones & Cassidy, 2009; Purdy & Jones, 2011; Purdy et al., 2008) demonstrated how athletes are never truly without power. For example, Purdy et al.'s (2008) auto-ethnographical account of her experiences as a rowing coxswain evidenced how she and her fellow crew members engaged in acts of resistance and struggle

against their coach. The findings of the study, which were theorised through Giddens' (1984) and Nyberg's (1981) concepts of power and resistance, highlighted how the rowers lost respect for their coach as they perceived that she did not act in an appropriate manner. Based upon their previous experiences and current expectations, the rowers felt that the coach was being too inconsistent, too general, and too authoritarian. In opposition to these 'poor' coaching practices, the crew members flexed their authoritarian muscles by actively resisting the coach's authority. Resistance principally took the form of verbal challenges, derogatory nicknames for the coach, and general scorn. Eventually the dysfunctional relationship between the coach and the crew members led to the coach moving to another coaching post (Purdy et al., 2008). This study, then, highlighted how athletes can influence coaches and the coaching environment as much as coaches are thought to control athletes (Purdy et al., 2008). Echoing the work of several authors (e.g. Jones et al., 2004; Potrac et al., 2002), the study also demonstrated how it is imperative for coaches to maintain athletes' trust and respect, as without it coaches simply cannot function (Purdy et al., 2008).

While studies such as those discussed above (e.g. Cushion & Jones, 2006; Jones et al., 2004; Potrac et al., 2002; Purdy et al., 2008) hinted at the micropolitical nature of coaching practice, Potrac and Jones (2009a) called for a more explicit investigation of micropolitics. The significance of the article was grounded in the need to better understand and theorise the everyday challenges, dilemmas, and demands of coaching. In this respect they believed that the adoption of a micropolitical perspective would further our understanding of the inherent social, problematic, and strategic nature of coaching practice that remained clandestine and largely taken for granted. In particular, Potrac and Jones (2009a) suggested that the work of Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002a,

2002b), which examines the micropolitical nature of teaching practice, would provide a fruitful theoretical lens to address the socially complex, and politically laden, activity of sports coaching.

In response to the call for research to examine sports coaching from a micropolitical perspective, Potrac and Jones (2009b) published a research article which shed light on the complex nature of coaching practice, particularly in relation to issues of politics and power. The study used in-depth, semi-structured, interviews to investigate the coaching actions of Gavin, a newly appointed head soccer coach at Erewhon City FC, as he strove to persuade the contextual power brokers (players, assistant coach, and chairman) to subscribe to his coaching methods. Using Kelchtermans and Ballet's (2002a, 2002b) writings on micropolitical literacy and Goffman's (1990 [1959]) theorising, the authors highlighted how Gavin attempted to deal with vociferous resistance from David, a senior player within the team (Potrac & Jones, 2009b). Here, Gavin described how he refrained from engaging in instant retaliatory action and, instead, focussed on manipulating situations that would result in him being accepted and respected by the vast majority of his players. Having failed to win over David, Gavin then explained how he intentionally engineered the training sessions to publically expose David's limited physical and technical ability. Gavin ultimately hoped that these training practices would have negative implications for David's standing and status among the players. Eventually, with the help of three new players who were recruited for their footballing abilities and to reinforce Gavin's methods and philosophies, David was marginalised within the squad and he subsequently requested to be transferred to another team, a request that Gavin was happy to accept (Potrac & Jones, 2009b).

Following the investigative work of Potrac and Jones (2009a, 2009b), several other interpretive coaching scholars have used Kelchtermans' (e.g. Kelchtermans, 2005; 2009; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002a, 2002b) micropolitical framework to explore the social and problematic nature of elite sports coaching (e.g. Booroff et al., 2015; Huggan et al., 2014; Thompson et al., 2013). The findings from such work have further evidenced the need for practitioners to develop their micropolitical understandings to survive in an organisational context that is vulnerable to frequently competing ideologies, goals, and motivations of the stakeholders that comprise them. For example, the study conducted by Thompson et al. (2013) on the actions and experiences of Adam, a newly appointed fitness coach at an elite soccer club, provides further evidence of micropolitical action in practice.

Data for the study were collected through a series of in-depth, semi-structured interviews and were subjected to an inductive process of analysis. Kelchtermans' (e.g. Kelchtermans, 1993; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002a, 2002b) micropolitical perspective and Goffman's (1990 [1959]) writings on impression management were principally used to make sense of Adam's perceptions and actions. The findings of the investigation revealed how Adam was initially naïve to the reality that his colleagues would expose his coaching limitations in an effort to safeguard or advance their own positions. For example, Adam explained how he came to understand that the goalkeeping coach intentionally chose to sabotage his credibility by publically undermining him to reinforce his own standing, status, and position within the club. In an effort to redress this situation, Adam engaged with his colleagues in a very confident professional manner and he used various learning materials to advertise himself as a creative, knowledgeable, and hardworking individual. Despite employing such

micropolitical strategies, Adam failed to receive the professional recognition he needed from his colleagues to survive in that context and he was eventually sacked from his coaching position. Adam's story, then, further supports Potrac and Jones's (2009b) contentions that coaching is "as much about careful personal negotiation, orchestration, and manipulation, as about improving the performance of individuals or the team" (p. 566). As Adam himself noted, "how you deal with the political side of the job can really impact upon how successful you can be as a coach ... The more you know about that side of things the more you can do" (Thompson et al., 2013, p. 11).

The study of emotion only became a recognised field in sociology in recent decades (Stets & Turner, 2014; Turner & Stets, 2005). The relative silence on the dynamic of emotions for much of sociology's first 150 years has been attributed to the fact that the founding figure of microsociology, Mead (1934), did not include emotions into his theorising (Stets & Turner, 2014). Likewise, scholars have also contended that the production of "sociologies without emotion" could be ascribed to a misinterpretation of "Weber's idea that the increasing rationalisation of the world means the decreasing significance of emotion in human affairs and conduct" (Barbalet, 2001 p. 13). Within Western thought, then, emotion and reason were considered to be at opposing ends of a continuum, with emotions and irrationality at one pole and cognition and rationality at the other (Turner & Stets, 2005). In this respect, Moller (2005) noted how rationality was "considered sacred and holy, while emotions [were] perceived as being more or less inappropriate to talk about" (p. 89).

In the 1970s, however, sociologists began to challenge this oversight by theorising and empirically studying human emotions (e.g. Hochschild, 1979; Kemper, 1978). This was because they realised that a sociologically orientated

approach may help to explain the relationship among body system, cognitive processes, and cultural constructions. As Turner and Stets (2005) note:

[It became] evident that emotions are the “glue” binding people together and generating commitments to large-scale social and cultural structures; in fact, emotions are what make social structures and systems of cultural symbols viable. Conversely, emotions are also what can drive people apart and push them to tear down social structures and to challenge cultural traditions. Thus, experience, behaviour, interaction, and organisation are connected to the mobilisation and expression of emotions. (p. 1).

While sociologists were late in recognising how important emotions are in understanding the social world, it has been suggested that they have made up for lost time over the last four decades (Stets & Turner, 2014). Indeed, the sociology of emotions has made remarkable progress since its emergence in the late 1970s, with clear theoretical and research traditions now being evident (Stets & Turner, 2008). In fact, the study of emotions now stands at the forefront of microsociology and, increasingly, macrosociology (Stets & Turner, 2014; Turner & Stets, 2005). Other disciplines, of course, continue to be interested in the nature of emotions, but sociology has brought new insights to its conceptualisation (Turner & Stets, 2005).

Since sociologists turned to the study of emotions, they have been primarily concerned with understanding how emotion influences the dynamics of the self, interaction, social structure, and culture (Turner & Stets, 2005). Out of the efforts to examine these issues, several sociological theories of emotions have been developed, including symbolic interactionist theories, ritual theories, exchange theories, structural theories, evolutionary theories, affect control theories, and neuro-sociological theories (Stets & Turner, 2014; Turner & Stets,

2005). The development of these theoretical approaches or clusters has allowed scholars to better recognise the significance of emotions in social life and pedagogical activities. For example, there is a large and growing body of sociological literature on worker-customer interaction in frontline service work (e.g. Sayers & Fachira, 2015; Payne, 2009). This research, much of it inspired by Hochschild's (2012 [1983]) cultural analysis, has showed how emotional labour is a fundamental part of service work, with it being reflected in job expectations and requirements, the everyday performance of work tasks, and the structures and processes that govern how work is done and evaluated.

For example, Godwyn (2006) explored how service workers and salespeople in a range of workplace settings, from restaurants to clothing stores, employed emotional labour in their jobs. Her work shows how employers attempted to hire individuals who had a warm and nurturing personality and who could maintain relationships with customers. Godwyn (2006) also reported that employers attempted to routinise their employees' performances. Within training, employees were told that they had to smile, act friendly and welcoming, and build and maintain relationships with customers. Being required to adhere to these workplace protocols, Godwyn (2006) noted how the employees consciously managed their interactions with customers. This included referring to customers by their first name, asking them about their day, and giving occasional discounts. Despite sometimes feeling compelled to display emotions that were not genuine, Godwyn (2006) reported that the employees enjoyed their work. This led her to conclude that successful engagements in emotional labour may lead to a sense of satisfaction and self-respect (Godwyn, 2006).

In more recent years emotional labour research has expanded from its initial focus on service work to a wide variety of interactive occupations (e.g.

Sharpe, 2005; Tracey, 2000; Orzechowicz, 2008). For example, George's (2008) study into personal trainers showcased how these professionals used emotional labour to demonstrate their competence and negotiate the competing demands of the workplace. Her work highlighted how these workers employed specific strategies when engaging with clients in an effort to meet their service requests, and to bolster their own reputations. This included demonstrating expertise, developing motivational relationships, and being authoritative from time-to-time. George (2008) concluded that these interactions were determined by the service demands of customers, the trainer's role relations with clients, as well as being implicitly shaped by the skills and styles of individual trainers.

A smaller body of research (e.g. Cohen, 2010; Tschan, Rochat, & Zapf, 2005) has explored how professionals use emotional labour not only with clients, but also with peers and managers. One of the most notable studies in this regard is Pierce's (1995) explorations of the legal profession. In her study, Pierce devoted particular attention to paralegals interactions with attorneys. She reported how paralegals were expected to behave as caregivers when interacting with attorneys. While this was not present in job descriptions or formal training procedures, Piece (1995) noted how those who failed to perform it were less likely to be viewed as competent.

Although emotion is now a central concern for sociologists working in a wide variety of theoretical traditions, Potrac and colleagues (e.g. Jones et al., 2011b; Potrac et al., 2013b; Potrac & Marshall, 2011) have reported that the sociological inquiry of sports coaching has yet to give adequate attention to the emotional demands of the activity. They argued that save for a few notable examples (e.g. Jones, 2006; Jones et al., 2005; Purdy et al., 2008), existing coaching research portrayed coaching as an unemotional undertaking, with

coaches typically presented as calculating and dispassionate beings. For them, this neglect was somewhat problematic, as there is no doubt that coaching is a personal, emotionally laden, and interactive activity (Potrac et al., 2013b; Potrac & Marshall, 2011). Grounded in educational research (e.g. Hargreaves, 2000; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002a, 2002b), which evidenced how emotions are an inherent feature of the teaching landscape, the authors argued that the dilemmas, demands, and challenges faced by coaches are not just social or cognitive in nature, but are also emotional phenomena and need to be understood as such (Potrac et al., 2013b; Potrac & Marshall, 2011). In particular, these scholars (as cited above) urged for future inquiry to use the work of Hochschild (2012 [1983]) as a conceptual frame to better explore and understand emotion in coaching practice.

In response to this call, Nelson et al. (2013a) used an interpretive perspective to explore the thoughts, feelings, and actions of Zach, the head coach of a semi-professional soccer team. Data for the study were collected through a series of in-depth, semi-structured interviews and were subjected to an inductive process of analysis. Hochschild's (2012 [1983]) concepts of surface acting, emotional labour, and human costs were principally utilised to make sense of Zach's data. The findings of the investigation highlighted how Zach often chose to suppress, modify, enhance, or fake his true emotions to achieve his desired ends. For example, he highlighted how there were often times when he did not 'fancy' taking training sessions. However, rather than displaying these feelings to his players, he chose to display positive emotions. Zach did this as he perceived that it was part of his job role to create an atmosphere and tempo in training sessions that would facilitate player development and the likelihood of success in competitive fixtures.

Zach also discussed how he tried to manage the outward projections of his emotions with all of the contextual stakeholders with whom he was required to interact. For example, he alluded to how he often disliked having to engage in 'small talk' with certain supporters in the clubhouse after competitive fixtures, but sought to present himself as an upbeat, polite, and enthusiastic coach who was genuinely interested in hearing the supporters' thoughts and views on the team's performances. Zach engaged in this emotional management as he fully understood that he could not be seen to fall out with the fans, as it was their financial backing that chiefly subsidised the day-to-day operations at the club (Nelson et al., 2013a). Importantly, the study also highlighted how Zach's long-term engagement in these inauthentic behaviours led to various unintended consequences. Zach described how he became fatigued and demotivated by constantly feeling obliged to sustain required emotional displays. This led not only to a situation where both his sincerity and credibility as a coach were questioned, but also ultimately to him taking a break from coaching (Nelson et al., 2013a).

Nelson et al.'s (2013a) research project has suggested that emotion is central to the coaching process. Their work demonstrates how emotions are an inherent feature of coaches' lives and that they consequently cannot be separated from thought or action. In this regard, Potrac et al. (2013b) highlight the need to better understand the relationship between emotion, cognition, and behaviour if we are to more adequately prepare coaches for the realities of their work. Given this state of affairs, it is perhaps surprising that coaching scholars have failed to build upon these findings. Indeed, despite several calls (e.g. Jones et al., 2011b; Nelson et al., 2013a; Potrac et al., 2013b; Potrac & Marshall, 2011) for researchers to give greater consideration towards the emotional nature of practice, published accounts have continued to be free of emotionality. Such a

reality would seem to be problematic as, arguably, coaching is a personal, emotion-laden, and interactive endeavour (Cassidy, Jones & Potrac, 2015; Jones et al., 2011b; Nelson et al., 2013a; Potrac et al., 2013b; Potrac & Marshall, 2011).

By putting the person back into the study of sports coaching, interpretive inquiry (e.g. Booroff et al., 2015; Jones et al., 2004; Purdy et al., 2008) has enabled our understanding of coaching to move beyond flow charts, sanitised lists of inputs and outputs, and bland models (Nelson et al., 2013a; Potrac & Jones, 2009a, 2009b). Such work has highlighted how coaching is a complex, contested, and uncertain social activity that often requires coaches to utilise many and varied political strategies to achieve desired ends (e.g. Huggan et al., 2014; Jones & Wallace, 2005; Potrac & Jones, 2009b; Potrac et al., 2013a). Save for a few notable examples (e.g. Cushion & Jones, 2006, 2012; Purdy & Jones, 2011), these interpretive studies have largely been conducted from a single method perspective, with a large proportion of the data being collected through interviews (Cushion, 2014). While these researchers should be congratulated for starting to reflect the social logic in use in coaching practice (Potrac & Jones, 2009a), some scholars have argued that there has been an over-reliance on a single method approach, particularly interviews (Culver et al., 2003; Cushion, 2014). They contend that there are numerous limitations to a single method approach, not least that it is very difficult to acquire a complete understanding of the particular area of interest (Cushion, 2014; Krane & Baird, 2005). For example, Cushion (2014) noted that “the coaching environment is so complex that a single method approach can only yield limited and sometimes misleading data” (p. 173).

Acknowledging such concerns, various coaching scholars (e.g. Cushion, 2014; Jones, 2009; Nelson et al., 2013a) have urged for future coaching inquiry to move beyond a single method perspective and towards a combination of

methods. For example, Nelson et al. (2013a) suggested that ethnographic accounts “house the potential to explore beyond the surface of coaching and illuminate how coaches and athletes feel and how they respond to the dilemmas, challenges, and ambiguities that they encounter” (p. 483). Cushion (2014) also argued that there are numerous benefits associated with employing such an approach. He contended that researchers will be able to acquire a more holistic understanding of the activity as they will be better equipped to understand the inherent processes and context within which coaching operates. He also argued that scholars may be able to access data that could escape the conscious awareness of the participants. Finally, Cushion (2014) suggested that researchers may develop knowledge about the coaching process which may not have been generated through an interview. That said, it is important to note that these researchers are not suggesting that coaching inquiry should not employ interviews, but rather that scholars should use interviewing as part of a multiple method approach (Cushion, 2014; Jones, 2009; Nelson et al., 2013a). In summary, then, it seems that coaching scholarship should employ multiple methods, such as participant observation and interviews, as this approach can produce a more comprehensive understanding of the social complexity of coaching practice (Cushion, 2014; Jones, 2009; Nelson et al., 2013a).

In addition to there being an over-reliance on single method approaches (Culver et al., 2003; Cushion, 2014), there has been a dearth of empirical research addressing the work and lives of community sports coaching practitioners (Cronin & Armour, 2013; Ives et al., 2016). Indeed, save for a few notable examples (e.g. Cronin & Armour, 2013; Ives et al., 2016), the vast proportion of coaching research has explored the pedagogical interactions and practices of coaches working in performance settings (e.g. Booroff et al., 2015;

Jones et al., 2004; Nelson et al., 2013a; Potrac & Jones, 2009b; Potrac et al., 2013b; Thompson et al., 2013). As a result, we know very little about the everyday demands and dilemmas that community coaches experience in their work, including the pedagogical, micropolitical, and emotional tensions that may be inherent in this occupation (Ives et al., 2016; Potrac & Marshall, 2011). This neglect is both unfortunate and surprising, as arguably community sports coaches have to engage in a challenging activity that requires them to make connections to and from various individuals and groups (e.g. disaffected youth, the unemployed, and the elderly), adopt a variety of different roles based upon their reading of situational needs (e.g. counsellor, social worker, actor, pseudo-parent, and educator), and tailor their relationships and interactions towards the achievement of particular policy outcomes. Indeed, community sports coaches are being increasingly utilised to facilitate various sporting and non-sporting policy objectives (Houlihan & Green, 2008). These include, for example, reducing crime, developing pro-social behaviour, overcoming social isolation and exclusion, rebuilding communities, developing healthy lifestyles, and raising educational aspiration and attainment (Bergsgard et al., 2007; Bloyce & Smith, 2010; Coalter, 2013; Houlihan & Green, 2008). Yet, despite the investment in, and value attached to, sport and physical activity initiatives by policymakers, there has been little detailed empirical research addressing the working lives of those community coaching practitioners who are charged with the responsibility of enacting policy initiatives at the micro (face-to-face) level of practice (Cronin & Armour, 2013; Ives et al., 2016; Potrac & Marshall, 2011). (These issues and concerns are explored at greater length within section 2.5.)

In summary, the interpretive paradigm has enabled sports coaching researchers to better understand the everyday, social, power-ridden, and

emotional nature of the activity. While such work has undoubtedly extended our understanding of coaching practice, there are several critiques of the interpretive approach to research. Some scholars (e.g. Blaikie, 2007; Rex, 1974) take issue with the way that interpretive researchers do not meddle with, seek to alter, or critique social actors' accounts of their behaviours. Others have criticised interpretivism for failing to adequately acknowledge how structure and discourse influence the social world and the social actors' actions (Giddens, 1984). Somewhat similarly, Fay (1975) criticised interpretivism for failing to provide "a means whereby one can study the relationship between the structural elements of a social order and the possible forms of behaviour and beliefs which such elements engender" (pp. 83-84). In other words, Fay (1975) contends that interpretivism is unable to understand the conditions that give rise to meanings and interpretations, actions, rules, and beliefs. Fay (1975) also argues that focussing on individual meaning-making prevents interpretivism from explaining the pattern of unintended consequences of actions. Finally, Blaikie (2007) suggested that interpretivism is implicitly conservative, in that it fails to pay adequate attention to the structures in society and, hence, the possible causes of social actors' actions. In conclusion then, while a key strength of interpretivism is that individuals define their own meanings within respective cultural, social, and political settings, it appears that some scholars take issue with this view of the social world and nature of knowledge.

2.4. Poststructuralist investigations of sports coaching

Another paradigm that has framed some sports coaching research is poststructuralism (e.g. Denison & Avner, 2011; Denison & Mills, 2014; Mills & Denison, 2013). Like interpretivists, poststructuralist researchers view reality, truth, and knowledge to be fragmented, multiple, multi-faceted, and situated

(Tracy, 2013). In contrast to positivistic researchers who believe that it is possible to be objective and uncover truth and reality through scientific method, poststructuralist scholars believe that “research is inevitably influenced by the social, and thus always contextual, and subjective, whether scientific or sociological” (Avner, Jones & Denison, 2014, p. 43). In other words, poststructuralists question totalising truths and certainty, reject generalised theories that tidily explain a phenomenon, and resist the idea that with more research we can better control the world (Markula & Silk, 2011; Tracy, 2013).

While poststructuralist and interpretivist scholars adopt subjective epistemologies (i.e. individuals make multiple meanings and the researcher’s meanings are a core feature of the research process), poststructuralists do not view particular individuals and groups as either dominant or subordinate (Markula & Silk, 2011). Rather, they believe that everyone, including the researcher, is part of some power relationship (Avner et al., 2014; Markula & Silk, 2011). An important tenet of poststructuralism, then, is that power is relational, and as the majority of individuals have to interact with others, everyone is “always necessarily part of power relations” (Markula & Silk, 2011, p. 48). What further differentiates poststructuralism from positivism and interpretivism is that poststructuralist researchers believe that reality, truth, and knowledge are produced through discourses (Avner et al., 2014; Markula & Silk, 2011). Discourses correspond not only to ways of understanding and knowing a particular social field (e.g. sports coaching), but also to understanding dominant practices within that social field (e.g. sports coaching practices) (Avner et al., 2014; Markula & Silk, 2011). Importantly, poststructuralist researchers argue that “discourses are produced through dynamic and fluid (albeit non-egalitarian) power relations, which frame our understanding of the social world” (Avner et al.,

2014, p. 43). Thus, poststructuralist researchers subscribe to the view that reality and truth are inevitably political as they are necessarily tied to power relations (Avner et al., 2014; Markula & Silk, 2011). Finally, in terms of research methods, poststructuralist researchers typically employ observations, interviews, or textual analyses (Avner et al., 2014).

The aforementioned ontological, epistemological, and methodological assumptions of poststructuralism influence how poststructuralist scholars understand coaching practice and the purpose of coaching research, and how they attempt to investigate the activity (Avner et al., 2014; Markula & Silk, 2011). Broadly speaking, poststructuralist coaching researchers endeavour to shed light on the power relations involved in the production and dissemination of coaching knowledge and how these influence and impact upon how we understand and practice sports coaching (Avner et al., 2014). The work by Denison and colleagues (e.g. Denison, 2007; Denison & Avner, 2011; Denison & Mills, 2014; Mills & Denison, 2013) and Piper and co-workers (e.g. Garratt, Piper & Taylor, 2013; Piper, Garratt & Taylor, 2013; Piper, Taylor & Garratt, 2012) provides two examples of sports coaching research agendas that reflect this poststructuralist approach.

Denison (2007) provides an auto-ethnographic account of his understanding of the poor performance of his long-distance cross-country-running athlete before and after he had engaged with Michel Foucault's theory of disciplinary power. His initial interpretation was that his athlete's poor performance was a consequence of him 'lacking' the necessary mental toughness. In other words, Denison (2007) felt that the problem was with the athlete and therefore did not consider how his own coaching practices may have contributed to the poor performance. However, after engaging with the work of

Foucault, Denison (2007) recognised that his athlete's poor performance could be attributed to the traditional long-distance coaching practices that he uncritically and unreflexively applied. He came to understand that these training principles may have led his athlete to become a docile runner who simply went through the motions in races (Denison, 2007). Moreover, Denison (2007) realised that he himself had become docile, whereby he administered training practices and programmes without giving any consideration towards their potential side effects or unintended outcomes. Such findings highlight how everyday coaching practices may have hidden consequences and the need for coaching practitioners to "consider the disciplining effects of their coaching practices to prevent their athletes from turning into docile bodies or losing a sense of 'ownership' over their performance" (Denison, 2007, p. 381). The study also highlights how it is difficult to generalise coaching knowledge as the activity is context-specific and requires the coach to act on a case-by-case basis (Denison, 2007).

Mills and Denison (2014) also utilised the theorising of Michel Foucault to examine how long-distance-running coaches' understanding and knowledge of how to plan their athletes' practices have been developed, and what impact they have on their understanding of how to coach and the making of the endurance running body. Data for the study were collected by interviewing 15 high-performance male endurance coaches on two separate occasions, as well as a single observation of each coach in their respective training environments (Mills & Denison, 2014). The findings from the study highlighted how the coaches engaged numerous coaching techniques (e.g. precisely controlling athletes' training plans and denying athletes the opportunity to engage in many basic human functions, such as thinking) which may have unintentionally led to their

athletes underperforming (Mills & Denison, 2014). In keeping with the aforementioned work of Denison (2007), the authors concluded that coaches need to accept and critically consider how contemporary endurance training practices can result in a number of problematic consequences which may not only limit an athlete's potential to perform at his or her best, but also undermine the coaches' effectiveness (Mills & Denison, 2014).

In addition to the abovementioned studies, Denison and his co-workers (e.g. Denison, 2010; Denison & Avner, 2011; Denison and Mills, 2014; Denison, Mills & Jones, 2013) have conducted various other research projects from a poststructuralist/Foucauldian perspective. These studies have typically used the same research methods as those discussed above (e.g. interviews, observations, and textual analyses) to explore and critique contemporary coaching practices. For example, Denison and Avner (2011) critiqued the reductionist understandings of positive and ethical coaching and argued that if coaches are to become a positive force for change they must not only engage in an ongoing critical examination of the assumptions and knowledge that inform the way they solve problems, but also carefully consider the effects produced by these problem-solving approaches (Denison & Avner, 2011). In another study, Denison and Mills (2014) employed a Foucauldian analysis to critique contemporary distance running coaching practices which tend to make athletes docile through the use of overly controlling and disciplining training principles, and they argued the need for coaches to adopt more open-ended and flexible coaching plans and practices. In summary, these studies reflect the poststructuralist perspective in that they have utilised the work of Foucault to disrupt, challenge, and problematise existing coaching practice and thinking.

An Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) funded research project which has been principally piloted by Heather Piper, Bill Taylor, and Dean Garratt (e.g. Garratt et al., 2013; Piper et al., 2012, 2013) offers further pragmatic examples of sports coaching work that has been conducted from a poststructuralist perspective. The ESRC research project has been concerned with exploring how sports coaches understand and apply child protection principles and practices when coaching children and young people, and with how coaches consider child protection to have impacted on their coaching roles. Data for the project were collected through interviews with about a hundred sport coaches, as well as from observations of child protection and coaching training events. The data were then principally disseminated through numerous research studies which utilised a Foucauldian analysis as a conceptual frame (e.g. Garratt et al., 2013; Piper et al., 2012, 2013). For example, Garratt et al. (2013) drew upon the Foucauldian concept of genealogy to critically consider the emergence and development of various discourses and how they have shaped child protection and safeguarding policy in sports coaching. Their Foucauldian analysis demonstrated how social and historical concerns about child welfare, coupled with media reports of high-profile cases or critical incidents of child abuse and child death inquiries, have produced a reactionary politics in sport, with arguably numerous unintended consequences for sports coaching practice and policy (Garratt et al., 2013). In particular, the authors argue that the discursive terrains on which child welfare and child protection policy have emerged have led to ongoing fear and confusion, where coaches are stuck between balancing caution and safeguarding on one hand, and enjoyment and performance on the other (Garratt et al., 2013).

In another study, Piper et al. (2013) explored the notion of 'no touch' sports coaching, by positioning it in a broader social context which problematises the way safeguarding is considered and discussed in terms of practice and policy. The research study provides a discussion of risk society, moral panic, and worst case thinking, before utilising Michel Foucault's work on governmentality to explain how the current practice of 'hands-off coaching' arose (Piper et al., 2013). The researchers suggest that the discursive terrain on which child abuse and the safeguarding guidelines and training have emerged has created a coaching environment in which coaching practitioners are fearful and confused, and subsequently unsure of how to be around the children and young people they coach (Piper et al., 2013). Somewhat similarly, the study by Piper et al. (2012), which also used a Foucauldian analysis to explore issues of touch in sports coaching, concluded that the current practice of no touch coaching, and the associated culture of mistrust, will have numerous problematic consequences (e.g. the recruitment and effectiveness of coaches and the development of healthy relationships between coaches and children) which are likely to have negative implications for the levels of achievement in sport.

In summary, the poststructuralist paradigm has enabled sports coaching researchers to map the dominant discourses which have shaped practices, to critique the problematic issues resulting from these discourses, and to promote theory-driven pragmatic inventions to foster more ethical coaching practices (Avner et al., 2014; Markula & Silk, 2011). While such work has undoubtedly added value to the sports coaching literature, there are several critiques of the poststructuralist approach to research. For example, poststructuralism has regularly been accused of determinism, which makes reference to the notion that "individuals are so constrained by power relations that they have no ability to

make any meanings of their own” (Markula & Silk, 2011, p. 52). In other words, poststructuralism has been criticised for having no theory of agency because it views power as being embedded in discourse and, as such, rejects the idea that individuals can make their own choices. Chomsky (1995) has also criticised poststructuralism for being meaningless and promoting obscurantism as it deliberately prevents the full details or the facts of something from becoming known. Moreover, Rorty (1989) and Dawkins (1998) see poststructuralism as having a parasitic bias, because it condemns everything and adds nothing to analytical or empirical knowledge. Somewhat similarly, Rosenau (1991) has argued that poststructuralism is sceptical because it promotes a ‘negative’ agenda, based on the idea of the impossibility of establishing any truth. Finally, Greenfield (2000, 2005) has argued not only that the postmodernist tendency to push political agendas casts doubt on its scientific merit, but also that its anti-theoretical stand is, ironically, a theoretical position. In conclusion, then, while a key strength of poststructuralism lies in its perspective that power is relational, it seems that several issues emanate from this viewpoint too.

2.5. Sport development: From policy to practice

As highlighted above (see section 2.3.), the promotion and development of sport are common features of sport policy and sport development work in many Western nations (Bloyce & Smith, 2010; Bloyce, Smith, Mead & Morris, 2008; Coalter, 2007; Houlihan & Green, 2008). The increasing salience of sport to government and its various policies is an expression of the belief that participation in sport will lead to many positive impacts and outcomes, such as improved fitness, increased sense of well-being, decreased drug use and anti-social behaviour, improved educational performance, and increased employability (Bloyce & Smith, 2010; Coalter, 2007). In addition to being an important aspect

of overall welfare provision, governments in many countries also believe that the multidimensional character of sport can develop the economy through capital investment, job creation, and balance of payments (Bergsgard et al., 2007).

In the context of the United Kingdom, the use of sport and physical activities as vehicles of sport (and social) policy designed to achieve numerous sporting and non-sporting outcomes can probably be traced back to the 1960s (Bloyce & Smith, 2010; Bloyce et al., 2008; Coalter, 2007; Houlihan & White, 2002). Perhaps one of the most notable organisations that played a key role in sport policy and sports development work in Britain at that time was the Central Council for Physical Recreation (CCPR). The CCPR (now formally known as the Sport and Recreation Alliance) was, and still is, an umbrella organisation for the governing and representative bodies of sport and recreation in the UK (see <http://www.sportandrecreation.org.uk/about>). The organisation was formed in 1935 primarily in response to growing concerns over the health of the nation (CCPR, 1960). In 1957, the CCPR commissioned Sir John Wolfenden to examine the state of sport in Britain, and the ensuing *Wolfenden Report*, published in September 1960, not only increased sports status with the government, but also helped provide “the context within which public involvement in sport was considered for the next generation” (Houlihan & White, 2002, p. 18). Among other matters (e.g. the contribution that sport could make to addressing social issues), the majority of the report focussed on the “manifest break between, on the one hand, the participation in recreational physical activities which is normal for boys and girls at school, and, on the other hand, their participation in similar activities some years later when they are more adult” (CCPR, 1960, p. 25). Concern with this so-called ‘Wolfenden Gap’ became a central feature of sport policy that has,

to this date, remained a key political priority and an important area of sport development activity (Bloyce & Smith, 2010).

While there were various changes to the organisation and administration of sport in the UK during the period from the early 1970s to the late 1980s, it was perhaps the 1990s, and in particular when John Major was Prime Minister, when the importance of sport to the government increased substantially (Houlihan & White, 2002). During his time in charge sports development policy went from a period that was marked with a “lack of sustained political interest and direction in sport and sports development” to a period that was characterised by a “sustained increase in public investment in sport, but also one of sustained governmental interest and debate about the role of sport in society” (Houlihan & White, 2002, p. 52-53). Major’s Conservative Government establishment of the National Lottery in 1994 was what Henry (cf. 2002) refers to as the “masterstroke” for [sport and] leisure policy (p. 92). Not only has it since provided increased funding for sport, but it has also helped to change the landscape of sport policy in the UK (Bloyce et al., 2008).

In 1997 the Conservative Government was replaced by a Labour Government and perhaps the most significant sport-related policy published to date appeared during its reign (Bloyce & Smith, 2010). In December 2002 the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the government’s Strategy Unit (SU) published *Game Plan: A Strategy for Delivering Government’s Sport and Physical Activity Objectives* (DCMS/SU, 2002). Central within *Game Plan* “was a focus upon health and community outcomes at a local level, while retaining a focus on elite sport for national governing bodies of sport as well as school and youth sport” (Bloyce et al., 2008, p. 364). In an attempt to realise these objectives, New Labour introduced numerous organisational changes, all of

which articulated the shifting policy priorities for sport in Britain (Bloyce & Smith, 2010; Houlihan & Green, 2008). This ‘modernisation project’ resulted in the policy objectives of the sports councils that cover England, namely Sport England and UK Sport, being streamlined and re-branded, such that Sport England was now to focus upon community sport development, with a specific emphasis on mass participation, social inclusion, and health, and UK Sport had a specific policy remit to develop elite sport (Bloyce et al., 2008; Houlihan & Green, 2008).

If one strand of New Labour’s modernisation was the narrowing of Sport England’s objectives, the other strand was very much the “non-directive approach to local provision, with more use of performance framework tools such as public health focused targets and local PSAs [public service agreements]” (DCMS/SU, 2002, p. 162). In this respect, frontline sport and physical activity providers (e.g. local authorities, schools, and national governing bodies) were, and still are, increasingly expected to supply detailed evidence based data (such as percentage increases in sport and physical activity participation rates) to demonstrate the impact their provision is having on the attainment of sought-after social outcomes (Bloyce & Smith, 2010; Bloyce et al., 2008; Coalter, 2007; Houlihan & Green, 2008).

Although the New Labour Government was replaced by a Coalition Government in 2010, the growing willingness to use sport and physical activity as a vehicle to achieve a range of sporting and non-sporting outcomes has remained. Among the most prominent and recent sport policy documents to have been released in England was *Creating a Sporting Habit for Life: A New Youth Sport Strategy* (DCMS/SE, 2012). This policy saw Sport England allocated a budget in excess of £1 billion to reduce the number of young people (14-25 years old) dropping out of regular participation in sport and physical activity (DCMS/SE,

2012). Thus far these funds have been invested in a variety of schemes, such as Sportivate, Active England, Street Games, and Games4life.

From a conceptual standpoint, such provision can be broadly classified into two categories (Bloyce & Smith, 2010; Coalter, 2007, 2010, 2013). The first is where sport provision, either by external affirmation or implicit assumption, is considered to have inherent developmental properties for communities and participants (Coalter, 2013). The second refers to occasions where sport is used to develop young people (e.g. health, social skills, educational attainment, and confidence). This category is considered to consist of two sub-sets that could be labelled as *sport plus* or *plus sport* (Coalter, 2007). The former refers to occasions where “sports are adapted and often augmented with parallel programmes in order to maximise their potential to achieve developmental objectives”, while the latter is when “sport’s popularity is used as a type of ‘fly paper’ to attract young people to programmes of education and training” (Coalter, 2013, p. 24). In the latter, the systematic development of sport is almost never a strategic objective (Coalter, 2013). Of course, while these ideal types can be separated for analytical purposes, Coalter (2013) acknowledged that they are not always clearly distinguishable in practice. In both cases, outcomes are pursued “via varying mixtures of organisational values, ethics and practices, symbolic games, and more formal didactic approaches” (Coalter, 2013, p. 24).

Importantly, the youth sport strategy document has also further reinforced the need for evidence based policy – already a requirement in place following *Game Plan* – to indicate how well the relevant objectives of the strategy are being met (DCMS/SE, 2012). As Jeremy Hunt stated in the Foreword, *Creating a Sporting Habit for Life* would see “a more rigorous, targeted and results-orientated way of thinking about grassroots sport,” one which “will bring a sharper

sense of direction and purpose across the entire sporting family through payment-by-results ... The most successful organisations will be rewarded; and those which don't deliver will see their funding reduced or removed" (quoted in DCMS/SE, 2012, pp. 2-3). In other words, this policy further cemented the notion that benchmarking, PSAs, target-setting, and performance management and reviews are very much part of the everyday reality of the operations of sport policy and frontline sports development work in the UK (Bloyce & Smith, 2010; Bloyce et al., 2008; DCMS/SE, 2012; Houlihan & Green, 2008).

The steady increase in government and state involvement in sport has attracted considerable academic attention in recent years (Bloyce & Smith, 2010; Bloyce et al., 2008; Coalter, 2007, 2010, 2013; Collins & Kay, 2014; Crabbe, 2008; Flintoff, 2003, 2008; Kay, 2009; Skinner, Zakus, & Cowell, 2008; Smith & Waddington, 2004). In this respect, scholars have explored the government investment in, and direction of, elite sports development (e.g. Green & Houlihan, 2005; Houlihan & Green, 2008), the government's interest in sport's potential contribution to alleviating a variety of social problems (Coalter, 2007), the complex relationship between sport and social capital (Nicholson & Hoye, 2008), the social significance and importance of hosting sporting 'mega-events' (e.g. Preuss, 2004), and the politics associated with numerous aspects of sport policy and sports development (Houlihan & Green, 2006, 2008; Houlihan & White, 2002).

In addition to the variety of issues outlined above, scholars have also increasingly focussed their investigative lenses on how the changing political priorities of government have come to impact upon the implementation of sport policy and sports development work (e.g. Bloyce & Smith, 2010; Bloyce et al., 2008; Flintoff, 2003, 2008; Houlihan & Lindsey, 2008; Penney & Evans, 1997;

Sandford, Armour & Warmington, 2006; Smith, Green & Thurston, 2009; Smith & Platts, 2008; Smith & Waddington, 2004). For example, Bloyce et al. (2008) sought to examine how 16 sport development officers (SDOs) in the West Midlands and the north west of England experienced and managed organisational change. Data for the study were collated through a series of semi-structured interviews that were transcribed and subjected to thematic analysis. The findings indicate that the increasing intervention of government in the sports policy arena, which has seen sport policy priorities move towards the use of sport to achieve a variety of non-sporting objectives, has resulted in many unintended and undesirable outcomes (Bloyce et al., 2008). The authors claim that the government's determination to use sport as a vehicle to achieve non-sporting objectives has constrained SDOs to develop partnerships with wider organisations in order to realise these non-sporting goals. They suggest that these developments, which were also connected to concerns over the increasing 'target-hitting' culture within sports development (Bloyce et al., 2008), have made it increasingly difficult for SDOs to achieve the government's sport-specific policy goals, such as the development of mass participation in sport. In other words, Bloyce et al. (2008) contend that the use of sport to achieve government's non-sporting objectives has not only resulted in SDOs "playing the game (plan)" of securing funding through the promotion of non-sporting goals, but has also undermined the "extent to which government is able to achieve its sporting priorities because it is dependent on the actions of other, seemingly less powerful, groups such as SDOs, who simultaneously seek to protect, maintain, and advance their own individual and/or collective interests" (p. 1).

These findings are very much in keeping with other studies (e.g. Flintoff, 2003, 2008; Smith, Odhams, Platts & Green, 2009 as cited in Bloyce & Smith,

2010) which have sought to address the ways in which teachers working in Specialist Sports Colleges (SSCs) have endeavoured to manage the implementation of the government's SSC policy through the Youth Sport Trust (YST). For example, this research has uncovered how the SSC policy has both constraining and enabling elements for physical education (PE) teachers, which has, ultimately resulted in some unintended outcomes. In this regard, these investigations have illuminated how the government's SSC policy is constraining PE teachers to shape their activities towards the attainment of sought-after policy objectives, even if such goals may be unrealistic. At the same time, however, these constraints are also enabling practitioners to meet the agendas of both their school and personal priorities. In this respect, while the SSC initiative has constrained the conditions under which practitioners work, the PE teachers are, to a greater or lesser extent, simultaneously reinterpreting the SSC policy and implementing the activities of SSC in the ways that they feel are most appropriate in terms of both the local context of their schooling and their own personal interests, an outcome which may not have been intended by the YST or the government (Flintoff, 2003, 2008; Smith et al., 2009 as cited in Bloyce & Smith, 2010).

In addition to highlighting how policy implementation has resulted in numerous outcomes that may be rather different to all the key actors' intentions, scholars (e.g. Bloyce & Smith, 2010; Coalter, 2001, 2007; Davis & Dawson, 1996; Smith & Waddington, 2004) have also argued that an important determinant in the success or, indeed, failure of sport development projects is the personalities of the project workers. Specifically, it has been contended that projects are more likely to achieve sought-after outcomes if the project worker has 'authority' in the eyes of the young individuals attending these schemes, but at the same time is

not seen as an authority figure (Davis & Dawson, 1996). In other words, the authority of project workers must lie in relevant knowledge and practice (Davis & Dawson, 1996), as well as in having a high level of skill in the core sporting activity (Coalter, 2001, 2007; Smith & Waddington, 2004).

Taken together, the aforementioned research suggests that it would be naïve to assume that policymakers can “implement change in such a way that the outcome, within closely defined limits [was] more or less what was intended” (Dopson & Waddington, 1996, p. 533). Among the reasons for this is that while policymakers and other key decision-makers may have a greater ability to make important decisions over things such as the priorities and content of policy, they are nonetheless constrained by the way that groups closer to the point of delivery, including the implementers themselves, “are committed to or opposed to the prevailing policy, and the strategies which they adopt in relation to that policy play an important role in determining its outcome” (Dopson & Waddington, 1996, p. 546). In particular, it seems that the implementer’s pursuit of their own perceived interests, which may coincide, partially coincide, or be at distinct variance with administered policy, significantly impacts on the extent to which the government achieves their formally stated objectives (Bloyce & Smith, 2010; Bloyce et al., 2008; Flintoff, 2003, 2008; Penney & Evans, 1997).

Although this situation has led to various scholars (e.g. Bloyce & Smith, 2010; Coalter, 2007; Dopson & Waddington, 1996; Waddington & Smith, 2009) arguing the need for a better understanding of policy implementation in order to minimise what may be held to be potentially undesirable consequences, so far there remains a paucity of inquiry addressing the working lives of those community sports coaches who are charged with the responsibility of enacting policy initiatives at the micro (face-to-face) level of practice (Cronin & Armour,

2013; Ives et al., 2016; Potrac & Marshall, 2011). This not only includes 'how' and 'why' community sports coaches attempt to achieve desired policy goals in the ways that they do, but also their understandings of the everyday demands and dilemmas that they experience in their work (Cronin & Armour, 2013; Ives et al., 2016; Potrac & Marshall, 2011). Similarly, little consideration has been given towards understanding how contemporary employment trends, such as reduced funding and organisational rationalisation, 'flexible' working hours, vulnerability in the form of zero-hours or short-term employment contracts, increased scrutiny and measurement of workplace performance, and unclear career pathways impact upon the health and well-being of community sports coaching practitioners (Ives et al., 2016).

By health, I do not merely mean the absence of disease. Rather, as the World Health Organisation definition clarifies, health comprises three domains: physical health, mental health, and social health (WHO, 2006). When I use the term health, then, I am making reference to the "ability to adapt and self-manage in the face of social, physical, and emotional challenges" (Huber et al., 2011 p. 1). In other words, health involves several dimensions, including an individual's capacity to fulfil their potential and obligations, the ability to manage one's life with some degree of independence, the ability to participate in social activities including work, the capacity to maintain physiological homeostasis through changing circumstances, and the capability to cope with, and recover from, strong psychological stress (Huber et al., 2011).

While the above helps to clarify my interpretation of health, it is also important to outline what I mean by the term well-being. For me, well-being is most usefully thought of as "a dynamic state, in which the individual is able to develop their potential, work productively and creatively, build strong and positive

relationships with others, and contribute to their community. It is enhanced when an individual is able to fulfil their personal and social goals and achieve a sense of purpose in society” (FMCW, 2008 p. 10). Put another way, well-being makes reference to the quality of people’s experiences of their lives, which may be determined by the following elements: (a) the experiencing of good feelings, (b) the undertaking of activities which are meaningful and engaging, and make the individual feel competent and autonomous, (c) the ability to cope when things go wrong and to be resilient to changes beyond ones immediate control, and (d) the degree to which individuals have supportive relationships and a sense of connection with others (FMCW, 2008).

As noted in the introduction (see chapter 1, section 1.2.), it is unfortunate that scholars have yet to explicitly consider the aforementioned issues. The acquisition of such knowledge would seem important, not only because we cannot naïvely assume that the understandings from the body of research addressing micropolitics and emotions in performance coaching (e.g. Nelson et al., 2013a; Potrac & Jones, 2009a, 2009b) can be naturally and unproblematically applied to the community coaching arena, but also because it has been increasingly acknowledged that (sport) policies are not simply implemented but are, instead, actively translated, interpreted, reconstructed, and enacted by a range of social actors and stakeholders, including community sports coaches (cf. Ball et al., 2012; Flintoff, 2003, 2008; Penney & Evans, 1997; Smith et al., 2009 as cited in Bloyce & Smith, 2010).

In drawing upon the work of various scholars (Ball et al., 2012; Penney & Evans, 1997), it is perhaps important to recognise that community sports coaches are not “automatons or mere puppets” engaged in the linear and straightforward delivery of particular policy goals, objectives, and initiatives (Penney & Evans,

1997, p. 28). Instead, like all the social actors involved in the enactment of policy, they have aspirations, hopes, fears, and worries and are bound up in networks of relations that are influenced by economic and social forces, institutions, people and interests, and, sometimes, pure chance (Ball et al., 2012; Taylor, et al., 1997). Furthermore, as outlined above, “policy cannot implement itself” (Penney & Evans, 1997, p. 28); the actions of delivery partners, such as community sports coaches, are fundamental to the success or, indeed, failure of government initiatives (Bloyce & Smith, 2010; Bloyce et al., 2008; Flintoff, 2003, 2008; Penney & Evans, 1997). As Penney and Evans (1997) note, “although they [community coaches] face ever increasing pressure to respond in set ways, they remain key and influential elements” in the policy process (p. 28). Unfortunately, however, the scholarly understanding of community sports coaching work has yet to adequately consider and explore these realities (Ives et al., 2016).

2.6. Conclusion

The overarching purpose of this chapter was to provide a comprehensive review of existing coaching research. I have not only presented some of the key findings from the literature underpinned by the positivistic, interpretive, and poststructuralist paradigms, but have also critically considered the strengths and limitations associated with such work. By doing so, it is hoped that this chapter has demonstrated the need for a greater understanding of the working lives of those community sports coaches who are responsible for enacting policy initiatives aimed at facilitating various sporting and non-sporting policy outcomes. This includes not only the micropolitical and emotional challenges faced by these practitioners on a daily basis, but also their experiences of the employment demands of such work.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1. Introduction

In this chapter I outline and justify the paradigmatic, theoretical, and methodological positions I adopted for this research study. I then discuss the processes involved in the selection of my sample, introduce my research participants and the scheme under study, and state how I secured access. Following this, I provide a rationale for the research methods used, as well as an in-depth description of how they were utilised to collect data. Next, I describe the approaches, techniques, and theoretical frameworks employed to analyse and make sense of the data obtained. I then discuss the form of representation used in this thesis before finally outlining the criteria by which I would like the reader to judge the 'goodness' of this research.

3.2. An interpretive approach

As demonstrated in the previous chapter, paradigms play a pivotal role in the research process (Gill, 2011; Mallet & Tinning, 2014; Potrac et al., 2014; Sparkes & Smith, 2014; Tracy, 2013). They not only tell "researchers what is important, legitimate, and reasonable to study," but also "what and how to do things" (Sparkes & Smith, 2014, p. 9). Research in the world of sports coaching is often underpinned by the positivistic (e.g. Smith & Smoll, 1990), the interpretive (e.g. Nelson et al., 2013a), or the poststructuralist paradigm (e.g. Denison et al., 2013). When I explored, considered, and responded to the questions posed by the basic beliefs of these paradigms, I found that my assumptions were in keeping with the interpretive paradigm. I adopt an internalist-idealist/relativist ontology (i.e. there is no reality independent of perception), a subjectivist epistemology (i.e. knowledge is subjective and socially constructed), and an ideographical methodology (i.e. the focus is on the individual case) (Markula & Silk, 2011;

Potrac et al., 2014; Sparkes, 1992). From an ontological perspective, then, I reject the assumption “that there is a real world ‘out there’ that can be objectively measured” (Mallet & Tinning, 2014, p. 13). Rather, I believe that the social world is complex and that individuals construct their own meaning within particular political, cultural, and social contexts (Markula & Silk, 2011; Potrac et al., 2014). I am not suggesting that the social world exists solely in an individual’s mind or that “the mind creates what people say and do” (Smith, 1989, p. 74). Rather, as an interpretivist, I subscribe to the view that the mind influences “how we interpret movements and utterances” including “the meanings we assign to the intentions, motivations, and so on of ourselves and others” (Smith, 1989, p. 27).

While my interpretive stance emphasises personal meaning-making, I also believe that our interpretations of the social world may be influenced by a range of social, political, and cultural factors (Howell, 2013; Stryker, 2002 [1980]). Social reality, for me, is the product of how humans, both individually and collectively, interpret and make sense of their social worlds (Markula & Silk, 2011; Smith, 1989). In other words, I do not consider sense-making to be a stable and fixed phenomenon, but rather a process that has the capacity to change in relation to our experiences and sense-making abilities (Sparkes, 1992). Furthermore, I argue that the meaning “an individual attaches to episodes in the social world is open to revision,” as the person “may revisit and re-interpret their own and others’ behaviours in a variety of different, sometimes contradictory, ways” (Potrac et al., 2014, p. 33).

In terms of my interpretive epistemological assumptions, I subscribe to the view that knowledge is socially constructed (Potrac et al., 2014). Here, rather than thinking that the social world is an external reality which can be objectively investigated without influencing it or being influenced by it, I believe that we can

only attempt to understand social reality through subjective interaction (Potrac et al., 2014; Sparkes, 1992). From my interpretive perspective, I view research to be an interactive, subjective, and co-constructed process between the researcher and the researched (Howell, 2013; Potrac et al., 2014; Sparkes & Smith, 2014). This means I believe not only that the “researcher’s questions, observations, and comments shape the respondent’s actions” but also that “the participant’s responses influence the analysis and interpretations of the researcher” (Manning, 1997, p. 96). Thus, while understanding that the experiences of research participants lie at the heart of interpretive inquiry, I acknowledge that I cannot “hope to see the world outside of our place in it” (Sparkes, 1992, p. 27). As will be discussed in more detail later, I recognise that this thesis is a product not only of my interactions and relationship with my research participants, but also of my analytical choices and abilities and my interpretations of, and subscription to, various sense-making frameworks (Markula & Silk, 2011; Potrac et al., 2014).

In terms of my methodological assumptions, I adopt an idiographic methodology to explore and interpret how others make sense of their experiences (Mallet & Tinning, 2014). In other words, I strove to “understand the meaning of contingent, unique, and often subjective phenomena” and to provide “detailed accounts about a small number” of individuals (Mallet & Tinning, 2014, p. 17). Instead of prioritising a breadth of data to formulate generalisations (as would be the case with positivism), the focus is placed on producing ‘thick description’ (i.e. highly detailed and rich accounts about what is heard, seen, and felt) and ‘thick interpretation’ (i.e. analysing events that took place within the research context) (Denzin, 1989; Howell, 2013; Potrac et al., 2014). As will be discussed in the following sections, this involved spending an extended period of time with my

research participants and employing qualitative methods that included participant observations and in-depth interviews (Potrac et al., 2014).

My decision to subscribe to the interpretive paradigm was ultimately driven by my experiences as a community sports coach, undergraduate sports coaching student, and, relatedly, my interpretations of published sports coaching research. As highlighted in the introduction (see chapter 1, section 1.1.), when I interpreted my experiences as a community coaching practitioner I felt that I often had to navigate my way through a context which was characterised by multiple realities, tensions, joys, problems, and interpretations held by various people. There never seemed to be a time where I felt in complete control of events, where other stakeholders and I were interpreting the environment in exactly the same way, and where I was not striving to protect, maintain, and advance my own personal interests. In keeping with recent interpretive coaching research (e.g. Jones & Wallace, 2005; Nelson et al., 2013a; Potrac & Jones, 2009b), then, I felt that power, ambiguity, pathos, social interaction, emotion, and micropolitics lay at the core of my community coaching experiences. As a result, I experienced a strong sense of dissatisfaction when I was exposed to traditional sports coaching research that was underpinned by the positivistic position (e.g. Lacy & Darst, 1985; Smith & Smoll, 1990). I simply felt that this rationalistic, bio-scientific, technical, and largely unproblematic representation of coaching did not adequately capture what I did on a daily basis. Collectively, these experiences influenced my decision not only to situate my research studies within the realm of the interpretive paradigm, but also to focus my investigative lens on exploring the everyday demands and dilemmas that two community sports coaches experienced when implementing a government-funded initiative that aimed to

increase young people's participation in sport and physical activity (Gill, 2011; Sparkes & Smith, 2014).

While some will take issue with this reality, I felt that the interpretive perspective enabled me to develop a less naïve and more reality grounded understanding of this topic area. It has been argued that “the interpretive paradigm lends itself to the exploration and interpretation of the frequently emotional, complex, and negotiated nature of coaches’ and athletes’ lifeworlds” (Nelson et al., 2013, p. 472). Echoing the thoughts of various coaching scholars (e.g. Jones, 2009; Nelson et al., 2013a; Potrac et al., 2014), I believe interpretive inquiry can move our understanding of the activity beyond the largely inhuman representations that have underpinned much of the literature. I am not suggesting the interpretive paradigm is the ‘best’, as I acknowledge that it is insufficient to enable the exploration of all potential research questions in sports coaching science (Mallet & Tinning, 2014). Instead, I argue that the interpretive perspective can provide valuable insights into the world of community sports coaching that cannot be obtained by other research paradigms (Mallet & Tinning, 2014). Simply put, by engaging in interpretive coaching research I believe I have provided an interpretation of the truth which houses the potential to complement published research findings from both this and other paradigms, and therefore contribute to the knowledge of sports coaching (Cushion & Lyle, 2010; Jones & Wallace, 2005; Mallet & Tinning, 2014).

3.3. Theoretical approach: Symbolic interactionism

The present study might be broadly located within the interactionist tradition. That said, it is important to recognise that this is not a unified and unambiguous theoretical perspective (Allan, 2013; Denzin, 1992; Roberts, 2006). The tradition comprises a number of different schools of thought which to some extent reflect

the differences surrounding the initial and continuing influences and the broadening of the body of theory and research (Roberts, 2006). According to Denzin (1992), the heritage and development of symbolic interactionism can be divided into six key phases and time periods, starting with the emergence of the canonical texts in the late 1800s. The canonical phase (1890-1932) describes the period when pragmatism emerged as a distinct philosophical formation in America. Pragmatism rejects “the notion that there are any fundamental truths and instead proposes that truth is relative to time, place, and purpose” (Allan, 2013, p. 37). In other words, pragmatism is “an idea about ideas” (Menand, 2001, p. xi). During this phase, writers such as Mead, James, Dewey, and Cooley developed several forms of pragmatism which have been central to the interactionist heritage. Denzin (1992) describes the period 1933-1950 as the empirical/theoretical phase. This time period saw the rise of second generation interactionists, including Herbert Blumer and Everett Hughes. The period 1951-1970 saw third and fourth generation interactionists including Goffman, Strauss, Stone, and Becker radically alter the perspective. For example, Goffman (1959), barely taking note of Mead or Blumer, developed a dramaturgical framework to understand how people are concerned with the presentation of their character to an audience. Denzin (1992) suggests that the period 1981-1990 was the contemporary phase of symbolic interaction. During this time frame several new variations of symbolic interactionism were developed, including Couch’s (1984) *Constructing civilizations*. In addition to providing an historical overview of the main currents and theoretical formations in symbolic interactionism, Denzin (1992) developed his own stance, interpretive interactionism, which attempts to incorporate elements of poststructural and postmodern theories, feminism, and

cultural studies into symbolic interactionism underlying views of history, culture, and politics.

Despite having several variations, the tradition of symbolic interactionism has some overarching principles that informs its philosophical basis. First, interactionists assume that human beings create the worlds of experience they live in (Denzin, 1992). They do this by acting on things in terms of the meanings things have for them (Blumer, 1969). These meanings are created through interaction, and they are shaped by how people define and interpret the situation and the other people around them (Denzin, 1992; Tracy, 2013). Symbolic interactionism also suggests that human beings are unique because they use symbols (i.e. language), which enables them to “produce a history, a culture, and very intricate webs of communication” (Plummer, 1991, x-xi). Moreover, through this language people produce shared meanings which are always open to reappraisal and further readjustment (Plummer, 1991; Roberts, 2006). Another foundational aspect of this perspective is its explanation of how people come to know their own self. For symbolic interactionists, people understand themselves by imagining how they look to significant others (e.g. friends, family, employers, and peers) (Tracy, 2013). That said, symbolic interactionists suggest that the self is also created through our own agency, not just through the opinions of others (Tracy, 2013). In other words, human beings know themselves through their social performances and through others’ reactions to them (Tracy, 2013). Finally, to understand how meaning is created through interaction, symbolic interactionists typically utilise subjective or naturalistic methods of research practice (Roberts, 2006).

While I broadly located this study within the symbolic interactionist tradition, it is important to highlight that I did not explicitly set out to do so. Rather,

as this study progressed I came to appreciate the utility of the theories from the symbolic interactionist tradition to make sense of my research findings. As I reflect back on my research questions, methodological design, representation, and data analysis I can also see how my research approach aligned to this tradition. This could perhaps be explained by the fact that I was taught and subsequently supervised by academics who subscribe to this way of thinking. Put simply, I would argue that my theoretical beliefs were largely developed through a process of socialisation. That said, it is also important to note that my decision to draw upon the symbolic interactionist framework was not solely due to my socialisation experiences, but also because I was drawn to, and found an affinity with, the writings of symbolic interactionist theorising.

3.4. Methodological approach: Ethnographic research

One of the most established applications for understanding the individual meaning-making process is ethnography (Markula & Silk, 2011). The origins of ethnography can be traced back to nineteenth-century Western anthropology, where it made reference to “an integration of both first-hand empirical investigation and the theoretical and comparative interpretation of social organisation and culture” in a society different from one’s own (i.e. non-Western societies and cultures) (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 1). During the twentieth century, ethnography expanded into forms that focussed on cultural settings in Western society (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Between 1917 and 1942 a large array of sociologists working out of the University of Chicago created the Chicago School of Ethnography (Deegan, 2007). These researchers typically explored how urban ecology shaped the daily lives and symbolic interactions of particular groups in the city (Bulmer, 1984; Deegan, 2007; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). The rise of contemporary ethnography in the latter decades of

the twentieth century saw ethnography spread beyond the disciplinary confines of anthropology and sociology into many other domains of empirical research such as health studies, science and technology studies, and educational research (Atkinson, Coffey, Delamont, Lofland & Lofland, 2007; Markula & Silk, 2011; O'Reilly, 2012).

Despite ethnography contributing to social science research since the nineteenth century, it escapes a standard, well-defined meaning (Atkinson et al., 2007; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). The long and complex history of ethnography may have contributed to this ambiguity (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). As highlighted above, over the course of time, and in each of the abovementioned disciplines, the term ethnography has been recontextualised and reinterpreted in numerous ways in order to address specific issues (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Markula & Silk, 2011; Pole & Morrison, 2003). While the term ethnography is variable and contested, Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) have argued that ethnography, on a fairly practical level, “usually involves the researcher participating, overtly or covertly, in people’s daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, and/or asking questions through informal and formal interviews, [and] collecting documents and artefacts” (p. 3).

Through participating and observing as well as conducting interviews, ethnographers endeavour to interpret the “voices, emotions, and actions of those studied, so that the seemingly taken for granted and invisible features of daily life are captured and made visible” (Denzin, 1990, p. 231). In other words, ethnographers typically use participant observation and interviews to capture the routine and day-to-day activities of people and the hierarchies involved, understand the subjective meaning of these activities from individuals’

perspectives, and produce rich description of social practice (Cushion, 2014; MacPhail, 2004; Pole & Morrison, 2003). A key assumption, then, is that ethnographic methods will enable scholars to better understand the motivations, behaviours, and beliefs of the research participants (Fetterman, 1989; MacPhail, 2004). Indeed, Cushion (2014) contends that ethnographic methods enable coaching scholars to capture the problematic and emotional nature of the activity better than by using any other theoretical approach.

In light of the abovementioned characteristics and benefits, I drew upon some of the broad principles of ethnography to produce ethnographic inspired research. At this juncture, it is important to emphasise that this study was not ethnography as it did not seek to understand the culture of community coaching and policy enactment from the perspective of the group members. Rather, I used participant observations and interviews to gain rich and detailed insights into the motivations, behaviours, beliefs, and emotions of two community sports coaches (Tracy, 2013). Furthermore, I focussed my analysis on issues associated with my research questions and objectives rather than on a broad range of cultural issues (Tracy, 2013). That said, I would argue that, to a certain extent, my study produced some cultural interpretations (Potrac et al., 2014). As highlighted earlier (see section 3.2.), the interpretive paradigm acknowledges that an individual's interpretation of social reality may be influenced by a range of cultural, political, and social issues (Howell, 2013; Potrac et al., 2014; Stryker, 2002 [1980]). Thus, through observing Greg's and James's interactions with a range of stakeholders (e.g. participants and line managers) and through striving to understand how they made sense of their community coaching social worlds, I generated insight into how a number of political, cultural, and social factors influenced their

understandings, behaviours, values, and emotions (Howell, 2013; Potrac et al., 2014; Stryker, 2002 [1980]).

3.5. The participants

3.5.1. Selection of participants

Two participants (Greg and James) were selected for, and subsequently participated in, this research project. My decision to use this sample was determined by a variety of factors (Markula & Silk, 2011; Tracy, 2013). For example, I purposely chose individuals who I felt would provide ‘information rich’ cases about the everyday demands and dilemmas community sports coaches experience when implementing government-funded initiatives that aim to increase young people’s participation in sport and physical activity (Patton, 2002; Sparkes & Smith, 2014). For Patton (2002), the “logic and power” of selecting “information rich cases” lies in the fact that researchers “can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of inquiry” (p. 230). To help ensure that I chose participants who could provide information rich cases, I employed criterion sampling (Patton, 2002; Sparkes & Smith, 2014; Tracy, 2013). Specifically, individuals had to meet the following predetermined criteria: (1) be a community coach; (2) be employed by a community coaching organisation; (3) be actively delivering a publically funded community coaching scheme that aimed to increase young people’s participation in sport and physical activity; and (4) be willing to permit me to observe their interactions with participants during the delivery of a funded scheme. My decision to use these criteria was principally informed by the research objectives of this study (see chapter 1, section 1.3.).

The sample was also influenced by my philosophical position (Markula & Silk, 2011; Potrac et al., 2014). As discussed above (see section 3.2.), interpretive researchers focus on collecting rich and highly detailed data from a

small number of individuals, as opposed to prioritising a breadth of participants to formulate generalisations (Howell, 2013; Potrac et al., 2014). This is because they believe that the social world is constructed within individuals' "subjectivities, interests, emotions, and values" (Sparkes, 1992, p. 25). Accordingly, I chose a small population as I endeavoured to produce 'thick description' and 'thick interpretation' of a small number of community sports coaches (Howell, 2013; Potrac et al., 2014). That said, it should be made explicit that while I only focussed on two community sports coaches, I also observed and explored their interactions with various stakeholders (e.g. participants, line managers, and peers). It should also be noted that the exact sample size was also determined by access. This will be explored in more detail below (see section 3.5.4.).

3.5.2. Participant background information

At the start of my investigation, Greg was 18 years old and employed as a community sports coach at Community Coaching 'R' Us (a pseudonym), a charitable enterprise which delivered a variety of sport and physical activity programmes in the south west of England. The company had less than five full-time members of staff but employed an array of individuals, including Greg, on zero-hours contracts. Greg had level 1 and level 2 coaching qualifications in a variety of mainstream sports and was also studying for his A-levels at a nearby college. He started voluntary coaching in a community setting when he was 14 with the coaching of a local children's rugby team. He thoroughly enjoyed this experience and as a result chose to pursue a career in community sports coaching. He secured his first paid employment at a community coaching organisation when he was 16 years old. One year later, Greg took up his position at Community Coaching 'R' Us. His main responsibilities were to coach target groups such as adolescents from low-income areas, athletes with disabilities, and

schoolchildren. Greg's long-term career goal was to secure a full-time position at Community Coaching 'R' Us.

My second participant, James, was 21 years of age. He had been employed as a zero-hours contract community sports coach for approximately four years at Get Active Community Coaching (a pseudonym), a private sector sport and physical activity provider in the south west of England. The company comprised five departments, with each prioritising a different area of physical activity – from developing and delivering publically funded sports initiatives, events, and activity projects in partnership with various organisations to delivering PE provision in primary schools. With the mission to enhance and cement their position at the forefront of sports service delivery, Get Active Community Coaching aimed to provide inspiring, reliable, engaging, and professional sports coaching provision. At the time of the study, James had level 1 and level 2 coaching qualifications in numerous sports and a BTEC (Business and Technology Education Council) Level 3 Extended Diploma in Sport from a UK further education institution. He started coaching when he was 13 with the coaching of young athletes at his local boxing club. James found this voluntary work to be both enjoyable and rewarding, which ultimately led him to pursue and subsequently accept his community sports coaching role at Get Active Community Coaching when he was 17 years old. James's main responsibilities were to deliver bikeability training for schools and local authorities, provide PE provision in primary schools, offer specialist sports sessions and camps for children of all ages, and deliver sports coaching initiatives to target groups such as the elderly, disadvantaged youth, and the unemployed. His short-term career goal was to secure a promotion to a senior community sports coach at Get Active

Community Coaching, while his long-term aspirations were to set up his own community coaching organisation.

3.5.3. The government-funded scheme

During the study, both Greg and James were charged with the responsibility of facilitating the Kidz 'N' Games (a pseudonym) initiative in two socially deprived communities. Kidz 'N' Games received large-scale investment from Sport England and had been set the task of increasing sports participation among young people (14-25 years old) who live in deprived areas. In an effort to realise this objective, Kidz 'N' Games employed local authorities, community groups, and sports service providers such as Get Active Community Coaching and Community Coaching 'R' Us to promote and deliver informal neighbourhood based sports clubs. The important features of these Kidz 'N' Games sport clubs were that they offered young people living in socially deprived communities accessible and affordable opportunities to take part in sport, provided vibrant, fun, varied, and sociable sessions that enhanced young people's motivation and ability to adopt a sporting habit for life, and used monitoring and evaluation systems to demonstrate how young lives were changed. The government, Sport England, and Kidz 'N' Games ultimately believed that participation at these clubs would result in a variety of positive sporting and non-sporting outcomes, such as improved fitness, increased self-esteem, improved educational performance, and decreased drug use and anti-social behaviour (Bloyce & Smith, 2010; Coalter, 2007; DCMS/SE 2012; DCMS/SU, 2002; Houlihan & Green, 2008).

3.5.4. Gaining access

To gain access to my desired sample I first contacted the local authority in the south west of England. They suggested that I used community sports coaches who were delivering the Kidz 'N' Games government-funded scheme within this

region. Following their instruction, I then attended a Kidz 'N' Games regional meeting where I gave a short 5-minute presentation to the delivery partners. The presentation overviewed the study's rationale, outlined the proposed method, discussed my past experience, provided a statement about confidentiality and organisational protection, and documented my contact details. Following the presentation, Community Coaching 'R' Us and Get Active Community Coaching granted me access to their respective Kidz 'N' Games sport clubs and subsequently gave me the contact details of the community coaches who were delivering these sessions, namely Greg and James. I arranged individual meetings with both Greg and James where I discussed the rationale behind my planned research, the proposed methodology and desired sample, what their involvement in the study would mean to them in terms of time, effort and commitment, and participant and organisational confidentiality. Following this, I invited the coaches to participate in my study, an invitation Greg and James kindly accepted. The ethical issues related to my research were then explained to them and they subsequently provided informed consent. Finally, before my observational period began I provided the relevant parties (e.g. service providers) with various documentation (e.g. Criminal Records Bureau certificate) and they subsequently gave me permission to observe the young performers who attended the scheme.

3.6. Data collection

3.6.1. Participant observations

The first data collection technique I employed was participant observations. I observed Greg delivering 20 different Kidz 'N' Games sessions over a seven month period. In his role, Greg was required to improve the health and well-being of young people in a socially deprived community in the south west of England

through fostering their engagement in rugby-focussed activity. His coaching sessions took place on a Monday evening at a multi-purpose outdoor sports facility, lasted between 30 and 120 minutes, and typically attracted up to 20 participants. James, on the other hand, was observed across a total of 10 different Kidz 'N' Games sessions during a three month period. As an employee of Get Active Community Coaching, James was required to deliver a multi-sports initiative to children in a socially deprived urban neighbourhood in the south west of England. His weekly two hour coaching sessions took place at a local youth centre and attracted between 15 and 35 participants.

I chose to employ participant observations because they allowed me to collect data about the mundane, taken for granted, and unremarkable (to my participants) features of Greg's and James's everyday lives, as well as examine their lives in situ and, as it happened, in 'real time' (Cushion, 2014). This approach also enabled me to gather data on not only what Greg and James said they did (as in interviews), but also what they actually did (O'Reilly, 2012; Sparkes & Smith, 2014). The participant observations also enabled me to build a rapport with Greg and James. This allowed me to grasp an understanding of the language and similar experiences (Cushion & Jones, 2006; MacPhail, 2004) and crucially to be party to conversations and interactions that may not have been shared through any other qualitative method (MacPhail, 2004). Another benefit of using participant observations was that they enabled me to ask Greg and James questions about specific interactions, scenes, and events that I had observed within the subsequent in-depth one-to-one interviews (Merriam, 2009). Indeed, by using a combination of participant observations and in-depth one-to-one interviews, I was able to better understand the motivations, behaviours, and

beliefs of my participants than by using a single method approach (Cushion, 2014; Krane & Baird, 2005; Tedlock, 2000).

Gold's (1958) classic text suggests that a researcher can move through a continuum of participation and observation roles. These range from complete participant and participant as observer through to observer as participant and complete observer. Complete participant is where the "researcher is a member of the group being studied and conceals his or her observer role from the group so as not to disrupt the natural activity of the group," and complete observer is where the "researcher is either hidden from the group (for example, behind a one-way mirror) or is in a completely public setting such as an airport or library" (Merriam, 2009, pp. 124-125). I will not elaborate further on these two positions as, to me at least, it is impossible to be a complete participant or a complete observer. If someone decides to participate in the workings of those under study they become a participant observer, not a complete participant. At the same time, researchers cannot be entirely non-participatory. One cannot be a 'fly on the wall' or use one-way mirrors. As O'Reilly (2012) states, "even trying to act as if we are not there would have effects" (p. 110). For me, the middle two positions better capture the roles a researcher can assume during participant observations.

Participant as observer is where the researcher's observer activities are subordinate to the researcher's role as a participant (Merriam, 2009). This means that the researcher is "involved in the setting's central activities, assuming responsibilities that advance the group, but without fully committing themselves to the members' values and goals" (Adler & Adler, 1998, p. 85). The participant as observer role has several advantages. These include the ease with which participant-researcher relationships can be established, maintained, and extended (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). The close enmeshment to the scene also

allows the researcher to understand participants' values and ask questions (Tracy, 2013). Another advantage is that the researcher is able to move around the setting as they wish, and therefore observe in greater depth and detail (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). Finally, because those under study are aware of the research objectives, it is also easier for the researcher to depart from the scene once they have acquired the required data (Tracy, 2013).

The biggest challenge associated with the participant as observer role is consistently maintaining the trust of those under study and ensuring that they know the research is essentially harmless (Tracy, 2013). Researchers must endear themselves to their participants, ensure that they are aware of their ongoing activities, and meet their various needs and expectations (Tracy, 2013). This stance may also require the researcher to engage in some impression management (e.g. Goffman, 1959) to maintain the individuals' trust and respect and to ensure long-term access to the context of interest (Cushion, 2014; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Tracy, 2013).

Observer as participant refers to a researcher who "enters a scene with an explicit researcher status and a clear agenda of which data to gather in the scene" (Tracy, 2013, p. 128). The researcher's main role is that of information gatherer and they are only marginally involved in participation activities (Merriam, 2009; Sparkes & Smith, 2014). While the observer as participant role has many advantages, namely the ability to ask questions and to be accepted as a colleague without having to become a member of the group under investigation (Merriam, 2009; Sparkes & Smith, 2014), it also has several limitations. Researchers have to rely more heavily on their own interpretations of what they see and hear as they are not close enough to the scene to intuitively feel (Tracy, 2013). This also means that there is a greater chance of misunderstanding

(Tracy, 2013). Furthermore, the researcher's lack of involvement in the setting can create a source of tension in the participant-researcher relationship, especially in a busy work environment, such as a sports club (Sparkes & Smith, 2014).

While I have described these two participant-observer roles as separate entities, in practice they were not static (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Merriam, 2009; O'Reilly, 2012). I found that I often interchanged between the participant as observer and observer as participant roles throughout my research project; sometimes I participated more and sometimes less (O'Reilly, 2012; Sparkes & Smith, 2014). The important issue to note is that my role was explicitly informed by my research interests. For example, during my early observations I often adopted what can best be described as an observer as participant role. I focussed my energies on observing, listening, learning, asking questions, being friendly and polite, helping out in some organisational matters (e.g. collecting equipment), treating my participants as complete individuals by showing an interest in their wider social lives, finding some common ground, and offering neutral responses. I assumed this role not only to maintain the much desired marginal position between being close enough to my participants to gain an understanding, yet simultaneously far enough away to notice what was going on from an outsider's perspective (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; O'Reilly, 2012; Tracy, 2013), but also to build rapport with my participants (Merriam, 2009). Indeed, the development of a good rapport was a key consideration of the roles I undertook throughout my observational period because "in order to be accepted and talked to and have people share their experience and ideas with you, you have to gain trust and establish friendships" (O'Reilly, 2012, p. 96). In essence, I was aware

that my research desires hinged on the establishment of a strong participant-researcher relationship (Cushion, 2014; O'Reilly, 2012; Tracy, 2013).

Once I had established a strong rapport with my participants, I switched between the observer as participant and participant as observer roles on a more frequent basis, often multiple times in a single observation. I did this to gain access to different kinds of data (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007) and to further develop my friendship with my participants. For example, I often participated in the sporting activities (e.g. football matches) that were organised by my two participant coaches and I also set up and managed various tournaments (e.g. table tennis) throughout my observational period. By adopting a participant as observer role during these activities I was able to go beyond the five senses of what I saw, heard, touched, tasted, and smelt to what I also felt (Tracy, 2013). This enabled me to better understand and make sense of my participants' experiences as I was able to "intuitively feel" some of the tensions, challenges, and emotions that were associated with their community sports coaching role (Tracy, 2013, p. 109). This active, fun, friendly, polite, and helpful position also aided the development of a strong rapport with my participant coaches which, in turn, went a long way towards securing ongoing access and rich data (Tracy, 2013).

Despite the many positives associated with the participant as observer role, I also adopted an observer as participant role on many occasions as I felt that it would allow access to better data (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; O'Reilly, 2012). For example, when the young individuals who attended these schemes were partaking in anti-social behaviour I was only marginally involved in the situation. I adopted this stance as I felt it would better enable me to watch and

listen, and then ask questions about the ways that my participant coaches' behaved during these social situations (Tracy, 2013).

In summary, the most important point to note here is that my role was explicitly informed by my research interests. That is, I always attempted to adopt a position which I felt would help me to gain access to meaningful data and thus answer my research questions. This in turn required me to change my position along a continuum from participant as observer to observer as participant in response to the social situation (e.g. my participants' actions, behaviours, and comments). This allowed me to obtain rich, detailed, and creative data as I was marginally positioned between being an insider and an outsider and between being involved and detached, and poised between strangeness and familiarity (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; O'Reilly, 2012). By adopting this marginal position I was also able to learn from my participants' experiences while minimising the dangers of over-rapport (Cushion, 2014). Indeed, I never had to worry about the danger of 'going native' or the bias of 'over-rapport' as there was always some social and intellectual 'distance' between me and my participants (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). That is not to deny that there were times when I engaged in social interaction for pleasurable reasons, but the point is that I never totally committed myself to the setting or to a particular moment. I always strove to be alert, with "more than half an eye on the research possibilities that can be seen or engineered from any or every social situation" (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 91).

3.6.2. Fieldnotes

Transforming my experiences and observations into data through written fieldnotes was another core activity that helped to produce and, ultimately, shape the final findings presented in this thesis (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 2007, 2011).

Fieldnote writing is a process whereby a participant observer transforms a piece of their lived experience into a textual domain (Emerson et al., 2007, 2011). It “serves to consciously and coherently narrate and interpret observations and actions in the field, offering creative depictions of the data observed” (Tracy, 2013, p. 114). In other words, fieldnotes are a form of representation, a way of transforming just-witnessed events, persons, and places into a written document (Emerson et al., 2007, 2011). As representations, fieldnotes never provide a complete record and they are unavoidably selective (Atkinson, 1992; Emerson et al., 2007; O’Reilly, 2012; Scheper-Hughes, 2000). Researchers write about things that seem significant or relevant to their research, and hence ignore or leave out matters that they do not perceive to be important (Emerson et al., 2007; O’Reilly, 2012). Perhaps more importantly, fieldnote texts are also selective in what they do incorporate as they unavoidably present or frame incidents in a specific way and, as such, miss out other ways that incidents may have been presented (Emerson et al., 2011). Writing a descriptive fieldnote, then, is not simply a matter of producing accounts that mirror reality, or record facts about what occurred. Rather, it is an “active” process of “interpretation and sense-making” that “embodies and reflects particular purposes and commitments” (Emerson et al., 2007, p. 353).

For me, this interpretive process started during my participant observations (Emerson et al., 2007, 2011). I was aware that it would be impossible for me to record everything that I observed (Emerson et al., 2011; O’Reilly, 2012; Scheper-Hughes, 2000) so I purposely looked for events and interactions that I felt were significant in relation to answering my research questions (Emerson et al., 2007, 2011; Lofland & Lofland, 1995). When I witnessed incidents or encounters that I regarded as significant, I made mental

notes or head notes (Emerson et al., 2011). Although the vast majority of what was turned into full fieldnotes was recorded in my head, I also jotted down notes. That is, I made “brief written record of events and impressions captured in key words and phrases” (Emerson et al., 2011, p. 29). I found that making jottings while I was participating in the field helped me to accurately recall the details of significant interactions and events when I reconstructed my observations into full written fieldnotes (Emerson et al., 2007, 2011; O’Reilly, 2012; Tracy, 2013).

While my investigation was overt and my participants were aware of my research endeavours, I was very sensitive to the ways in which openly jotting down notes might have negatively impacted upon my relationship with Greg and James and the authenticity of their behaviours and interactions (see Scheper-Hughes, 2000). As a result, I chose to take jottings in an inconspicuous or unobtrusive manner by using my mobile phone rather than a more traditional transcribing method such as paper and pen. This gave my research participants the impression that I was merely texting or emailing a friend or colleague rather than writing notes about them and their behaviours (O’Reilly, 2012). While some argue against this approach and urge researchers to adopt an open jotting stance (e.g. Emerson et al., 2011), based upon my interpretations of published literature (e.g. Emerson et al., 2011; O’Reilly, 2012; Scheper-Hughes, 2000) I felt that an open jotting stance was more likely to have negative implications for my relationship with Greg and James and the way that they conducted themselves in the field. Of course, if my participants discovered that I had been taking notes there was still the potential for awkward or tense encounters and the likely development of a strained participant-observer relationship, but this was a concern I was prepared to live with.

In addition to considering how to take my jottings, I also had to give thought to when and where I took them. Making jottings in the midst of significant talk and activities can impact upon the researcher's ability to pay meticulous attention to what is happening as they will unavoidably miss important interactions, movements, and expressions when they are frantically scratching down notes (Emerson et al., 2011). Taking jottings during activities is not always desirable for other reasons too. For example, if the researcher is actively involved in the ongoing scene, event, and interactions it would be inappropriate, or even impossible, to jot down notes (Emerson et al., 2011; O'Reilly, 2012). Being aware of these potential problems, I jotted down notes about scenes, incidents, or conversations that I deemed to be significant or interesting immediately after they occurred rather than when they were occurring (Goffman, 1989). In other words, I waited until my participants began to engage in something that I perceived to be insignificant and I was not actively involved in before making my jottings (Emerson et al., 2011; O'Reilly, 2012).

Immediately following the completion of each observation I returned to my desk at home and transformed my headnotes and jotted notes into full typewritten fieldnotes, using a standard word processing program on my computer. I chose to write my fieldnotes immediately after leaving the field as I was aware that memories fade quickly (Tracy, 2013). Indeed, Emerson et al. (2011) argue that fieldnotes which are not composed immediately or soon after returning from the field tend to be simplified summaries rather than rich and detailed reconstructions. Thus, by constructing my fieldnotes immediately after each observation I helped to maintain freshness, detail, accuracy, and quality (Emerson et al., 2011; O'Reilly, 2012; Tracy, 2013).

The first strategy that I implemented when I sat at my computer was to trace and recall significant scenes, incidents, and conversations in a bullet-point format. These brief descriptions or references to significant events that unfolded during an observation were developed in chronological order. That is, I traced my observation from start to finish, and made bullet-point notes on interesting or significant events in the order that I observed and experienced them. These bullet-point notes, coupled with my jotted notes, helped to aid my memory of events (Emerson et al., 2011). They acted as a guiding framework, providing links back to my observations and experiences, which ultimately helped me to actively repicture and reconstruct these witnessed events in a written format (Emerson et al., 2011; Tracy, 2013). Simply put, they helped to anchor the process of writing full fieldnotes (Emerson et al., 2011; O'Reilly, 2012).

While my jottings and bullet-point notes helped to guide the writing process, constructing full fieldnotes from these recordings was not simply a process of 'expansion' on the basis of memory. As stated above, it was an active process of selection and interpretation (Emerson et al., 2011). This involved not only what to include but also what to leave out from my jottings, bullet-point notes, and headnotes (Emerson et al., 2011). For example, I often found that I had jottings about specific events and conversations but, for numerous reasons (e.g. not related to my research questions), I chose not to include them into my full fieldnotes. At the same time, I also found that I often incorporated activities that I had made no jottings or bullet-point notes about. In keeping with Emerson et al. (2011), then, I would argue that by transforming my headnotes, jottings, and bullet-point notes into full fieldnotes I engaged in a process of preliminary analysis whereby I incorporated or rejected noteworthy events based upon my research purpose and interests and my socialisation experiences.

While a key objective of my fieldnote construction was to write in a loose and flowing style in order to record as much detail as possible before my memories started to fade (O'Reilly, 2012; Tracy, 2013), I also wrote with an envisioned audience (e.g. supervisors, academics, and students) in mind. That is, I attempted to write in a way that would allow other individuals to not only understand what was going on, but also crucially come to their own conclusions about its meaning (Emerson et al., 2011; Tracy, 2013). By adopting this approach I felt that I could better guard against taking detail 'short-cuts', using evaluative wording, and inadvertently summarising what I had observed and experienced. Indeed, Emerson et al. (2011) suggest that by self-consciously writing fieldnotes for an "ultimate, broader audience, notes will be richer; they will provide more background, context, and detail" (p. 93).

To help achieve this objective, I implemented various writing and organisational strategies. For example, I wrote my fieldnotes as "episodic tales" (Emerson et al., 2011, p. 113). For each observation I wrote about significant events or episodes one after another and in the sequence in which I observed and experienced them. Many of these fieldnote episodes were isolated incidents. They were only linked to other episodes or written within the same fieldnote document because they occurred during the same observation. As a result, I also wrote "transitional summaries" to provide a concise link between episodes (Emerson et al., 2011, p. 79). By using this strategy, I hoped to allow the reader to understand not only what happened during the period of time between each significant episode, but also how I 'transitioned' from one episode to the next (Emerson et al., 2011).

In terms of writing strategies, I tried to follow Goffman's (1989) advice of writing as "fully and lushly" as I could (p. 131). For example, I attempted to

interpret knowledge that is never explicitly articulated but is publicised through the intricacies of shared cultural understanding, such as smirks, stolen glances, and eye rolls, in rich detail rather than summarising it through abstract generalisations (Tracy, 2013). I also tried to show the (anticipated) reader how and why I felt a scene was, for example, exciting or scary, by using adjectives, active verbs, and adverbs to convey detail rather than merely telling the reader that it was exciting or scary. In this sense, I strove to describe a scene or event through using concrete, multi-sensory details and actions (Emerson et al., 2011; Spradley, 1980; Tracy, 2013).

Another writing strategy that I implemented was to write my fieldnotes from a perspective of real time incomplete knowledge (Emerson et al., 2011). This means that I sought to describe events as an in-process discovery rather than from an end-point position (Emerson et al., 2011). Writing about events as they unfolded in real time helped me to recall details and produce accurate descriptions. Writing real-time descriptions also helped to “preserve the qualities of uncertainty and indeterminacy that characterise much of social life” (Emerson et al., 2011, p. 109).

I also made sure that I did not ignore my presence as both a participant in, and observer of, the events that unfolded in the field (Emerson et al., 2011). I chose to adopt this stance as, for me at least, a researcher cannot write fieldnotes from any perspective other than their own. In other words, I contend that the researcher’s involvement in the events and interactions that occur in the field implicitly shapes the perspective from which they can write about them. For example, when I was an active member of an unfolding event or interaction, I wrote from a first-person orientation. However, when I was not actively involved in an unfolding incident, I wrote about others’ activities and interactions from a

third-person point of view. By shifting between first- and third-person orientations I could effectively depict to the reader what others said and did, but also how my observations were understood, conveyed, and influenced by me, the participant-observer researcher.

Finally, I also reproduced the conversations that took place in the field as accurately as possible in my fieldnotes. I did this because dialogue can offer invaluable insights into the views and perceptions of those under study (Emerson et al., 2011; Tracy, 2013). While I tried to reproduce the exact conversations that occurred during my observations I would not claim that the dialogue included in my fieldnotes, and ultimately the final fieldnote excerpts presented in this thesis, was verbatim. This is because it represents “an analytical interpretation and selection” of talk and action (Psathas & Anderson, 1990, p. 75). For example, I reproduced conversations from memory and my jotted notes rather than from audio recordings, I chose when to punctuate to denote the end of a phrase or sentence, I determined the tone of a conversation or statement by the type of punctuation I used, and I decided the meanings of members’ talk when they sent complex messages through incongruent, seemingly contradictory and ironic verbal and nonverbal expression as in sarcasm or polite putdowns (Emerson et al., 2011). Thus, while I tried to accurately capture the conversations that occurred in the field within my fieldnotes, as they offered some valuable and fascinating insights, I acknowledge that the dialogue was not verbatim as it was a product of my interpretation and analytical selection (Psathas & Anderson, 1990). It is also important to point out that the names of any individuals, organisations, and places that were used within my fieldnotes were pseudonyms. I did this in order to ensure anonymity and confidentiality (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Purdy, 2014).

Although the main aim of my written fieldnotes was to coherently describe just-witnessed events, as well as people's reactions to these happenings, I naturally began to reflect on and hence (tentatively) interpret and analyse what I had just experienced and observed (Emerson et al., 2007, 2011; Lofland & Lofland, 1995; Schatzman & Strauss, 1973). In an effort to capture these analytic ideas and inferences and to make them available for additional interpretation and analysis, I also engaged in numerous forms of in-process analytical writing during the midst of, or shortly after, producing my written fieldnotes (Emerson et al., 2011; Lofland & Lofland, 1995; O'Reilly, 2012; Tracy, 2013). For example, when I was actively composing a fieldnote I wrote asides or comments in 'balloons' in the margin of the document (Emerson et al., 2011). These asides were brief reflective bits of analytical writing that succinctly "explained, interpreted, clarified, or raised questions about some specific happening or process described in a fieldnote (Emerson et al., 2007). Importantly, I also used these asides to convey my emotional responses and personal reactions to the scenes, incidents, and conversations considered within the fieldnote. This information proved to be extremely valuable as it provided important analytical leads into the emotions and experiences of my two participant coaches (Ellis, 1991; Goffman, 1989; Lofland & Lofland, 1995).

In addition to writing analytical asides, I also wrote an 'analytical commentary' immediately after I finished composing each of my fieldnotes. These commentaries, which were written in separate paragraphs directly underneath my fieldnotes and set off with parentheses, offered a more detailed reflection on the events and issues that were documented within the fieldnotes. For example, I often answered the following questions in my commentaries: 'What did I learn today?' 'Was that in keeping with, or different from, my previous observations?'

How?' 'What did I find particularly interesting or significant? Why?' 'What was my emotional response and personal reaction to these encounters? Did that appear to be in keeping with, or different from, my participant's feelings and emotional reactions?' While answering these questions required more sustained thought and interpretation, these commentaries did not (or were not designed to) offer a final analysis, but rather were to document and explore emerging theoretical possibilities and to provide guidance for future observations and analysis (Emerson et al., 2007, 2011).

3.6.3. *Interviews*

Following the completion of my participant observations, I collected further data through a series of one-to-one (pre-arranged) in-depth interviews. The interview process with each coach started shortly after the completion of my participant observations and was brought to a close when I felt data saturation was reached (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Merriam, 2009). That is, I interviewed each coach until almost no new data were provided in relation to the specific purpose of this investigation (Nelson et al., 2013a). In practice, this meant that I interviewed Greg on 12 separate occasions with each interview lasting approximately 90 minutes and James 14 different times with the average duration of each interview being 75 minutes.

I chose to collect further data through a series of interviews as I believed they would provide a more detailed insight into why and how Greg and James interpret their social worlds (Cushion & Jones, 2006; Jones et al., 2004; Purdy, 2014). While I took any opportunity to listen and to ask Greg and James questions about their actions and interactions during my participant observations, I was only able to generate superficial insights into the meanings they made of their experiences, as well as their emotions, opinions, and feelings. This was largely

because our discussions were often interrupted by other people (e.g. participants and line managers) and by unfolding events. Consequently, I felt that it was necessary to conduct a series of interviews with Greg and James to try to gain a better understanding of their ideas, thoughts, opinions, and feelings (O'Reilly, 2012; Patton, 2002). For example, the interviews enabled me to access information on events that occurred outside of my participant observations, as well as on Greg's and James's backgrounds, interests, and motivations (Merriam, 2009; Silverman, 2001). The interviews were also extremely beneficial for shedding light on, and enriching, the data I obtained throughout my participant observations as I had the opportunity to ask Greg and James to explain, confirm, contradict, defend, or expand upon my interpretation of the events I had observed (Tracy, 2013). Indeed, by following my participant observations with a series of in-depth interviews I was able to delve into and explore the thoughts, emotions, and meanings Greg and James gave to the things that they actually did (O'Reilly, 2012). In short, by complementing my participant observations with in-depth interviews I was able to better capture the often complex, chaotic, ambiguous, and negotiated working lives of these two community sports coaches (Cushion & Jones, 2006; Jones, 2006; Potrac & Jones, 2009b).

Research methods textbooks tend to suggest that a qualitative researcher may use a structured, semi-structured, or unstructured interviewing format (e.g. Merriam, 2009; O'Reilly, 2012). A structured interview is a "highly standardised and purposefully inflexible way of interviewing" (Sparkes & Smith, 2014, p. 84). Here, the researcher uses a predetermined interview schedule to guide the direction of the interview (O'Reilly, 2012). This means that the researcher asks the interviewee those questions that have been developed in the pre-established interview schedule (Purdy, 2014; Tracy, 2013). Furthermore, the questions are

asked in exactly the same order as stated in the interview schedule and no additional questions can be added during the interview (Purdy, 2014; Tracy, 2013).

While structured interviews are beneficial to those who want to compare and contrast data across a large-scale sample (Tracy, 2013), there are several shortcomings associated with this technique. For example, it may be difficult to uncover the interviewee's perspective and understanding of the world because the researcher is only able to ask those questions stated within the predetermined interview schedule (Merriam, 2009). Furthermore, because the researcher is unable to ask additional questions or attend to nonverbal cues by strategically using follow-ups or probes, this approach assumes that the participant's first answer to a question is truthful and singular even if nonverbal expressions such as hesitations suggest otherwise (Tracy, 2013).

At the opposite end of the interview spectrum is the unstructured interview. This is the most free-flowing, spontaneous, flexible, and organic interview technique available to a qualitative researcher (O'Reilly, 2012; Purdy, 2014; Tracy, 2013). Here, the interviewer has a broad range of topics or areas they would like to discuss (Merriam, 2009). However, unlike the structured interview, the researcher can explore and follow up issues or ideas raised by the interviewee as and when required (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). In this sense, emphasis is placed on the "natural flow of interaction and the knowledge and experience of the researcher and participant" (Purdy, 2014, p. 162). Indeed, the researcher adopts the stance of a listener and reflector as much as that of a questioner (Tracy, 2013).

There are several advantages to unstructured interviews. Most notably, they allow for the participant's emotions, opinions, and experiences, and the meanings they give to their experiences, to flourish in detailed ways (Sparkes & Smith, 2014; Tracy, 2013). The lack of structure or researcher control also allows for unanticipated, spontaneous, and potentially exciting data to emerge (Kvale & Brinkmann, 1996). At the same time, however, the unstructured nature of this interviewing technique can present problems. The researcher needs not only to have a clear understanding of their research goals and relevant literature, but also the ability to develop, adapt, and generate questions that are appropriate to both the situation and the overriding purpose of the study (Merriam, 2009; Tracy, 2013). Indeed, if the researcher is unable to handle the situational flexibility that unstructured interviews demand there is a risk of obtaining an overwhelmingly large volume of unconnected data that are difficult to interpret and analyse (Merriam, 2009; Sparkes & Smith, 2014).

The final interview technique available to the qualitative researcher is the semi-structure interview. In this approach the researcher uses a predetermined interview guide to help focus the direction of the conversation, but they also explore additional ideas and topics that arise throughout the discussion (Purdy, 2014; Sparkes & Smith, 2014). The semi-structured interview is the most commonly used interview method within sports coaching research (Purdy, 2014). This is because the moderately tight structure enables the researcher to obtain data about a particular phenomenon while also providing the interviewee the opportunity to express their own thoughts and feelings (Merriam, 2009; Purdy, 2014; Sparkes & Smith, 2014). It has been argued that a one-to-one semi-structured interview with open-ended questions allows a researcher to acquire an in-depth understanding of the interviewee's opinions, feelings, ideas, beliefs,

values, and attitudes about a particular topic of interest (Purdy, 2014; Sparkes & Smith, 2014). Although this is extremely advantageous, this technique does have some potential drawbacks. For example, due to the relatively tight structure, there is a risk of reducing or losing some of the complexity of the participant's life (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). Furthermore, unless a strong rapport is established between the researcher and the participant there is the potential that the participant may withhold certain types of information or experiences (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). Finally, because this technique encompasses an unstructured element there is the danger of collecting a wealth of "dross rate" data (Sparkes & Smith, 2014, p. 85).

After considering the positives and negatives associated with each of the aforementioned forms of interview, I decided to implement a combination of semi-structured and structured interviews (Merriam, 2009; Sparkes & Smith, 2014). I chose to do this as I felt that there were times when one form was more appropriate to employ than another (Purdy, 2014). For example, during the initial interviews I used a semi-structured approach to gather demographic and background information in relation to my participants' current community sports coaching roles, coaching qualifications, employment history, and short- and long-term career aspirations. I hoped that by focussing the initial conversations around these 'non-threatening' and 'easy to answer' topics, I would not only generate new understandings (Tracy, 2013), but also help Greg and James to become comfortable with the interview process (Purdy, 2014; Tracy, 2013).

Once I felt that my participants were comfortable with the interview process and I had acquired sufficient background information, I continued to use the semi-structured interviewing technique. I employed this approach to explore significant interactions, events, and scenes that occurred during my participant

observations, Greg's and James's understandings of their role expectations and requirements, and how they attempted to manage their relationships with key contextual stakeholders. My decision to ask questions in relation to these topics (as well as new areas of inquiry that emerged during the discussions) was driven by my research questions, my reading of relevant social theory and sports coaching literature, my own community sports coaching experiences, and importantly the data I had obtained during my participant observations and previous interviews (O'Reilly, 2012).

To help gather rich, meaningful, and storied data in relation to the topics outlined above, I also provided Greg and James with various fieldnote excerpts and then asked a series of questions about them. For example, "Can you describe to me the types of emotions you experienced during this incident?" or "What underpinned your actions and behaviours within this scene?" By using this method I was able to ask Greg and James questions about their experiences in different and perhaps more appropriate ways (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). I was also able to help them recall key events and encourage them to speak in rich and detailed ways (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). It also provided Greg and James with the opportunity to give meanings, rationales, explanations, and justifications for their actions and behaviours (Tracy, 2013). Indeed, one of the main benefits of this approach was that it allowed them to speak vividly about the ways that they interpreted and understood events documented in the fieldnote excerpts.

For the final few interviews with both Greg and James I employed what could be best described as a 'highly structured semi-structured' interview method to gather additional 'fill-in-the-gap' data in relation to the topics outlined above. In practical terms, this meant that I utilised an interview schedule to direct the interaction, as well as clarification and elaboration probes (discussed at length

below). This allowed me to obtain clear, comprehensive, and in-depth information about very specific areas of interest. The pre-established questions asked in these interviews were again driven by my research objectives, my reading of relevant theory, my own community sports coaching experiences, and previously obtained data, but also by my ongoing attempts to write the results chapter of this thesis. As will be discussed at length within the data analysis section of this methodology (see section 3.7.), writing the results chapter of this thesis was not a distinct activity that occurred after data collection and analysis, but rather ran simultaneously alongside them. In short, writing was a form of analysis that enabled me to identify gaps in my collected data, which in turn guided those questions that I asked at this stage of the interview process (Richardson, 1990).

As highlighted above, I employed elaboration and clarification probes throughout the interview process. I did this not only to try to ensure that clear and in-depth accounts, responses, and stories were obtained, but also to provide Greg and James with the opportunity to confirm, correct, or build on my interpretation of what they were trying to explain (Gratton & Jones, 2010; Merriam, 2009; Sparkes & Smith, 2014). For example, when I was unclear about what Greg or James were striving to convey I would make comments such as “I’m sorry, I don’t quite understand what you mean. Can you describe it again to help me understand?” However, when I wanted to elicit further details about a particular point I asked follow-up questions such as “Can you tell me more about that?” or “Can you provide an example for me?” Through using these probing techniques I was able to gather additional data and delve deeper into Greg’s and James’s life stories (Merriam, 2009; Sparkes & Smith, 2014; Tracy, 2013).

In addition to considering which form of interview to employ, I also gave thought to how various other applied issues may impact upon the interview

process (Purdy, 2014). For example, I gave consideration to the context of the interview as I was aware that the setting can influence the content of interviews (Manderson, Bennett & Andajani-Sutjahjo, 2006; Sin, 2003). Research methods texts (e.g. Merriam, 2009; Purdy, 2014; Tracy, 2013) encourage scholars to find a suitable location in terms of the participant's needs, and access and safety (e.g. a quiet and comfortable public location with adequate privacy). In an effort to realise this objective, I followed the combined advice of Tracy (2013) and Purdy (2014) whereby I suggested numerous settings that I felt were appropriate and then asked each of my participants to choose their preferred location from the options provided. This helped to ensure not only that the setting was appropriate for collecting in-depth information, but also that the participants were happy with the location (Tracy, 2013). In the end, both Greg and James chose a (different) coffee shop for the location of their interviews. It is also worth noting that the setting stayed the same throughout the interview process. This was a conscious decision as a change in location may have had negative implications for the direction, dynamic, and content of the interviews (Manderson et al., 2006; Sin, 2003).

I also gave consideration towards my appearance and general conduct as it has been contended that these issues may influence participant talk (Merriam, 2009; O'Reilly, 2012; Sparkes & Smith, 2014). I purposely wore casual clothes (e.g. jeans, T-shirt, and trainers) for every interview rather than more formal attire (e.g. a suit or University of Hull branded clothing) or sports clothing. I felt that the informal attire would help Greg and James to feel at ease and thus encourage them to talk freely. I also wanted to disassociate myself from my 'academic' or sports coaching 'expert' status as this may have provoked measured and restricted responses from my participants (Cushion, 2014; O'Reilly, 2012). In

terms of my general conduct, I continued to act in the same friendly, polite, and respectful manner as in my participant observations. I also attempted to be an 'active listener' throughout the interview process by being attentive and responsive (Sparkes, 2000; Sparkes & Smith, 2014). For example, I strove to present a bodily demeanour that not only demonstrated I was listening, but that I was extremely interested in what my participants were saying (O'Reilly, 2012). I also shared some of my own stories in relation to certain topics (e.g. my community sports coaching experiences and career ambitions) throughout the interviews (Bowman, Bowman & Resch, 1984; Denzin, 1989). Through adopting this friendly, interactive, and story-sharing role I hoped to maintain and enhance the rapport between me and my participants. This was important because a strong participant-researcher relationship can help to elicit rich and meaningful data (Rubin & Rubin, 2005; Sparkes & Smith, 2014; Tracy, 2013).

To help ensure a complete and accurate record of the data, I recorded all of the interviews on an audio recording device (Purdy, 2014). Recording the interviews allowed me not only to focus on the dynamics and topic of the interviews, but also to review and re-listen to the dialogue (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Purdy, 2014). The recording of each interview was also transcribed verbatim. That is, I transformed the exact words spoken by my participants into written text in a word processing program (Riley, 1990). This included hesitations, pauses, laughter, silences, 'ums' and 'ahs', and comments such as 'like' and 'you know' (Purdy, 2014). That said, in order to ensure confidentiality I did mask the information that may have revealed the identity of the interviewees and the individuals and organisations that they mentioned (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). This was achieved through the use of pseudonyms (Purdy, 2014). After each transcript had been created I gave the relevant participant a copy of it to confirm

that it offered an accurate representation of the interview (Purdy, 2014). Returning the interview transcripts also afforded Greg and James the opportunity to negotiate what information was made public (King & Horrocks, 2010; Purdy, 2014).

Finally, I also gave consideration to how the audio recording device may influence the interview process. To help Greg and James feel comfortable with the recording device, I followed the guidelines of Purdy (2014) who stated that researchers should make the participant “aware of the confidentiality of their participation, and what will happen to the recordings” (pp. 167-168). For example, I explained how (1) the content of the interviews would be confidential, (2) both the audio and transcribed recordings would be stored on my personal password protected laptop, (3) I would be the only individual who would have access to the audio and transcribed recordings, (4) upon the completion of the investigation they could decide whether the audio and transcribed recordings are kept by me for further analysis, destroyed, or returned to them, (5) their names and the names of any individuals, organisations, and places that they mention would be replaced with pseudonyms to ensure anonymity and confidentiality, and (6) they could withdraw from my investigation at any point.

3.7. Data analysis

Qualitative researchers have frequently suggested that data analysis is a distinct and isolated event that is procedural and unproblematic in nature (Taylor, 2014; Walcott, 1994, 2001). In practice, however, I did not find the data analysis process to be a single and isolated event, but rather an ongoing activity that occurred throughout the research study (Markula & Silk, 2011; Sparkes, 2002; Taylor, 2014; Walcott, 1994, 2001). It did not matter if I was developing my research questions, reading policy documentation, writing a fieldnote, conducting an

interview, or talking to others about my findings; I was always thinking about my investigation and how I would make sense of it. Data analysis for me, then, can be best described as an iterative and recursive exercise (Taylor, 2014); that is, one where a researcher moves back and forth between an emergent or emic reading of the data set and the etic application of theories, models, and explanations (Tracy, 2013). Indeed, an iterative approach does not exclusively ground meaning in the emergent data, but also in the reflection upon existing literature and the numerous theories the researcher brings to the data, as well as the researcher's goals, interests, and priorities (O'Reilly, 2012). In other words, iteration is a "reflexive process in which the researcher visits and revisits the data, connects them to emerging insights, and progressively refines his/her focus and understandings" (Tracy, 2013, p. 184).

While I engaged in various forms of analysis in the midst of my participant observations (see section 3.6.2.), the first focussed, concentrated, and comprehensive analysis cycle occurred in the days and weeks after the completion of my observation period, but importantly before the in-depth one-to-one interviews. This cycle comprised three phases: data immersion and primary-cycle coding, hierarchical coding, and writing (Tracy, 2013). Before I discuss the processes involved in each phase, it is important to point out that each phase was not a separate and isolated activity. I did not necessarily 'complete' my data immersion and primary-cycle coding for my entire corpus of data, and then move on to hierarchical coding, before finally engaging in writing. I often engaged in the writing phase after conducting primary-cycle and hierarchical coding for a small portion of my data, before returning back to data immersion and primary-cycle and hierarchical coding, and then back to writing. In short, although I have presented these phases as individual activities, this data analysis cycle was not

made up of three separate activities that neatly followed on from one another (Markula & Silk, 2011; Sparkes, 2002; Taylor, 2014; Walcott, 1994, 2001). It should also be noted that I engaged in the same data analysis processes for both of my participants.

The goal of the data immersion and primary-cycle coding phase was to submerge and absorb myself in the entire breadth of my fieldnote data and to establish ideas, themes, and issues, no matter how diverse and varied (Tracy, 2013). To achieve this, I first read and re-read my entire fieldnotes as one complete corpus of data. In doing so, I was able to absorb, re-experience, re-examine, and review the entire record of my participant observations as they evolved over time, while consciously thinking about analytical possibilities and particular areas of interest (Emerson et al., 2011). Once I had submerged myself in the data, I then tried to establish 'what' was present in the data by applying primary-cycle codes to my data set. In other words, I examined my fieldnotes on a line-by-line basis and assigned words or phrases to the basic activities and processes in the data to capture their essence. Throughout this primary-cycle coding process, I also employed the constant comparative method (Charmaz, 2006) to compare and contrast the data applied to each code, and then if the data did not fit the code I would either slightly modify the code or create a new one. This helped me to avoid definitional drift (Gibbs, 2007; Tracy, 2013).

Once my data immersion and primary-cycle coding phase was complete, I critically examined the codes already established in the primary-cycle and then grouped codes that were related under a hierarchical umbrella that made conceptual sense (Tracy, 2013). At this stage, then, I moved beyond descriptive coding to analytical coding: coding that comes from "interpretation and reflection on meaning" (Richards, 2005, p. 94). It may seem that the construction of these

hierarchical categories was completely inductive, but it was also responsive to the purpose of this research project. In other words, I developed categories that would help me to answer my research questions (Merriam, 2009). This meant that data which were not at least tangentially related to my research interests were not included within my hierarchical categories. In keeping with the iterative approach, it is worth noting that the construction of these categories was also informed by my reading of existing social theory and policy documentation, as well as the differences and similarities between Greg's and James's stories. Indeed, while I did not necessarily set out to analyse my data in relation to my prior analytical concerns and theoretical commitments, I acknowledge that this inevitably influenced my category construction as I could not completely detach myself from thinking about what I had previously read, seen, or heard (Taylor, 2014).

Once I had organised and placed the coded fieldnote excerpts into their respective categories, I then started to create the fieldnote centred stories that are presented in the results chapter of this thesis (see chapter 4). Some may take issue with the fact that I started writing my results before I had finished my data collection and analysis. However, I would argue that when we write the "meaning of our findings come into being and the content of our ideas slowly start to take form" (Groom, Nelson, Potrac & Smith, 2014, p. 86). Indeed, through writing these fieldnote centred texts I was able to "think and rethink" about what was going on in my fieldnotes, why I wrote about these social events in the first place, my current levels of understanding, and perhaps most importantly the issues that I needed to address in my in-depth one-to-one interviews (Freire, 2005, p. 2).

To begin the process of transforming my categories into fieldnote centred texts I read and re-read the data pertaining to each category to look for potential

fieldnote excerpts that could develop into a story line (Emerson et al., 2011). Selecting the fieldnote excerpts was not simply a matter of picking the most interesting examples or every example that related to the category of interest. Rather, every fieldnote excerpt had to offer a specific purpose (Emerson et al., 2011). This ranged from aptly illustrating recurring patterns of behaviour or typical situations to demonstrating variations from what is usual, to being rich in talk and action. In other words, each fieldnote excerpt had to contribute to the emerging story and provide an analytical point (Emerson et al., 2011).

Once I had selected which fieldnote excerpts would represent each category, I routinely edited the chosen excerpts to remove material irrelevant or extraneous to the argument and to provide anonymity to the individuals and institutions studied (Emerson et al., 2007, 2011). I also edited the fieldnote excerpts to make them comprehensible and appealing to readers. For example, I often had to weave in pertinent information about the context, background, and activities, as well as revising unclear portions of the excerpts that were not in direct quotations. That said, I did try to minimise the editorial changes in an attempt to preserve as much of the actual content of the fieldnote excerpts as possible. I held the belief that the writings composed directly after the event would better capture the immediacy and local meanings and as such would be more adept at taking readers through a journey in which they develop an “experiential sense” of the events ... and come away with a sense of “what it must have felt like to live through what happened” (Ellis & Bochner, 1992, p. 80). In the end, editing these fieldnotes was a delicate balancing act between attempting to preserve the complexity and vividness of the original excerpts and producing a clear, economical, and readable account of the story I was trying to tell (Emerson et al., 2007).

With each category now being represented by a series of purposely selected and edited fieldnote excerpts, I next composed “interpretive commentaries” not only to explicate each excerpt and link it to others but also crucially to voice my analytical interpretation of the events I witnessed (Emerson et al., 2007). I preceded each excerpt with an analytical point in an attempt to instruct the reader about the ways I intended for them to read and interpret the excerpt by directing their attention to certain of its features. Following the analytical point, I then try to set the scene for the excerpt by briefly providing some orienting information. After this, I invite the reader to assess the construction, underpinnings, and authenticity of the eventual interpretations offered by presenting my visually marked-off fieldnote excerpts. Through combining my fieldnote excerpts with interpretive commentaries I hoped not only to build up, piece-by-piece, a coherent fieldnote centred story, but also to convince the reader that my interpretation and general story line were justified.

Focussed data analysis for my one-to-one interviews occurred alongside and throughout the entire interview process. The first interview transcript was subjected to an in-depth examination or analysis prior to the second interview. The second interview transcript was critically analysed before the third interview, and so forth. In this sense, an attempt was made to interweave data collection and analysis, as it has been contended that without ongoing analysis data can become “unfocused, repetitious, and overwhelming” (Merriam, 2009, p. 171).

My analysis of each interview transcript comprised alternating between two contrasting cycles. It is important to recognise that I did not ‘complete’ the first cycle and then move on to the second cycle; rather I moved back and forth between these two cycles until I felt my analysis of each interview transcript was complete (Tracy, 2013). For the first cycle I performed an emic or emergent

analysis of the interview transcript. This was very similar to the data immersion and primary-cycle coding phase I conducted for my fieldnotes, whereby I read and re-read the interview transcripts to identify meaningful data in relation to my research questions and objectives. However, I also actively looked for data in relation to the analytical issues or questions I had previously raised during the analysis of my fieldnotes. In other words, I searched the transcript for data that would explain, confirm, contradict, or expand upon my analytical interpretations of the conversations, actions, behaviours, and events I had witnessed during my participant observations. The identification of meaningful data also helped to shape the questions I asked in subsequent interviews. As such, each new interview episode tended to build upon, and enrich, the previous ones (Ely, Vinz, Downing & Anzul, 1997; Jones et al., 2004).

As meaningful data were identified in the ongoing emergent analysis, I started to engage in my secondary analysis cycle by conducting an etic analysis of the interview transcripts. Within this stage, I critically examined meaningful segments of data identified in the emic analysis, and through the use of analytical memos I made preliminary links to numerous theoretical concepts that might help to explain the key issues within my data (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994; Sparkes & Smith, 2014). Establishing such tentative links not only helped to guide the questions asked in future interviews, but also “contributed to identifying the analytical ‘hooks’ on which to peg the final discussion” (Jones et al., 2004, p. 216).

Part way through collecting my interview data, I also started to write up the findings of my interviews using the meaningful data I had already obtained. As stated above, this form of analysis allows researchers to think about the meaning of their findings and to formulate their ideas (Freire, 2005; Groom et al., 2014;

Richardson, 1999). By writing up alongside data collection, I was able to critically assess the depth, richness, and appropriateness of my findings in terms of answering my research questions (Groom et al., 2014). This was of extreme value as it highlighted the numerous gaps in my findings and thus the issues that I needed to address in future interviews.

3.8. Theoretical framework: Micropolitics, impression and emotional management, multiple identities, and consuming life

Greg's and James's career experiences were principally understood in relation to five framing devices. The first theoretical backdrop used was Kelchtermans' work addressing the micropolitical learning that teachers develop at the beginning of their careers and the ensuing vulnerability that they experience in their teaching jobs (Kelchtermans, 2005, 2009, 2011; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002a, 2002b). Within this micropolitical framework, Kelchtermans and colleagues contended that teaching practitioners have clear assumptions about what conditions are needed to achieve professional objectives and to experience workplace satisfaction (Kelchtermans, 2005; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002a, 2002b). His analysis also revealed how vulnerability is a structural condition of the teaching profession that can elicit both positive and negative emotions in teaching practitioners (Kelchtermans, 2005, 2009, 2011). Finally, Kelchtermans' work highlights how he believed that teachers will engage in strategic actions in an effort to cope with the structural vulnerability of their teaching jobs and to protect and advance their careers (Kelchtermans, 1996, 2011; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002a, 2002b).

The second theoretical backdrop used to interpret aspects of Greg's and James's career stories was provided by the writings of Erving Goffman (1990 [1959]), and his book *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Through this work

Goffman developed a dramaturgical metaphor as a means to understand social life and face-to-face human interaction. Here, Goffman (1990 [1959]) examined what individuals and groups do when they are in the company of others. Specifically, his work provides a detailed analysis of how, in order to fulfil societal expectations of acceptable behaviour, individuals and groups attempt to control the impressions they give to others, and the kinds of actions that they may or may not engage in to reach desired goals (Goffman, 1990 [1959]). According to Goffman (1990 [1959]), then, people cannot freely choose the version of the self that they would have others accept. Instead, individuals are “constrained to define themselves in congruence with the statuses, roles, and relationships that they are accorded by the social order” (Branaman, 2000, p. xlvii). That said, Goffman also argued that the thoughts and actions of human beings are not completely determined by societal demands, as individuals can control their expressions (e.g. appearance, manner, and style) to strategically manipulate social situations and others’ impressions of them (Cassidy et al., 2015; Goffman, 1990 [1959]; Jones, 2004).

The third theoretical framework used to interpret how Greg and James made sense of their community coaching experiences was provided by Arlie Russell Hochschild (2012; [1983]) in her text *The managed heart*. Inspired by Goffman’s (1990 [1959]) dramaturgical theorising, Hochschild’s (2012 [1983]) writings focussed on the relationship between the emotions an individual feels, the emotions that the individual chooses to display to others, and the social context within which these emotions are displayed (Potrac et al., 2013b; Theodosius, 2008). Here, she draws upon her ethnographic work with flight attendants and bill collectors in the United States to provide rich and detailed insights into how, through the process of socialisation, people learn what

emotions are appropriate and expected in particular situations (Cassidy et al., 2015). Hochschild (2012; [1983]) further explained that individuals frequently engage in certain levels of acting when social encounters require them to produce particular emotional states. Central to Hochschild's (2012; [1983]) writings, then, is that individuals will mask and manage their emotions for the benefit of others.

At this point it is important to outline my interpretation of emotion. Scholars from a wide variety of disciplines have defined emotion, including sociology (e.g. Barbalet, 2001; Denzin, 1984; Turner & Stets, 2005), neuroscience (e.g. Damasio, 2003), philosophy (e.g. Sartre, 2015), and cognitive psychology (e.g. Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Rather than being a unified concept, then, emotion has been defined according to the numerous ontological and epistemological viewpoints of researchers and their preferred disciplinary interests.

Like other interpretive coaching scholars (e.g. Nelson et al., 2013a), I find myself drawn to the definition provided by Turner and Stets (2005). They contend that the concept of emotion "subsumes the phenomena denoted by other labels – sentiments, affect, feelings, and the like – which are often employed by theorists and researchers" (p. 2). Turner and Stets (2005) also suggest that while no one element (i.e. biological, cultural, or cognitive) can singularly explain how and why emotions are experienced and expressed in the ways that they are, emotion involves five key elements. These are:

- (1) the biological activation of key body systems;
- (2) socially constructed cultural definitions and constraints on what emotions should be experienced and expressed in a situation;
- (3) the application of linguistic labels provided by culture to internal sensations;
- (4) the overt expression of emotions through facial, voice, and paralinguistic moves; and
- (5)

perceptions and appraisals of situational objects or events. (Turner & Stets, 2005 p. 9).

While I subscribe to the broad definition of emotion provided by Turner and Stets (2005), this study focused on the socially constructed and personally enacted features of Greg's and James's emotional experiences as community sports coaches. I explored emotion and their management by workers who were expected to control and manufacture their emotions as part of their employment. Consequently, I chose to utilise Hochschild's (2012 [1983]) cultural analysis to help me better understand these features of their practice.

The fourth framing device used to make sense of Greg's and James's experiences was identity theory, which is rooted in symbolic interactionism (e.g. Burke & Stets, 2009; Stets & Serpe, 2013; Stryker, 2002 [1980]; Stryker & Burke, 2000). One of the principal objectives of identity theory is to explain how the meanings individuals attach to their identities are managed and negotiated in interaction (Stets & Serpe, 2013). Identity theorists typically focus their investigative lens on how various identities relate to one another, as well as how these identities influence thought, feeling, action, and behaviour (Stets & Serpe, 2013). In the symbolic interactionist strand of identity theory, there are two major programmes of research (Turner, 2013). These are the *structural* (e.g. Serpe & Stryker, 2011; Stryker, 2002 [1980]) programme which explores how social structures influence an individual and how the structure of the individual informs social behaviour, and the *perceptual control* programme (e.g. Burke & Stets, 2009) which examines the internal dynamics of self-processes as these impact upon social behaviour (Stryker & Burke, 2000). Importantly, these research programmes have been viewed as complementary rather than competing (Stets & Serpe, 2013; Stryker & Burke, 2000). In light of this, I drew upon concepts from

both the structural and perceptual control research programmes to help understand Greg's and James's stories.

The fifth sense-making framework used to understand Greg's and James's career stories was Bauman's (2007) work on consumerism, as outlined in his book *Consuming Life*. Here, Bauman (2007) examined the impact of consumerist attitudes and patterns of conduct on various aspects of social life. Central to Bauman's (2007) writings was the belief that people are becoming more and more like commodities that are purchased, sold, and advertised in ways that increase demand for them. Those who are viewed as desired commodities reap the rewards, and those who are not face the prospect of isolation (Bauman, 2007). To attain the status of a sought-after commodity, Bauman (2007) believed that people must engage in consumerism. He contended that individuals must buy commodities to become commodities. For Bauman (2007), this is the "secret" of contemporary society and it is the central thesis of his book.

There were various factors that influenced my decision to utilise these five theoretical frameworks. By broadly locating this study within the symbolic interactionist tradition, I was naturally drawn to the microsociological perspectives of Goffman (1990 [1959]), Hochschild (2012 [1983]), and Kelchtermans (Kelchtermans, 2005; 2011; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002a, 2002b). My decision to utilise these frames was also influenced by the writings of Potrac and colleagues (e.g. Jones et al., 2002; Potrac & Jones, 2009a; Potrac et al., 2013b), who have suggested that they may be valuable for researchers seeking to address the socio-political and emotional nature of sports coaching work. That said, I did not 'force' the data to 'fit' these frameworks or utilise every concept proposed. Rather, I drew upon notions that helped me to make sense of Greg's and James's career experiences. It was this approach to understanding the data

that informed my decision to go beyond these three framing devices. As will be demonstrated in the following chapters, a significant proportion of the data related to identity and consumption and, as such, could not be adequately understood through the writings of Goffman (1990 [1959]), Hochschild (2012 [1983]), or Kelchtermans (Kelchtermans, 2005; 2011; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002a, 2002b). Consequently, I drew upon additional theoretical frameworks, namely symbolic interactionist identity theory (e.g. Burke & Stets, 2009; Stryker, 2002 [1980]) and Bauman's (2007) work on consumerism, to make sense of these features. While some may take issue with my inclusion of Bauman (2007), or even the use of five framing devices, my rationale is that I sought frameworks and concepts that would enable me to develop a more sophisticated appreciation of the everyday realities of Greg's and James's work as community sports coaching practitioners. From my perspective, the adoption of a singular explanatory framework would have not allowed for such insights to be generated.

3.9. Representation: A modified realist tale

The realist tale is a dominant form of representation within qualitative research (Groom et al., 2014; Purdy et al., 2009; Sparkes & Smith, 2014). The researcher goes into the field, gathers data and, in the completed written article, reports on what those under study have said, thought, and done (Purdy et al., 2009). Van Maanen (1988) suggests that there are four conventions that shape the realist tale. First, the researcher endeavours to exhibit the 'typicality' of the situations observed and persons interviewed (Purdy et al., 2009). Second, in writing up the data the researcher attempts to present the participants' points of view (Sparkes, 2002). Third, the realist tale presumes that the interpretation of the data is the correct one (Purdy et al., 2009). And fourth, perhaps the "most striking characteristic of the realist tale is the almost complete absence of the author from

most segments of the finished text” (Sparkes, 2002, p. 41). Indeed, Van Maanen (1988) argues that a realist tale reveals:

... a fieldwork-author who more or less disappears into the described world after a brief, perfunctory, but mandatory appearance in a method footnote tucked away from the text. The only glimpse of the ostrich-like writer is a brief walk-on or cameo role in which he puts into place the analytical framework. The voice assumed throughout the tale is that of a third-party scribe reporting directly on the life of the observed. The tone suggests anonymity, a characteristic of science writing, where the fieldworker is self-cast as a busy but unseen little fellow who is confident that the world as represented in the writing is the real one. (p. 64).

Realist tales constitute powerful and persuasive fictions and their value should not be underestimated (Sparkes, 1995). When well-constructed and data-rich, realist tales can provide detailed, compelling, and complex depictions of the social world (Sparkes, 2002). However, as highlighted above, they tend to provide what Geertz (1988) has termed author-evacuated texts. This absence has been the source of much debate and tension in recent years (Purdy et al., 2009). Atkinson (1992) states that “however ‘factual’ or ‘realistic’ a text appears to be, it is inescapably dependent on the conventions of reading and writing its producer brings to bear” (p. 38). Similarly, Sparkes (1995, 2002) contends that the absent author is merely a textual illusion because authors are ever present throughout their final reports as they are responsible for selecting data and shaping the story that is presented. Thus, while author-evacuation is a key convention of the realist tale, it would seem that the reader gets not only the participant’s story, but also the author’s interpretation of it (Purdy et al., 2009). Indeed, several scholars (e.g. Hastrup, 1992; Purdy et al., 2009) have contended that the author must

acknowledge that the written article represents their interpretation, evaluation, and judgement of the participant's stories. Furthermore, Richardson (1990) argues that qualitative researchers must take the "responsibility of authorship" in order to avoid rejecting the value of sociological insight and implying that facts can somehow exist without interpretation (p. 27).

After contemplating the aforementioned information, I presented my interpretation of Greg's and James's stories in the form of a modified realist tale (Purdy et al., 2009; Sparkes, 2002). I not only wrote myself into the text when and where I felt it was appropriate (Sparkes, 2002), but through my interpretive stance (see section 3.2.) I also acknowledge that my theoretical analysis and representation of Greg's and James's stories were exactly that: they were my interpretation of their social worlds (Huggan et al., 2014). I do not consider this to be the only true or definitive reading of Greg's and James's stories (Smith & Sparkes, 2009a). Rather, it is one reading, but a reading that I hope offers an informative and insightful interpretation of their working lives (Nelson, Potrac & Groom, 2014). While some may take issue with my decision to present a modified realist tale, I strongly believe that these adaptations do "not detract from the essence of realist tales and could act to enhance their ability to provide insights into the world" of community sports coaching (Sparkes, 1995, p. 171).

3.10. Judging the story

There are numerous positions available to a qualitative researcher in relation to judging the goodness of qualitative research and how quality is conceptualised (Smith, Sparkes & Caddick, 2014). The most popular one in sport research is the parallel position (Sparkes, 2002; Sparkes & Smith, 2009, 2014). This approach is founded on the work of Lincoln and Guba (1985), who recognised that the standard criteria for judging quantitative research are inappropriate for qualitative

research. The parallel position substitutes the conventional criteria of internal and external validity, reliability, and objectivity for the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Sparkes & Smith, 2009). To meet these criteria, Lincoln and Guba (1985) advocate a number of techniques. They include prolonged engagement in the field, persistent observation, triangulation (sources, investigators, and methods), peer debriefing, negative case analysis, and referential adequacy. In addition to these, Lincoln and Guba (1985) claim that member checking is also a crucial technique for establishing credibility. This involves verifying with the participants that the researcher's interpretations of the data are accurate (Smith et al., 2014). In principle, if all of these techniques are utilised properly within a qualitative study, then trustworthiness has "adequately (if not absolutely)" been achieved and the research must be judged as good quality scholarly work (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 43).

While Lincoln and Guba's (1985) parallel position and associated techniques remain the gold standard for judging the quality of qualitative research (Smith et al., 2014), their approach has been subject to critique by Sparkes (2002) and Sparkes and Smith (2009, 2014). These scholars (as cited above) argue that Lincoln and Guba's (1985) parallel perspective is philosophically contradictory because it promotes both ontological relativism and epistemological foundationalism (Sparkes & Smith, 2009). In a practical sense, this means that Lincoln and Guba (1985) believe in a world that is made up of multiple mind-dependent realities and, at the same time, a world in which reality can be found objectively. For Sparkes and Smith (2009), these two beliefs are "incompatible" (p. 493). They contend that either the existence of a reality outside of ourselves that can be known objectively through the appropriate use of procedures or

techniques has to be confirmed, or there has to be an acceptance that in a relativist world of mind-dependent realities there is no way to sort out trustworthy interpretations from untrustworthy ones (Sparkes & Smith, 2009, 2014).

Sparkes (2002) and Sparkes and Smith (2009, 2014) also take issue with Guba and Lincoln's (1989) claims that member checking "is the single most crucial technique for establishing credibility" (p. 239). For them, the use of member checking as a method of verification is suspect because it indicates that in a world of multiple realities (the researcher's and the participants'), those under study are the 'real' knowers and, as such, the possessors of truth. They also contend that there is the possibility of researcher/participant disagreement on interpretations. This is not to say that they do not believe in procedures such as member checks (Smith & Sparkes, 2009a), but rather that participant feedback alone "cannot be taken as direct validation or refutation of the researcher's inferences" (Smith et al., 2014, p. 193).

Although many scholars continue to adopt a parallel position when judging the goodness of qualitative research, some have reacted to the aforementioned critiques and adopted alternative positions and strategies. For example, Sparkes (1998, 2002) and Sparkes and Smith (2014) have developed the letting go position. Here, the qualitative researcher 'lets go' of the traditional notion of validity and, instead, calls upon other more relevant criteria to judge the goodness of qualitative inquiry (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). This position is informed by a relativist perspective which appeals to time and place contingent lists of characteristics to sort out the good from the not-so-good qualitative research. It is important to note that Sparkes (2002) and Sparkes and Smith (2009) stress that this form of relativism does not mean 'anything goes' when it comes to assessing the quality of qualitative research. Nor does it mean that all knowledge

claims are equal to other knowledge claims. Indeed, Smith and Deemer (2000) suggest that relativism does not exempt qualitative researchers from partaking in open and unconstrained dialogue in an attempt to justify our scholarly work. For them, “all relativism brings to the table with regard to the issue of criteria is that to be a finite human being who must live with and make judgements with other finite human beings can be, with some frequency, very tough work indeed” (Smith & Deemer, 2000, p. 885).

Given my interpretive philosophical stance, I found myself agreeing with Sparkes’ (1998, 2002) and Sparkes and Smith’s (2009, 2014) ‘letting go’ perspective. When passing judgement on a qualitative research study in sports coaching I do not see the term criteria as meaning a preordained standard against which to make a judgement. Rather, I view criteria as characterising traits that have limited implications as instructions for inquirer behaviour (Smith, 1993). As a result, I invite readers to consider the goodness of this research investigation in relation to the non-foundational lists provided by Smith et al. (2014) and Tracy (2010, 2013). Specifically, I would like the reader to evaluate this study in relation to the following questions. First, does this investigation make a *significant contribution* to our understanding of social life? That is, does this research “bring clarity to confusion, make visible what is hidden or inappropriately ignored, and generate a sense of insight and deepened understanding” about the everyday demands and dilemmas Greg and James experience when delivering the Kidz ‘N’ Games initiative (Tracy, 1995, p. 209)? Second, is this a *worthy topic* in terms of being relevant, timely, significant, interesting, or evocative? Third, is this thesis rich in *rigour*? That is, does this study use “sufficient, abundant, appropriate, and complex theoretical constructs, data, and time in the field, sample(s), context(s), and data collection and analysis” (Smith et al., 2014, p. 196)? Fourth, does this

investigation demonstrate *credibility* through offering harmonious data and theoretical interpretations? Fifth, does this study provide *resonance* not only in terms of allowing you to better understand Greg's and James's social world by enabling you to experience moments from their lives as community sports coaches, but also by permitting you to make sense of your own situation? Sixth, does this study provide *heuristic significance* in terms of inspiring you to further question, probe, and explore the socio-political and emotional realities of community sports coaching?

3.11. Summary

In this chapter I have outlined how this study was broadly located within the interpretive paradigm and that the theoretical approach used to understand Greg's and James's experiences was symbolic interactionism. In terms of investigative design, I explained how the study utilised an ethnographic approach, whereby I collected data through the use of participant observations and in-depth interviews. Following this, I described how the fieldnotes and interview transcripts were subjected to an iterative and recursive process of analysis that occurred alongside data collection and writing. I then introduced the various theoretical frameworks (e.g. Bauman, 2007; Burke & Stets, 2009; Goffman, 1990 [1959]; Hochschild, 2012 [1983]; Kelchtermans, 2005; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002a; Stryker, 2002 [1980]) that were used to interpret and better understand Greg's and James's career stories. After this, I went on to explain how I have presented my interpretation of Greg's and James's stories in the form of a modified realist tale. Finally, I stated how I wish for the 'goodness' of this thesis to be judged in relation to the 'letting go' perspective as outlined by Sparkes (1998, 2002) and Sparkes and Smith (2009, 2014).

Chapter 4: Results

4.1. Introduction

This chapter seeks to present the key findings from this research project addressing the everyday demands and dilemmas that Greg and James experienced when implementing the Kidz 'N' Games initiative. The chapter initially discusses the findings generated from Greg's story. Here, three interrelated themes are presented: (1) *Targets, vulnerability, and self-interest*; (2) *Anti-social behaviours? I ignore them. I have to*; and (3) *Peers, motivations, and non-work relationships*. Following this, attention turns towards James's story. This section of the chapter is divided into three interrelated themes. These are: (1) *Targets and tactics*; (2) *Misbehaving participants, emotions, and personal goals*; and (3) *Workplace enjoyment? It is not enough*. The findings within each of the aforementioned themes are presented in two phases. Phase one draws upon data from the participant observations to explore the behaviours and interactions of each coach as they sought to realise the programme outcomes in practice. After these observational findings, data from the in-depth, one-to-one informal interviews are presented to provide a greater insight into the ideas, thoughts, opinions, feelings, and meanings that Greg and James ascribed to their experiences in the field.

4.2. Greg's story

4.2.1. *Targets, vulnerability, and self-interest*

One key issue that I identified during the participant observation phase related to the importance Greg attached to key performance indicators (KPIs). Greg often suggested that his company's performance was principally judged in relation to the number of participants who attended his sessions. He regularly made comments about how Community Coaching 'R' Us had to demonstrate the

achievement of pre-defined sessional participation targets. Greg appeared to be frustrated by the reality of this situation. He frequently explained how it was “ridiculous” to judge the pedagogical effectiveness of Community Coaching ‘R’ Us through participation targets, as the attendance of the young people at his sessions was regularly affected by variables out of his immediate control, such as the weather and location. The following fieldnote extract is illustrative of the types of interactions that often occurred in this regard.

18th February 2013: It’s all about participation targets

As I walked from the car park towards the AstroTurf I noticed that there were no participants, just Greg standing alone in the middle of the AstroTurf. “Where are the participants?” I thought to myself as I entered the AstroTurf and greeted Greg. 20 minutes had passed and still no participants. “This is strange” I thought to myself, but Greg did not seem to be concerned as we continued to play with the rugby ball – he was running, jumping and laughing. 15 minutes later however, Greg’s mood appeared to change. “Come on, Ben, let’s go home, no one is going to turn up tonight. It’s too bloody cold.” As I helped Greg pack away the sporting equipment he looked towards me. “What can you do? You can’t go and grab the kids and we can’t move location. What can you do? We are meant to hit these KPIs and that is all we ever get judged by, but numbers [participation figures] don’t take into account the weather, the time of the year, or the location ... it’s ridiculous. All we can do is turn up and hope the participants come. Hopefully next week will be better.” As we neared the car park, Greg tried to make light of the situation. “If only you were younger, Ben, we could have used you as a KPI.” We laughed before getting into our respective cars and leaving.

My observations suggested that it was not only Greg who attached considerable importance to participation targets, but the various key contextual stakeholders employed by Community Coaching 'R' Us. Throughout the observational period Greg's line manager, Alan, attended the session on two different occasions to check the participation figures were of the required standard. He frequently suggested that it was imperative for Community Coaching 'R' Us to achieve high participation rates when delivering the Kidz 'N' Games scheme. Interestingly, when Alan was at the session Greg initially presented a persona which indicated that he was concerned about Alan's attendance. Not only did he extensively quiz Alan to find out why he was at the session, but he was also at pains to point out that the generally high participation rates demonstrated that he was performing well in his role as a community sports coach. While Greg initially appeared nervous and worried about Alan's attendance, his demeanour drastically changed when he started coaching. He projected a confident, energetic, and enthusiastic image. This coaching display seemed to impress Alan; he regularly expressed to Greg that he was pleased with his coaching performance. The fieldnote extract presented below is typical of these types of interactions.

3rd June 2013: The return of the boss

As I stepped out of my car I noticed Alan walking towards the AstroTurf. "How are we doing, Alan?" "I am very good, thank you. How are you?" "I am very good, but I am surprised to see you here," I replied. "I have come to check the numbers again. We can't afford to have low numbers on this scheme." I nodded and shook his hand. We walked towards the AstroTurf – Greg and the participants were already there. As we entered the AstroTurf Greg came running over. "Alan, what are you doing here? Why are you here? I have been doing a great job. There is no need for you to be here. Why have you come down?" "Don't worry, Greg, why are you

worrying? I thought that you've been doing a good job," replied Alan. "I have, have you seen the numbers?" Greg quickly responded. Alan cracked a smile. "Stop panicking and go and collect the register." 20 minutes later, Greg put the completed participant information sheets into his rucksack and then jogged towards the middle of the AstroTurf, giving every participant he passed a high five. "Let's get this football match going," Greg shouted at the top of his voice. The participants quickly gathered around Greg and he organised them into two teams. Throughout the football match Greg joked with the participants and also offered them lots of encouragement. 65 minutes later the session was complete and I, Alan, and Greg were walking back to the cars. "Well done tonight, Greg. You delivered a fantastic session. You were upbeat and confident and that is exactly what I want to see. Keep up the good work," Alan said. Greg smiled and replied, "Thank you, Alan. That means a lot."

Another key issue that I identified during the participant observation phase was the emphasis that Greg appeared to place upon ensuring that the participant contact details and attendance register were kept up to date. Greg was reluctant to begin each of the observed coaching sessions until these administrative duties had been completed to his satisfaction. Collecting this information was not always a straightforward affair for Greg, as some of the participants were less than willing to provide the information or signatures that he requested. Accordingly, this task often took Greg between 10 and 50 minutes to complete. The fieldnote extract presented below offers an example of these types of interactions.

15th April 2013: The chase

Greg entered the AstroTurf. The participants were already doing their usual thing – blasting the football around. Greg quickly shrugged his backpack off his shoulders, dropped in onto the ground next to the goal,

unzipped the main compartment and drew out a pen, clipboard, and some participant information sheets. He walked over to the middle of the court. "Guys, please come and fill the register in. I need your details. You can't play without giving your details." The participants continued to kick the football around the AstroTurf. "Guys, come on," Greg exclaimed. The participants ignored Greg and continued to blast the football around the AstroTurf. Greg marched over towards Ed, a participant. "Hey, Ed, can you fill this form out for me please?" "I don't want to give my details," Ed replied. "Don't worry, we won't be using the information for anything serious, it's simply so we know how many is here," Greg responded. "I don't want to give you my details," Ed bellowed for a second time. "Well, I'm afraid you're going to have to leave. You can't be here if you don't give me your details," Greg explained. "Alright, I'll do it," Ed replied as he snatched the clipboard from Greg's hands. Once Ed had filled out a participation information sheet, Greg walked over to Richard, another participant. "Hey, Rich, can you fill this form out for me please?" "Not a chance," Richard replied. "Well, I'm afraid you're going to have to leave. You can't be here if you don't give me your details," Greg explained. Richard grabbed the clipboard from Greg's hands and started to fill out a participant information sheet. Once Richard had completed the form and handed the clipboard back to Greg, Greg walked over to another participant, Billy. "Hey, Billy, can you fill this form out for me please?" ...

In addition to trying to ensure the successful attainment of contact details and registers at the start of every session, Greg frequently offered each participant a reward in exchange for their attendance. Throughout my observational period, I witnessed Greg give the young individuals who participated in his session a variety of free gifts such as water bottles and keyrings. There were also times when Greg used the promise of tickets to professional rugby league fixtures to

encourage the young attendees to help him recruit additional participants. The following fieldnote extract is illustrative of the types of interactions that occurred in this regard.

11th March 2013: Prizes for participation

After Greg had collected the register, he walked straight to the centre of the court. “Come and listen in, guys, I have something important to say.” The participants stopped blasting the football across the AstroTurf and quickly huddled around Greg. “Right, guys, as you know we are putting a session on here every Monday, but if we want it to continue we really need to get more numbers. We need 20 people at each session. If you can get over 20 people here every week I will give everyone two tickets for Range Rovers FC [a professional rugby league team].” “20? Are you for real? We don’t have 20 friends,” a participant intervened. Ignoring the participant’s remarks, Greg continued, “I don’t care who you bring, your brother, your sister, your grandparents, or your dog. As long as we have 20 people here then you will all get tickets.” As Greg finished his sentence a participant walked towards him. “You said that two fucking years ago; all we have ever got is a keyring.” Greg didn’t respond – his eyes seemed unfocussed as he stood silently looking at the participant. The participant sniggered and turned away.

In light of the issues identified above, within the interviews I wanted to find out more about how Greg felt when Alan attended his coaching session. Specifically, I wanted to ask questions such as “What types of emotions did you experience when Alan attended your coaching sessions? Did you purposely display a positive and enthusiastic image to impress Alan?” At this time I also wanted to understand if Community Coaching ‘R’ Us had to deliver against various performance targets. Finally, I was keen to understand why Greg offered each

participant a reward (e.g. keyring or water bottle) in exchange for their attendance and prioritised the attainment of contact details and completed registers at the start of every session. In particular, I wanted to explore issues such as “Why did you engage in these actions and behaviours? Did you employ any other strategies to assist with the accomplishment of desired goals and objectives?”

When asked about performance targets, Greg revealed how he believed that his employer principally measured and reviewed his performance as a coach in relation to the number of young people that attended his sessions. His understanding on this matter was largely shaped through a briefing meeting he had with his line manager (Alan) shortly before the start of the scheme. At the meeting, Greg was told not only that Community Coaching ‘R’ Us had to demonstrate the achievement of pre-defined sessional participation targets set by Kidz ‘N’ Games to receive their public funding for delivering the scheme, but also that his own wage would be measured in this way. Greg explained how Alan informed him that he would only receive payment for his coaching work when he demonstrated required levels of participation through the documents he compiled, namely completed registers and participant details forms. As a result of these conversations, Greg held the belief that Community Coaching ‘R’ Us largely judged his pedagogical effectiveness in relation to participation rates rather than by the content and quality of his coaching practice. He explained this further.

Alan explained that he met up with Kidz ‘N’ Games and they gave Community Coaching ‘R’ Us set [participation] targets to hit ... [and] if Community Coaching ‘R’ Us didn’t hit these targets they didn’t get any funding for the sessions ... [He then] said that I need to make sure that I get those numbers [and] that if I didn’t collect the register and hit the

numbers then I won't be getting paid for delivering the session because they won't be getting the funding ... We never spoke about the content or the quality of the session, he just said "We need to hit these targets to help fund different parts of the company and pay salaries and if you're not meeting the targets we are not going to pay you and give the session to other people." ... [I left there thinking that] I could go into the session and run the worst session in the world, but as long as I've got the correct amount of people down they will be really happy with me. Or if I am running the best session in the world but I'm not hitting the targets then they will be unhappy and I will be told I'm not good enough and they will take away my wage.

Importantly, Greg also noted how his conversations with various other employees at Community Coaching 'R' Us further established his belief that his employer principally evaluated his pedagogical effectiveness in relation to the number of participants that attended his sessions.

Whenever I spoke to the other coaches, the first thing we would talk about is the numbers. It was always "How many are you getting at your sessions? Are you hitting your target?" We never talked about the drills that we did or anything like that ... It was the same with the people who worked in the office too ... They were always like, "Alan has told me you're doing a really good job, he said that the numbers are really high." Or "Greg, you know Alan isn't happy? He is concerned about the numbers at your sessions." ... And then, obviously, whenever I spoke to Alan, the only question he would ever ask is, "How's the numbers? How many did you have this week?" He never asked me about what sport I played or how the participants behaved or anything like that. It was just numbers, numbers, numbers.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, Greg was aggrieved by this situation as he believed that his performance and salary should be based on the content and quality of his coaching, not solely on the number of young people that attended these sessions. Greg's frustration regarding this matter was further exacerbated by his belief that he, ultimately, had little or no control over the number of people who turned up to his sessions each week. He noted:

It made me angry when the guys at Community Coaching 'R' Us said, "If you're not hitting the targets, we are not going to pay you," because obviously I felt that if the session has low numbers it's not my fault. The numbers were out of my control. I can't help it if something else is going on or they [young people] don't particularly want to come to the session. It's very annoying really because they have made it out like I am not doing my job properly if I am not getting the numbers on the session but it isn't, it's down to external factors [e.g. the weather, time of the session, and location]. If we go down to the session and try to get them involved and they don't want to join in or they are not there that is not our fault, that is the participants' personal preference. To be told that isn't good enough is wrong.

Greg explained how he had initially wanted to voice his concerns to his line manager, but was dissuaded from doing so by his parents. They suggested that such complaints might endanger his continued employment with the company. Heeding this sage advice, Greg instead chose to engage in strategies that he believed would address the demands and expectations of his employer. For example, Greg explained how he prioritised the attainment of participant details over delivering sporting activities. In his own words:

When I realised we were getting judged by numbers I had to change my approach and getting the participants' details became the most important thing. It was the only important thing because if I didn't get the numbers or collect them I didn't get paid ... It made me change my entire sessions. I changed my whole dynamic really. I just made sure that all of my actions were based around getting the numbers ... I spent the first 20 to 30 minutes of every session collecting participant details rather than trying to coach them ... Instead of it being about doing sport it became all about getting those forms filled in. I would totally ignore the participants for the first 20 to 30 minutes [and] I would just focus all of my energy on getting the details of every single participant who was at the session.

Greg also revealed how the sporting activities that he delivered throughout the scheme were strategically fuelled. He explained how Kidz 'N' Games expected him to deliver rugby orientated activities. Despite initially attempting to fulfil this objective, Greg quickly came to understand that the participants had no interest in playing rugby. In response, Greg decided to let the participants choose the sporting activities that they played. These actions were principally governed by his determination to try to ensure that the participants attended on a regular basis.

As he explained:

When I first started coaching there I tried to play rugby but the participants just told me to "F*ck off" because they didn't want to play rugby, so I just let them play whatever sport they wanted to, even though it was meant to be a rugby hub. I did that to keep the participants engaged and to keep them happy. More than anything though, I did it to keep them coming back. I could have kept it to rugby and said right, we are not playing any other sport, but I wouldn't have got any participants. That would have been a problem. I didn't want to lose participants. I couldn't.

In keeping with my participant observations (see 'Prizes for participation' fieldnote extract), Greg also described how he used rewards to help him attain the required participation figures. He explained how he regularly gave the participants "freebies" (e.g. water bottles and keyrings) in an attempt to encourage them to attend on a regular basis. He held the belief that the young people were more likely to attend his coaching session if they perceived that they would receive a free gift. He noted:

I also used freebies as a strategy to get more participants at the session. We had a load of stuff [e.g. water bottles, keyrings, and rugby league tickets] that we could give away and I used that to try and get better numbers. If someone thinks they are going to get something for free they will keep coming back.

Greg also described how he felt that he had to appropriately manage the emotions that he displayed to various stakeholders to obtain his desired end of high participation rates. For example, when discussing the taking of training sessions, Greg divulged that there were times when he experienced apathy towards his coaching role, but explained that he refrained from disclosing such feelings to the young people who attended his session. Greg was concerned that a dejected and lethargic coaching display might have led to a drop in the attendance figures. In light of this, Greg explained how he would refrain from revealing his 'true' feelings, preferring, instead, to present a positive and upbeat persona. He did this to elicit the reaction from his participants that he wanted. In his own words:

There has been times when I just couldn't be bothered to deliver the session. You know, when it was raining or cold. However, I never let the participants know how I was feeling. Even if only one participant was at

the session I would still want him to think that it was a good session, so rather than acting how I felt I would pretend be really upbeat and have lots of banter with him. I wanted the participants to think that I was excited that they were at the session ... I did that because I wanted to make sure that they had a good time and that would mean that they would come back. They might also tell their friends to come down because they had so much fun ... If I acted how I actually felt that wouldn't have happened. They wouldn't have enjoyed themselves and come back, let alone tell their friends to come down.

When asked about how he learnt to fake, modify, and suppress his emotions, Greg made reference to learning from previous events. Specifically, he explained how his determination to present an upbeat persona when coaching was developed through observing his dad coach the local rugby team that he played for. He explained:

When I was younger and I was being coached, by my dad actually, we had some problems with the participation rates at our local rugby team. It was a brand new team and we would only get two to three people at training, but it never looked like it bothered him. He was always really good fun and really positive. I am sure that on the inside he was gutted that hardly anyone turned up, but he never showed that. He always appeared to be really happy and that made you enjoy the sessions more ... The word spread about how good his sessions were and the number of players quickly grew ... So when I started coaching myself I just thought that if I want my participants to have fun and come back on a regular basis I need to be positive and upbeat, no matter how I actually feel on the inside.

At the time of these discussions Greg also revealed how his calculated coaching behaviours were not solely reserved for his dealings with the participants. Rather,

he employed various cognitive and emotional tactics and strategies with all of the contextual stakeholders with whom he was required to interact. For example, Greg described how he carefully constructed his conversations with his line manager when reporting the participation rates. He explained that when the number of young people at his session was below the required target he would tell Alan that the low numbers were caused by factors that were out of his control, not by his coaching practices. However, when the number of attendees were above the required participation target, Greg used it as an opportunity to promote himself and his coaching abilities. Greg felt that he had to manipulate his verbal behaviours in this way to protect and advance his career at Community Coaching 'R' Us. In his own words:

I would always give him explanations for why the numbers were low. It could be any number of reasons [from] cold weather to a big Champions League match but I would always give an excuse because it makes it look like external factors are causing that to happen rather than my coaching. It was important to do that because then they are going to keep giving me work because they will not think that it is my fault, they will think that its other things ... [However,] when the numbers were above the target I would text Alan telling him that the numbers were good and that I am doing a great job ... It was all about giving the impression that I was doing a good job and when the numbers were low it was out of my own control ... It was vital that they had that opinion of me to protect my job and also to try to open up future coaching opportunities.

When asked about the behaviours that I saw and then noted in the 'Return of the old guard' fieldnote extract, Greg discussed how he purposely controlled his emotional, physical, and verbal behaviour in order to offer Alan a coaching display that upheld the standards of conduct and appearance expected of someone in

his position. Greg explained how Alan's attendance initially induced a series of untoward negative emotions in him as he felt that Alan being there meant that his position at Community Coaching 'R' Us was under threat. Experiencing such emotions was somewhat problematic for Greg, as he believed that displaying these types of feelings to Alan would probably lead to him being sacked. Indeed, prior to the start of the scheme, Alan told Greg that he "wasn't doing very well" because he "always looked nervous and anxious" when coaching. In light of this, Greg described how he stopped himself from feeling nervous and made himself be confident, positive, and upbeat. Importantly, from my perspective, Greg suggested that he not only succeeded in 'squashing' his nerves, but also felt confident when he was engaging with his coaching role. He noted:

I was very nervous when I first saw him. I felt like he and the club didn't trust me. It made me feel like I wasn't doing my job properly. It made me feel that they thought that I wasn't a good coach ... I remember having that horrible feeling in the pit of my stomach because I was scared he was going to take the session off of me. That would have been a disaster as I wouldn't have got paid and it might have had a knock on effect on the other sessions that I was doing. I was confused, nervous and worried ... [However,] I knew that I had to hide them emotions from Alan ... Before this scheme started Alan told me that I wasn't doing very well because I always looked very nervous and anxious ... He said that I needed to be more confident and take more control of the sessions ... So after I collected the register and participant information sheets, I took a deep breath and told myself to stop feeling nervous and just do what you normally do. I told myself to be confident, positive, and upbeat. The funny thing is, after coaching for a few minutes I actually stopped feeling nervous and started

to feel confident. I felt like I was in control. I felt like I was coaching in the way that Alan expected.

As highlighted throughout, Greg believed that his engagement in these strategies would enable him to address the demands and expectations of his employer. Greg ultimately hoped that this would help to protect his earnings and increase the possibility of his moving from a zero-hours contract to the full-time position with the company that he desired. As he summarised:

I did all of these things because I wanted to impress the club. I wanted to be seen as the best part-time coach. I wanted to be above everyone else ... I wanted them to see me as a valuable member of staff and that would give me job security and hopefully it would mean that they will put me on even more sessions which would mean more money and that is the most important thing to me. I was also looking for a full-time position so if I could turn round to them and say that I have got good numbers and that everyone enjoyed it then that will put me in a very good position to get a full-time job ... The main reason was money but also job opportunities. I wanted to make myself look good and the best way to do that was to make sure I got really good numbers or make them think that it was their fault the numbers were low, and to appear really confident when Alan came to observe me. I knew that my current job and future opportunities depended on these things so I just did everything in my power to try to achieve them.

Finally, Greg revealed how his determination to protect his earnings and achieve a promotion was principally fuelled by a desire to earn a salary that would enable him to buy various commodities (e.g. clothes and alcohol). Greg attached a great deal of importance to having these items as he perceived that they were “needed” to successfully maintain important non-workplace relationships (e.g. with parents, friends, and girlfriend). Learning from his engagements with his friends, family,

and various media formats, Greg felt that failure to do so would potentially result in him losing his parents' respect and being abandoned by his friends and girlfriend. In his own words:

I wanted to earn a wage that would allow me to buy a car and nice clothes, go out with my friends and my girlfriend, pay board at home, and maybe move out ... I needed to be able to afford to do those things to be happy and respected ... [For example], when I go out with my friends and I turn up in nice clothes they are always really impressed and I feel like they respect me more ... but if anyone turns up and looks like sh*t, or even worse can't afford to come out, then they lose everyone's respect ... I remember how one of our previous friends had a sh*t job so he couldn't afford to come out very often and after a while we just gave up on him. We ditched him because he couldn't afford to do the things he needed to do to stay in our friendship group ... If you want to be part of the 'cool' group, you have to be doing these things. If you want to have any social value you have to go on 'lads' nights out and post pictures of it on Facebook, it's just the way it is ... It's the same with my girlfriend really. I need to be able to afford to pay for food, the cinema, or some drinks, or a hotel to keep her happy and to be a good boyfriend ... One of my friends has just been dumped actually because he couldn't afford to hang out with the lads as well as do things with his girlfriend. He kept choosing beer with the lads over her and eventually she finished him because he wasn't 'wining and dining' her enough ... It's also really important for me to be able to pay board at home. I have to be contributing because I know it makes my mum feel proud. I know she thinks that I am a success and a good son when I pay her board ... I also know she will be angry and disappointed if I don't ... I remember when my older brother was doing a 'crappy' part-time job and couldn't afford to pay the rent. My mum and dad were so disappointed

in him. They always used to tell him how he was letting the family down and that he needed to get a 'proper' job ... These were the main reasons behind my determination to protect my job and try to get a promotion. I needed to be able to earn a wage that would allow me to achieve these things ... Basically, I saw my job as a vehicle to allow me to achieve these things.

4.2.2. Anti-social behaviours? I ignore them. I have to.

In his role with Community Coaching 'R' Us, Greg was required to improve the health and well-being of young people through fostering their engagement in sporting activity. Throughout the participant observation phase, however, I often witnessed the participants engaging in various forms of anti-social behaviour. Importantly, when such incidents occurred, Greg did not directly attempt to bring them to a halt. Rather, it appeared that he just let these events 'play out' until they came to their natural conclusion. A good example of this could be seen in the way that Greg acted when some of the young people at his session engaged in recreational drug use, namely smoking cigarettes. During these events, Greg would initially attempt to direct the participants to smoke in what appeared to be the designated smoking area, the grass verge next to the AstroTurf. However, these individuals would often protest against leaving the AstroTurf to smoke their cigarettes. In response, Greg would simply withdraw his request for them to smoke outside of the AstroTurf and, instead, grant the participants permission to smoke while they were partaking in the sporting activities. The following fieldnote extract is typical of the types of interactions that occurred in this regard.

25th February 2013: Smoke screen

"Guys, if you are smoking then please do it outside of the Astro. We can't have you smoking while you're actually playing sport." Greg directed his

request at the three participants who were smoking. “Ahh, are you being fu*k*ng serious?” one of the participants replied. “Behave, Greg, you never make us leave the AstroTurf?” replied another. “Alright guys, I will let you smoke, just make sure you don’t burn anyone with your fags.” The participants continued to simultaneously smoke their cigarettes and play football until their cigarettes had burned almost to the filter. At this point they flicked the remnants of their cigarettes into the corner of the AstroTurf, before resuming their participation in the football match.

Interestingly, Greg behaved in similar ways even when the young people appeared to smoke less common and potentially illegal drugs. By way of an example, during my ninth observation there were various signs which suggested that a participant, Gallin, might have been smoking cannabis. Despite seemingly being aware that Gallin was potentially smoking illegal drugs, Greg did not attempt to address the situation. Instead, he just continued to participate in the sporting activities that were happening at that point in time. Greg’s behaviours, alongside the comments he made to me, indicated that he felt it was not a requirement of his role to prevent the participants from engaging in such behaviours during his sessions. As I noted in my fieldnotes:

22nd April 2013: Turning a blind eye

A faint musky smell of smoke drifted onto the court. It was sharp and sweet and it had a strong hint of herbs. Confused, I stopped participating in the football match and looked over towards Gallin who was sitting against the AstroTurf fence – it looked like he was smoking cannabis. At that point, I turned towards Greg in disbelief. Greg looked back towards me and shrugged his shoulders. I frowned in confusion. “Just like smoking, Ben, it’s not my job to stop them from smoking pot [cannabis]. It doesn’t matter,

it's just one of those things," Greg explained. I nodded and we both resumed our participation in the football match.

Another striking feature identified in the participant observation phase related to the coaching display Greg presented when some of the young people got involved in physical and violent exchanges among themselves. During these encounters, Greg appeared to be reluctant to stop the young individuals from fighting, preferring, instead, to stay silent, maintain some physical distance, and allow the remaining participants to bring the events to a halt. The following fieldnote extract is illustrative of the types of interactions that occurred in this regard. We were 75 minutes into a football match, the score was 6-6, and Greg had just shouted "next goal is the winner".

18th March 2013: Fight night

Tim was put through on goal; he only had the goalkeeper, Simon, to beat. As Tim moved swiftly towards the goal, Simon started sprinting out of his area. Tim slid the football down the left-hand side of Simon, but Simon ignored the football and kept running towards Tim ... There was a loud crunch as Simon sent Tim crashing to the ground. "You'll never beat me," screamed Simon as he stood over Tim. "What the f*ck did you do that for?" shouted a participant from the other end of the AstroTurf. "Because he is a pr*ck," replied Simon. Tim jumped to his feet. "Say that again. F*ck*ng say that again." "You're a pr*ck." Tim clenched his right fist and threw a punch towards Simon's head; it landed on Simon's left ear and sent him stumbling backwards. As Simon came rushing forward to unleash a punch of his own, a participant clinched him from behind, while the others grabbed Tim. While grappling with Simon in an effort to calm him down, the participant shouted, "F*ck*ng do something, Greg, help us out." Greg

looked towards the participant. "I think we will call that a draw. See you next week." Greg picked up his belongings and left.

In keeping with his actions outlined in the extracts above, Greg also appeared to be unwilling to address vandalising behaviours and evidence to the young people attending his session that engagements in such activities would not be tolerated. Perhaps the best example of this could be seen in my sixth observation. During this session, four attendees who were unhappy with the sporting activities that Greg suggested left the AstroTurf and vandalised some garden sheds within a nearby allotment. While I could not be certain that Greg was aware that they were engaging in these anti-social behaviours, he made no direct attempt to bring these events to a halt. Instead, he just focussed all of his energies on the young individuals who were actively participating in his session. Interestingly, when the four individuals returned to the AstroTurf some time later, Greg made no effort to explain to them that such behaviours were socially unacceptable. Rather, he simply expressed his delight at their return and proposed a football match for the next sporting activity. As I observed:

25th March 2013: Rocks like fireworks

"How are we doing, guys? Fancy some rugby?" Greg bellowed out towards the participants as he attempted to start the session. The participants ignored Greg and continued to blast a football around. Greg tried again. "Would you like to play some rugby?" More deathly silence followed. Greg tried for a third time. "Would you like to play rugby? What would you like to do?" "I don't want to play f*ck*ng rugby," replied one participant. "Who wants to do egg chasing, it's sh*t?" replied another. Greg tried to negotiate. "If you play rugby for a little bit we can play football after. Does that sound like a deal?" One participant paused and looked towards Greg. "I don't want to play f*ck*ng rugby, I don't want to be here." He grabbed his jacket

that was hanging off of the goalpost and shouted, “Come on, let’s go and do something fun. Let’s leave these losers to it.” Three of the participants quickly picked up their belongings and followed him. Greg set up a game of football cross bar challenge [individuals attempt to kick the football onto the crossbar from a set distance] for the remaining three participants ... Suddenly, there was a loud bang – I jumped out of my skin and then in a panicked state scanned the area. The four individuals who had previously left the session were throwing rocks against the garden sheds that were situated within the nearby allotment. Once I understood what was happening, I turned towards Greg, anticipating that he would attempt to address the situation, but he just continued to encourage the participants who were playing football crossbar challenge. A few minutes later the four individuals who were throwing rocks at the garden sheds re-entered the AstroTurf. “Awesome, you guys have returned. Let’s get a game of football going,” Greg said upon their arrival.

Within the interviews I wanted to better understand why Greg did not directly attempt to address anti-social behaviour. From my understanding, Greg was required to facilitate a variety of sporting and non-sporting policy outcomes, including decreased drug use and anti-social behaviour (Bloyce & Smith, 2010; Coalter, 2007; DCMS/SE, 2012; DCMS/SU, 2002; Houlihan & Green, 2008). With such a contradiction between the rhetoric of policy and Greg’s thoughts and actions, I found myself wondering if Greg was aware that he was expected to realise and deliver against non-sporting policy objectives such as crime and drug prevention. I was also keen to explore the types of emotions that he experienced when the participants engaged in anti-social behaviour. As I briefly alluded to above, when the young people were vandalising the garden sheds (see ‘Rocks like fireworks’ fieldnote extract) or fighting (see ‘Fight night’ fieldnote extract) I

experienced fear and worry. In light of my own experiences, I was intrigued to find out how Greg actually felt in these situations.

When asked about the policy outcomes that he was required to achieve, Greg revealed that he had a limited understanding of the objectives he was expected to facilitate through his coaching sessions. He explained that he only had a basic understanding of both the aims of the Kidz 'N' Games scheme and his role and responsibilities. Greg described how this situation largely stemmed from the fact that his employer, Community Coaching 'R' Us, did not brief him about the policy objectives of the Kidz 'N' Games scheme, nor the sporting and non-sporting outcomes that he was expected to realise. In light of this, Greg explained that he was unsure of how to tailor his relationships and interactions with the young people who attended his sessions, especially when dealing with anti-social behaviour. He noted:

I was never given any information or told this is what we are doing and why. It's a big negative really because if we don't know what we are meant to be doing, how are we meant to deliver it? ... I think that they expected me to go in there and get guys playing sport [but] I have no idea. I have never been told. I don't know what the objectives are ... I suppose I went into the session with my eyes shut really ... I didn't really know how I was meant to act around the participants or what I was meant to be doing. So when the participants were misbehaving, I just did what I felt was right, I was just guessing, to be honest.

While Greg suggested that he was unaware of how to manage his interactions with the young people when they engaged in anti-social behaviour, further conversations revealed that he intentionally attempted to manage his emotional display to prevent further anti-social behaviour, maintain high participation rates,

and safeguard his position at Community Coaching 'R' Us. Perhaps the most striking finding identified in these discussions with Greg was the wide variety of negative emotions that he suggested he had experienced during these situations. These ranged from worry through to anger. As he explained:

When it was happening I could feel my heart rate increasing. I would get butterflies in the pit of my stomach. Not the excited type, the nervous type. I just felt those signs of worry. I had a shortness of breath, that horrible feeling in the pit of my stomach and then all those thoughts buzzing around my head, thinking "What can I do?" I was also very angry. A lot of the kids who were causing problems didn't come to play sport. They just came to make trouble. I would get very angry with that.

Importantly, Greg highlighted how he tried to conceal these emotions to achieve his desired ends. He felt that he had to hide his 'true' feelings to maintain his authority and to bring these events to a halt. For example, when discussing the 'Fight night' and 'Rocks Like fireworks' fieldnote extracts, Greg divulged that he felt worried, scared, and angry, but explained that he refrained from disclosing such feelings. Instead, he sought to present a calm persona by ignoring the participants who were partaking in anti-social behaviour. He hoped that this emotional display would stop the misbehaving young people from engaging in further anti-social behaviour. In his own words:

I didn't want to show them that I was angry and scared when they were fighting or vandalising the garden sheds ... If I look like I am starting to get worried or angry about it, it makes it a big deal and the participants feel like they are winning and will just carry on ... [Plus] looking worried, scared, and angry makes it seem as if I am not in control and then the session will start to go away from me because the participants will start to think that

they can do what they want because they think they scare me ... So I tried to hide the actual emotions that I was feeling by ignoring them. I thought that by ignoring them it will make it seem as though I am calm, in control, and that they don't bother me ... By ignoring them and looking calm it encourages the participants to be calm. If you stay calm it will stop it from turning into a big issue. It helps keep everyone calm ... Being calm stops the participants from winning and getting the response that they want. It stops them from getting the satisfaction that they want and then they will probably stop doing it [engaging in anti-social behaviour] and calm down a bit.

Greg also divulged that he ignored the participants to protect his job. He revealed that he did not attempt to challenge their anti-social behaviour as he was concerned that they would get violent with him. More specifically, he felt that he would not be able to hide his feelings of anger if the young people started to physically abuse him. Greg explained that he could not afford to “lose control” with a participant as he perceived that it would cost him his job. He felt that Community Coaching ‘R’ Us, and any other community coaching company for that matter, would refuse to employ a coach who lost their temper with a participant. Thus, Greg utilised the tactics of “acting calm” and “staying silent”, not only in an attempt to maintain his authority and prevent additional anti-social behaviour, but also to protect his own job. He explained:

If I am telling them [participants] that they can't do this and that, they are going to kick off and maybe do whatever and I knew that I would lose my temper if they got violent with me ... Imagine if I didn't back off and we ended up arguing and eventually things got violent – it will look like my fault. It will look like I instigated it and that will cost me my job ... It could cost me my job because it would look terrible if I got angry and retaliated.

It would look bad on Community Coaching 'R' Us if I started arguing with a kid and it turned violent. They wouldn't want to associate themselves with that. So I didn't stop them from fighting and stuff because I was concerned that they would get violent and that I would react and this would cost me my job. I couldn't get sacked. It was a job that I really wanted to do. I had put a lot of effort into getting where I was. I wasn't just going to throw that away for some stupid incident. I was protecting myself. I was trying to protect my job. I knew that if I got sacked from Community Coaching 'R' Us that I would find it really hard to get a job elsewhere. Nobody would want to employ a coach who got involved in an incident with a participant.

Greg revealed how previous experiences informed his decision to refrain from displaying his 'true' feelings and, instead, present the emotions discussed above. He described how his behaviours were based on the understandings that he had gleaned from observing other coaches who worked at Community Coaching 'R' Us. Through reflecting upon these observations, Greg developed the belief that public displays of anger would not only be unproductive in terms of his desire to prevent further anti-social behaviour in the future, but would also likely have resulted in him being disciplined or released from his coaching position. He noted:

I have learnt it through coaching really, especially when I was starting out. I spent a lot of my early years observing or assisting other coaches and the better coaches always kept calm when the participants misbehaved. They always looked like they were in control. They never looked like the participants bothered them. And because of that the participants seemed to stop messing around a lot quicker. When the coaches started to look angry I think the participants used to feed off of that and misbehave even more. So when I started taking my own sessions I always had it in my head

that I need to ignore the participants who misbehave rather than letting them know that I am angry with what they are doing ... [Also,] when I was coaching on a previous scheme one of the coaches started to get a bit of abuse off of one of the participants but rather than staying calm he got into an argument with the participant and then the participant started to throw punches at him. Luckily, there were three of us [community coaches] there so we could restrain the participant. However, Community Coaching 'R' Us suspended the coach for a month for his actions ... I felt sorry for him but I realised that it could have been prevented if the coach stayed calm and if he didn't argue back. The coach made the situation worse and probably made the participant get violent by confronting him rather than ignoring him ... Through watching that I realised that I have to ignore the participants when they misbehave to protect my job ... I taught myself to always stay calm and remove myself from situations that could prove to be dangerous to both my health and my job.

Importantly, Greg also described how his determination to maintain high participation rates informed his coaching practice when dealing with anti-social behaviour. Learning from conversations with senior members of staff at Community Coaching 'R' Us, Greg developed the view that attempting to directly address anti-social behaviour could endanger the participation rates in future sessions. As discussed earlier (see section 4.2.1.), this was something that Greg wanted to avoid for fear of the damage this could do to his earnings and career progression at Community Coaching 'R' Us. In light of this, Greg explained that he intentionally ignored the misbehaving participants as he perceived that to do otherwise would potentially have negative implications for the attendance figures in subsequent weeks. In his own words:

I also ignored them because of the numbers. That was one of the main reasons ... I had senior members of staff telling me that if I started shouting at them [misbehaving participants] and saying that they can't do this and that, they won't have a good time and won't come back again, and that would mean my numbers would dwindle down more and more each week ... Like I said before, I couldn't afford to have low numbers. I needed good numbers to get paid and get a promotion ... So I listened to their advice and chose to ignore them [misbehaving participants] and let them do whatever they wanted to do. I hoped that would help me to get good numbers.

4.2.3. Peers, motivations, and non-work relationships

In the latter stages of the participant observation phase, there appeared to be a significant change in how Greg engaged with his community coaching role. To me, he transformed from being a coach who was typically positive, upbeat, and enthusiastic into a practitioner who was disinterested, lethargic, and demotivated. Importantly, from my perspective, the negative change in Greg's behaviour appeared to start when Sam, a senior coach at Community Coaching 'R' Us, attended a session. At the time, I was uncertain as to why Sam was at this particular practice; however, his being there certainly seemed to have a detrimental impact upon Greg and his coaching methods, something I noted in my fieldnotes.

10th June 2013: A new kid on the block

"Can we play rugby tennis?" one of the remaining participants directed towards Greg and Sam [the aim of rugby tennis is to kick/punt the rugby ball into the opposition's half. If the ball bounces on the ground then you score 1 point. If the ball is caught cleanly by the opposition then no points are scored]. "You don't need us to play, play on your own," replied Sam.

“There isn’t enough of us and you’re meant to be the coach, you’re meant to be entertaining us,” the participant responded. Sam and Greg looked at each other and laughed before Sam replied, “Where did you get that stupid idea from? We are not here to coach you, that is ridiculous. How about you play and we referee?” “No. We want you to play, we need you to play,” the participant stated. “Okay, we will play but you need to sort out the teams,” Sam replied. We were 2 minutes into the game and Greg kicked the rugby ball over the fence that surrounded the perimeter of the AstroTurf. “You wanted to play the game, so you can get the ball,” Sam exclaimed to the participants as the ball nestled into the grass. “No way, Greg kicked it so he can fetch it,” a participant responded as everyone sat down on the AstroTurf. 20 minutes later nothing had changed – the rugby ball was still nestled in the grass, the participants were still sitting on one side of the AstroTurf and Greg and Sam were still sitting on the other. I offered to get the rugby ball but Sam was determined that a participant would retrieve it. “No, don’t get it. We can sit them out, don’t worry, Ben.” He was correct – 10 minutes later a participant got up and retrieved the rugby ball. However, as he returned two females also entered the AstroTurf and sat down in the corner. The participants quickly went and sat with them while Greg and Sam stayed in their seated position on the other side of the court. 5 minutes later the two females and the four participants left the AstroTurf. As they walked out of view Sam bellowed out, “Yes. We can go home now.” Sam and Greg quickly picked up their belongings and left the facility.

Greg and Sam behaved in much the same ways during my next observation. They both seemed to be unwilling to deliver a coaching session and interact with the participants. Their reluctance to engage with their community coaching roles appeared to anger the young people who were at the session. Not only did the participants verbally express to Greg and Sam how unhappy they were with the

(lack of) coaching practices that were being provided, but they also left the session 75 minutes before it was due to finish. Another key finding that was tentatively identified in this observation related to Greg's continued employment at Community Coaching 'R' Us. During a conversation at the end of the session, Greg revealed to me how he was considering his future as a community sports coach. He explained that he was undecided as to whether he should continue to pursue a full-time position with his employer, seek employment with another community coaching provider, go to university, or learn the trade of his family's plumbing business. As I highlighted in my fieldnotes:

17th June 2013: Double trouble

Greg rushed over to the participants and started to collect their details. Once he had obtained their information he walked over to Sam, who was still leaning against the AstroTurf fence. "Sam, what shall we do?" "Whatever they want," Sam replied. "Okay," Greg responded as he slouched next to Sam. 5 minutes later one of the participants – the rest were kicking a football around the AstroTurf – walked up to the coaches. "Can we start a game?" "Yes," replied Sam, but the coaches didn't move. 2 minutes later a different participant approached Greg and Sam. "Can you please organise something. I would do it but I am not the boss, you are the boss. You're meant to be the coach. You get paid for this." Sam laughed and replied, "Don't put yourself down. You can do it, but as you've asked nicely I will organise a game of football." Once the game of football was up and running, Sam leant back against the AstroTurf fence while Greg stood in one of the corners of the AstroTurf making phone calls to various individuals. 10 minutes later a participant shouted, "You guys are rubbish." The participants then picked up their belongings and started to leave. Once the participants had left the AstroTurf, Sam quickly picked up the equipment and briskly walked towards the car park. Greg and I slowly

followed. As we were walking I noticed that Greg's head was down and he was dragging his feet. "Are you okay?" I asked. After a huge sigh Greg replied, "Ben, I don't know what to do. I have just finished my A-levels and I am at these huge crossroads. I need to decide what I am going to do with my life. Do I go to university? Do I try to get a full-time job for Community Coaching 'R' Us? Do I go and work for another community coaching company? Do I work for my dad? I just don't know what to do, it's so hard! I have no idea ...". As he was continuing, Sam shouted across the car park, "Oi, Greg, if you want a lift you need to hurry up, I haven't got all day. Some of us have got places to be." Greg turned to me. "Sorry, Ben, I need to go. See you next week." "No worries, Greg, see you next week," I replied.

Although Sam never attended another session during the participant observation phase, Greg continued to be reluctant to engage with his coaching role in the way the young people expected. Seemingly frustrated by his actions and behaviours, the participants started to verbally abuse Greg. While Greg did not appear to be directly affected by their abusive comments, he would often leave the session shortly after the young people had expressed their displeasure at his 'poor' coaching practices. The following fieldnote extract is illustrative of the types of interactions that occurred in this regard. The young people were partaking in a football match when one of them, Matt, kicked the football over the AstroTurf fence.

7th July 2013: You talk and I will walk

The game came to an instant halt and Matt shouted, "I am not fucking getting it." "Come on, Matt, go and get the ball. You kicked it," Greg replied from his seated position against the fence in the corner of the AstroTurf. "No, you f*ck*ng get it, it's your session. You're meant to be the coach. You're meant to be taking the session," Matt exclaimed. "Fine, don't get it.

It doesn't bother me if we don't do anything," Greg responded. In reply Matt said, "Yeah, that's because you just come and sit on your arse and do nothing. Everyone knows that you do nothing. You never f*ck*ng do anything, you're a sh*t coach." "It's true. You never coach us or entertain us anymore. All you do is sit on your fat arse," another participant quickly added. Greg sat silently looking down at the ground before lifting his head up towards the participants. "Fine, we just won't play then." He quickly picked up his belongings and walked off of the AstroTurf – the session was over.

Another key issue identified in these sessions related to Greg's continued employment in the sports industry. He regularly expressed to me how he was almost certainly going to relinquish his role at Community Coaching 'R' Us and take up an apprenticeship position in his family plumbing business, as he was unhappy in his current community coaching role. The fieldnote extract presented below provides an example of the interactions that typically took place.

15th July 2013: The stand-off

I entered the AstroTurf. Greg was sitting alone on one side while the participants were congregated on the other. I walked over to Greg and we exchanged the usual pleasantries before I sat down next to him. "Did you see the Formula 1 at the weekend?" I asked. "I think I have had enough of this, Ben. I can't do it anymore. My dad has suggested that I do an apprenticeship with him and right now I just don't see why not? There is nothing positive about this anymore," Greg replied. I wanted to ask "Why?", but I could sense that Greg was upset – there was a fragile tone to his voice – so I refrained, patted him on the back and tried to change the direction of the conversation. "Don't worry, Greg, everything will be okay. It will all work out in the end. So did you see the Formula 1 at the weekend?"

It was a great race, wasn't it." We continued to talk about the Formula 1 race until a participant walked across the AstroTurf towards us. "Are you two going to come and play football with us or what?" "Yes, we will play but you've got to sort the teams out," Greg swiftly replied. As Greg stood up there were some cheers from some participants and some heckles from others. "He is f*ck*ng getting up." "He is getting off of his arse." "F*ck me, he normally does nothing." Greg didn't acknowledge their insults. "Which team am I on then?" was his only comment. During the match Greg appeared despondent and absent – he was walking rather than running, he was silent and he often had moments where he simply stood still and look down at the ground. 7 minutes into the match Greg shouted out, "Next goal is the winner." Within 30 seconds the ball flew into the goal. "Right, that's it, I have had enough. I am off home," Greg exclaimed. He walked straight to the gate and left without a goodbye.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, shortly before I was due to attend my twenty-first observation, I received a text message from Greg explaining that he had quit his job at Community Coaching 'R' Us and had taken up a position as a plumbing apprentice in his family business. As the text message stated:

22nd July 2013: Enough is enough

Hi Ben, just to let you know I handed in my notice last week so I won't be running the session anymore. I am working with my dad as a plumbing apprentice now. If you still need to interview me then we can sort something out.

Within the interviews I wanted to understand why Sam attended two coaching sessions and if Greg felt his attendance had impacted upon the way Greg engaged with his community coaching role. At this time I also endeavoured to ask questions such as how did Greg feel when he was being verbally abused by the

participants? Did he leave the sessions early in response to the participants' abusive comments? If so, why did he feel the need to do this? Finally, I also wanted to shed more light on why Greg quit his role at Community Coaching 'R' Us and sought employment in an alternative profession, namely his family's plumbing business.

When asked about why Sam attended two coaching sessions, Greg revealed how he believed that his employer expected Sam to attend more practices than he actually did. Greg understood that Sam was required to deliver the Kidz 'N' Games scheme with Greg for the last ten sessions of the observational phase of this study. Greg shared how his view on this matter was largely shaped through interactions he had with his line manager part way through the scheme. During a telephone conversation, Greg was told that Sam would be attending every session going forward. His line manager explained that this was to ensure that the coach to participant ratio did not exceed 1:15. Perhaps unsurprisingly, Greg went on to describe how he was aggrieved that Sam did not attend the scheme as he was required to. Greg's frustration was further exacerbated by Sam's actions and behaviours when he did attend. Greg felt that the demotivated coaching persona that Sam presented had negative implications for the young people's enjoyment and attendance. Understanding that his employer principally judged his performance against the number of people who attended the session, Greg described how this situation angered him as he believed that Sam's 'poor' coaching practices put his salary and future job prospects in jeopardy. He explained:

He hardly ever turned up ... Even when he did turn up things were not much better as he always turned up really demotivated. I think he didn't care. You could see that by the fact he hardly ever turned up, and I think

that didn't help when he did come because his lack of motivation rubbed off on the kids and they were just not motivated to take part ... I got pretty angry because he had done nothing to help me and the session. I was angry because his actions had a negative impact upon the participants because half of them didn't come again after that. That made me angry because it affected me. Less people at the session meant that my wages were under threat. I also knew it would reduce my chances of getting a full-time job with Community Coaching 'R' Us.

Despite believing that Sam's actions were putting his earnings in danger and reducing the possibility of his moving from a zero-hours contract to a full-time position, Greg explained that he refrained from voicing his concerns to Sam. He explained how Sam was in a more senior position within the organisational hierarchy at Community Coaching 'R' Us. As a result, Greg felt that he did not have the necessary authority or coaching expertise to challenge Sam's coaching practices. Greg instead chose to keep his opinions to himself and let Sam engage with his coaching role in the way that he did. In his own words:

He was a senior member of staff so I didn't really feel that it was my place to complain or say that we need to be doing this. He was one of the most experienced members of staff that the club had so I thought that I should show him the respect that he deserves and let him coach in the way that he wanted, even though I thought that he was having a negative impact on the numbers and participants' enjoyment. At the end of the day he was more qualified than me so I didn't feel that I could moan or complain. I just thought that I should let him take the lead and coach in the way that he wanted.

Greg also explained that he abstained from disclosing his concerns about the way Sam engaged with his coaching role to his employer. He explained how he

initially wanted to express to his line manager that the drop in participation rates was a consequence of Sam's 'poor' coaching methods, but was dissuaded from doing so as he felt that such complaints would have likely resulted in reduced coaching hours or him being released from his coaching position. Greg explained how his outlook was based on his understanding that his employer attached great importance to positive working relationships. Prior to the start of the scheme, Greg attended a staff meeting where his line manager told Greg and his peers that those coaches who fail to build effective workplace relationships might be allocated fewer working hours or, worse still, be released from their position. In light of this, Greg perceived that he could not be seen to fall out with Sam or voice concerns about his actions and behaviours, for doing so might have alienated him from his peers. This was something that Greg wanted to avoid for fear of the damage it could do to his continued employment with Community Coaching 'R' Us. Despite perceiving that the reduced participation rates were putting his current and future job prospects in danger, Greg refrained from voicing his concerns about Sam's coaching practices to his employer. He felt that this course of action was more likely to protect his earnings and the possibility of him securing the full-time position that he desired. He noted:

I never reported it because it could have easily caused me problems. It could have made me look like I am not trying to be part of the team and I am just a trouble maker and having a go for the sake of it. I didn't want that because the club wants everyone to be able to work well together ... About a year ago we had a staff meeting and Alan told us that it was really important that we all got along. He felt that we would all do a better job if we were good at working together. He also said that if we fail to get along with each other then we would get less sessions and maybe even get sacked ... So I felt like I couldn't report Sam because it would look like we

weren't getting on. I was also concerned that if I reported Sam he would tell everyone [Greg's peers] that I have snitched on him ... I didn't want that to happen because I knew that everyone would turn around and say to my boss "I don't want to go to a session with Greg because he snitches on people." ... If that happened I would have definitely got less sessions which would have affected the money I was getting ... It probably would have meant that I wouldn't get a full-time position too ... So while I initially wanted to tell my boss that he was the reason why the numbers were low, I felt that I was more likely to get extra coaching hours or even a full-time position if I stayed silent ... I know the lower numbers also put my wages and future in danger, but I knew that if I reported him it would have come back to bite me a lot harder than if I didn't.

Greg also revealed how Sam's actions and behaviours had a detrimental impact upon his motivation and enthusiasm for his engagement with his community coaching role. Greg explained how observing Sam's frivolous approach made him question the importance Community Coaching 'R' Us ascribed to the scheme. Through these reflections, Greg developed the belief that the attainment of successful outcomes was not an important concern for his employer. This understanding brought about a change in Greg's coaching methods and display (17th observation onwards). Despite trying to display a positive and upbeat persona to maintain high participation figures, Greg explained how he began to apply less effort when coaching. In his own words:

Although I tried to be enthusiastic and take part as much as possible his actions eventually started to rub off on me and make me question my own. I don't think it made me act completely like him, but it definitely made my enthusiasm drop because obviously if people around me are not willing to put in the effort then why should I? Because he was clearly not bothered

about the session, I started to think why should I be bothered? He clearly didn't want to deliver the session. He clearly didn't care. So why should I? I was not a senior member of staff; he was. I was just a casual coach ... I tried to be enthusiastic to keep the attendance figures up, but in the back of my mind I was just thinking, what's the point? Nobody cared if the session was a success or not ... And I suppose those thoughts just had a negative impact on the amount of effort I put in. I did try to deliver good sessions, but I don't think they were as good as before. I certainly didn't put as much effort in after I saw Sam coach.

While Greg felt that the negative change in his outlook towards his coaching role contributed to the development of a dysfunctional relationship between him and the participants, he explained how their abusive comments still elicited strong feelings of anger in him. Despite experiencing such emotions, Greg tried to refrain from revealing them to the young people. Instead, he sought to present a calm and somewhat detached coaching persona. Greg thought that this emotional display was more likely to lead to the outcomes that he desired, namely to calm the young people down and to encourage them to stop verbally abusing him. He noted:

I was angry more than anything. I was really angry they were being like that. I was also upset that they were being like that. I got so frustrated when they were being like that but more than anything I just had an overwhelming feeling of anger. I started to clench my teeth and my fists. My whole body went tense. It went into fight mode. My breathing started to get a lot faster and my heart started pumping [but] I didn't show how I felt because I wanted to look like I was keeping my cool and that their abuse wasn't really affecting me. To do that I made sure that I made myself tall, I kept my shoulders back and puffed my chest out and just stayed

silent. I never said anything ... I would also move away from them. I would withdraw myself from the session a little bit. I would just ignore them. I would often just stand on the side of the AstroTurf and keep myself to myself ... I wanted to look like I was calm and composed and that I wasn't fazed by them to stop them from continuing to abuse me. I wanted to stay calm because I think that makes people realise that they are being stupid and it probably makes them calm down. By being calm it will make them calm.

Although Greg felt that suppressing his true feelings of anger and presenting a calm image was an important feature of his coaching practice, he also voiced how he found it difficult to maintain his desired emotional display. Greg explained that when the participants were verbally abusing him he had an overwhelming desire to lose his temper and argue with the young individuals who were at his session. This was somewhat problematic for Greg as he perceived that he had to refrain from revealing these emotions to avoid further abuse and to protect his position at Community Coaching 'R' Us. As discussed previously (see section 4.2.2.), learning from previous experiences, Greg believed that displaying such emotions would likely have resulted in him being disciplined or released from his coaching position. In an effort to ensure that did not happen, Greg revealed to me how there were times when he brought his session to a close almost immediately after the young people had verbally challenged his coaching methods. He believed that he had to do this to prevent himself from displaying his real thoughts and accompanying emotions to the young people at his session. In his own words:

Even though I was employing these strategies [e.g. ignoring the participants] I found it really tough to conceal how I was actually feeling. I

just wanted to snap. I was very angry. I was at boiling point, but I knew I couldn't let these emotions out ... I knew they would enjoy seeing me angry and as a result they would then disrespect me more to try to wind me up and get the same response. The numbers were another reason why I didn't want to show how I felt. If the other participants saw me flip they would never come back to the session. More than anything though, I was scared to lose my temper because of my job. As we discussed early [see section 4.2.2.], if I did lose my temper I knew that would be it. It would get back to Community Coaching 'R' Us and I wouldn't have had a job anymore. So to stop my real emotions from coming out and all of that stuff from happening, I also left the sessions early. Basically I left early to stop further abuse, protect myself, and also my job. Maybe that wasn't the right thing to do and maybe I should have said something to them but I knew if I challenged their behaviours I would have lost my cool and snapped. I would have just started arguing with them.

When asked about why he chose to relinquish his position at Community Coaching 'R' Us, Greg revealed that he had quit his job as it was not providing the income he needed to successfully fulfil important non-workplace relationships. He explained how his zero-hours contract community coaching salary, which was on average £200 a month, was not giving him the funds to participate in social activities with his friends and girlfriend on a frequent basis, pay board to his parents every month, and regularly put money into a savings account for a house and car. Greg described how his failure to engage in these activities had already had negative implications for his relationships with these individuals. He explained to me how his girlfriend "finished" with him and he began to lose his friends' and parents' respect. This situation, according to Greg, elicited strong negative emotions in him. He described how these experiences

made him perceive that he was becoming a “lonely” and “worthless” human being who was being “abandoned” by those individuals who were important. Greg’s recognition of these realities was the underpinning motive behind his decision to quit his role as a community sports coach and seek employment in the plumbing industry. Believing that his employer was never going to offer him the full-time coaching position that he desired, Greg felt that he had to change profession to earn the wage that he perceived was needed in order to acquire the recognition, approval, and respect of his friends and family. As he explained to me:

Well, when I was with my ex-girlfriend I couldn’t afford to do any of these things [go out for meals, buy her presents, and go on holidays] so we ended up breaking up. She finished me because I couldn’t afford to take her out and do things. That was a huge body blow. Imagine a girl saying to you “I am finishing you because you are broke.” She might as well had said “I am dumping you because you’re a complete waste of space who is failing at life.” It made me feel horrific, I had lost a girl I really liked because I was doing a job that was paying sh*t money ... My mum and dad were also getting angry because there was some months when I couldn’t afford to pay board. They kept telling me that I needed to get another job. They wanted me to move on and find a job that would allow me to do those things. Essentially, they told me to sort myself out and find a job that will enable me to pay my own way ... I also remember when my friend came round and he told me how he had saved up and bought his own car and had paid for all of his own driving lessons and how he had bought all of these new clothes. I was sat there thinking “I can’t afford to any of this.” ... All of my friends were buying nice things and going out on the pi*s all of the time and I could only afford to go out once a month and couldn’t afford to buy any new clothes. When I saw them they kept telling me to sort my life out and do a better job. ... These things just made me realise that I

needed to change my job and earn more money ... I was losing my friends and I had lost my girlfriend. It made me realise that I couldn't carry on like this because I would have ended up as a lonely, abandoned guy who was worthless and had nothing ... And that was why I left community coaching. I just didn't think that I could make a career out of it. I needed to be able to earn a living. I needed to be able to buy or rent a house. I needed to be able to buy a car. I needed to be able to pay board at home. I needed to be able to afford to go on a night out with my mates and stuff like that ... As I got older I started to realise that I was never going to be able to do any of those things working at Community Coaching 'R' Us. It was impossible to get a full-time position and being a zero-hour coach just didn't pay enough to do that. That's the main reason why I decided to leave and go into plumbing.

When asked about why he chose to pursue a career in plumbing rather than seek employment with another coaching company, Greg explained to me how he felt he could not earn the money he wanted within the sports industry as a whole, not just at Community Coaching 'R' Us. He revealed how there was potential for him to seek zero-hours contract employment with other sports coaching service providers, but ultimately declined to explore these employment opportunities as he felt they would not provide the security and salary he desired. Simply put, Greg believed that it was almost impossible to earn a successful living within the community coaching profession and, resultantly, moved into an industry where he felt the achievement of these goals was more likely to occur. In his own words:

I actually got the chance to go for an interview for a couple of community coaching jobs, but one wanted me to go and do a two-month unpaid trial – which I obviously couldn't afford to do. And then another place offered me a chance to do some part-time stuff for them, but that was earning the

same as I was at Community Coaching 'R' Us, and I was trying to leave to earn a better wage so I said no to that ... There were just no opportunities to make a good career in community coaching. There is nothing there. I used to search the job section of the UK Sport website every day and there was nothing. Ultimately, that was the main reason why I left community coaching. There was no money and no guarantee of a secure job. It is just impossible to make a career in this line of work ... There was just no way that I was going to be able to go out with my mates or save up for a house or a car if I took these jobs so I decided to get out and change profession. At the end of the day, no matter how much you enjoy doing your job, it's all about job security and earning enough money to be happy outside of work.

4.3. James's story

4.3.1. Targets and tactics

One of the key issues that I identified in the participant observation phase related to the emphasis that James appeared to place on ensuring that the activities he provided were in keeping with what the young people wanted. At the start of every session, James would ask the young people who were at his session what activities they wanted to engage in. He would then organise and deliver a session which incorporated their preferred mode of activity. Importantly, it did not seem to matter if these were sporting or non-sporting based sessions. Throughout the observational period I witnessed James deliver a wide range of different activities, from football based sessions to PlayStation tournaments. James regularly made comments which suggested that he did this in an attempt to ensure that the young people were enjoying partaking in the scheme. He frequently explained how he believed that the young people were more likely to enjoy his sessions if he based

them around the activities that they wanted to do. The following fieldnote extract is typical of the types of interactions that occurred in this regard.

6th June 2013: What activities do you want to do?

Everyone had gathered in the indoor hall when James bellowed out, “Come in, guys.” The participants quickly congregated around James. “How are we all doing? What sport do we fancy playing tonight?” The participants simultaneously shouted out their answers. “Easy, guys, one at a time. I can’t hear you when you talk over each other. Bobby, what would you like to do?” “A Fifa tournament,” Bobby replied. “Hands up who else would like to do a Fifa tournament on the PlayStation?” 13 out of the 16 participants put their hands up. “Fifa it is then. Get yourself into teams of two while me and Ben set up the PlayStations. We will have a four-team tournament on each PlayStation and then the winners of each tournament can play each other in the grand finale.” As I helped James set up the PlayStations, I asked him, “Why do you always let the participants choose what they want to do?” “Just to try and make sure they enjoy the session really. You know, they will have more fun if I let them do what they want, rather than me telling them what we are doing.” “That makes sense, but isn’t this scheme about playing sport? The PlayStation doesn’t really count as sport, does it?” As James started to reply, the participants came over. “Come on, James, hurry up.” “Sorry, guys, we are nearly done ...” Due to the demands of the participants, I didn’t get the opportunity to broach the question again.

In addition to letting the participants select the mode of activity for each of the ten sessions of the scheme, James also regularly gave the young people free sweets from the tuck shop, which was staffed by one of the youth workers. James typically offered these rewards to those individuals who met certain sporting

criteria such as winning football or badminton tournaments, hitting a home run during a softball match, or scoring the next goal in cuppies (a football game where players compete against each other to score in one goal. The last player to score in each round is eliminated and a new round starts until one player is left). From my point of view, the prospect of acquiring such rewards had positive implications for the way that the young people engaged with James's coaching practices. When they were made aware that such rewards were available, the young people appeared not only to apply additional effort, but also to experience greater enjoyment. This was perhaps best demonstrated during my fourth observation. The participants' engagements with the game of cuppies that James had organised were slowly deteriorating. However, when James announced that rewards would be given to the next goal scorer and the winner of the tournament, the participants were instantly reenergised. Upon completion of the tournament, some of the young individuals also expressed to James how they tried harder and had more fun when there was the potential of winning free sweets from the tuck shop. As I noted in my fieldnotes:

20th June 2013: Free treats

The game of individual cuppies was starting to go a bit flat. The participants' enthusiasm and energy levels were waning. They were running rather than sprinting and walking rather than jogging. The smiles on their faces were being replaced by sighs and frowns. They were starting to look bored ... "Next goal scorer will get a free drink from the tuck shop and the winner of the tournament will get £1 of free sweets." The game instantly intensified; the participants were flying into tackles, sprinting after every loose ball, and shooting at every possible opportunity. When Darren scored the next goal, he celebrated by outstretching both arms and running around like an aeroplane before diving onto the grass with his

arms and legs extended, replicating the 'Klinsmann', a celebration made famous by former Tottenham striker Jürgen Klinsmann. The rest of the participants and James burst into laughter as they watched Darren's celebrations unfold. Sometime later, Jamie eventually won the tournament and the £1 free sweets prize. Following his extravagant celebrations, James and the participants sat down on the grass together. "James, I am knackered, I try so hard when you tell us we can win sweets," one participant explained. "Yeah, the games become so intense," another participant added. "It makes it better though, doesn't it?" James asked. "Yeah, we all love it when we can win sweets, we have way more fun," a participant replied. "Yeah, I'll second that," replied another. "Me too," said another. "Good stuff, I will keep doing it, then. See you next week," James replied before picking up his belongings and leaving.

During the opening four sessions of the scheme I never witnessed James collect a register. I was somewhat surprised by this, given the importance that Greg placed upon ensuring that the participant details and attendance register were kept up to date (see section 4.2.1.). At the end of my fifth observation, however, I found out that James had been indirectly collecting a register. He explained how the youth centre was providing him with a photocopy of their own attendance registers, but he had simply forgotten to collect these duplicates from the youth workers. James also suggested that his employer's performance was potentially judged in relation to the number of people who attended his session. He explained to me how Get Active Community Coaching were required to compile completed registers to demonstrate that they were achieving high levels of participation in this initiative. As I noted in my fieldnotes:

27th June 2013: Whoops, I nearly forgot the register ... again

“Good session tonight, eh, Ben?” James asked. “Yeah, super,” I replied. We both got into my car and I started to drive us out of the A1 Youth Centre car park. “Oh sh*t, the register. One second, Ben, I need to go and get the register. I always forget the register,” James explained. I stopped the car and James ran back into the youth centre. A few minutes later, he returned to the car with several pieces of paper in his hands. “Cheers, mate, I am up to date with the registers now. I forgot to pick them up for the last 4 weeks.” “I didn’t think you collected registers,” I said. “Well, I do and I don’t. A youth worker collects it for me when the participants sign in to the youth centre and then I give the register to Get Active Community Coaching so they can evidence how many people have been attending the sessions,” James replied. “So the register is pretty important?” I joked. James smiled. “Yeah, participant details are pretty important. We have to show that lots of people come to our sessions.”

While James continued to collect photocopies of the youth centre’s attendance registers for the remainder of the scheme, it was perhaps not until my final observation that I began to fully understand the importance of the administrative element of his work with the young people. During the session, James made several comments which indicated that the income awarded to Get Active Community Coaching was determined by the documents he compiled, namely, completed participant details forms and attendance registers. Although James had already collated the required attendance registers, he had yet to obtain the contact details of the participants. Believing that failure to collect such information would result in his employer’s funding being reduced or removed, James prioritised the attainment of contact details. Indeed, he would not allow the participants to engage in any sporting or non-sporting related activities until they

had completed the participant detail forms to his satisfaction. The fieldnote extract presented below illustrates the interactions that took place at the beginning of the session.

1st August 2013: I need contact details and I need them tonight

We entered the youth centre; James stopped by the youth worker, Callum, who was sat at the 'signing in' table waiting for the participants to arrive. "I need a favour," James directed to Callum. "What's that?" asked Callum. James shrugged his backpack off his shoulders, dropped it onto the ground, unzipped the main compartment, drew out a large pack of forms and placed them on the table in front of Callum. "Could you get the kids to fill out these forms for me?" James asked. "What are they for?" Callum replied. "It's the Kidz 'N' Games forms," James explained. Callum frowned. "You know, we have to get the kids to fill out these forms," James continued. Callum shook his head. "So Kidz 'N' Games know how many people are participating and for Get Active Community Coaching to get their funding," James persisted. "Oh yeah, I remember, but rather than causing a queue when they arrive why don't you get them to fill out the forms while they are playing sport?" Callum replied. James smiled and nodded in agreement. "Do you have some pens I could borrow?" James asked. Callum rummaged through a cardboard box that was underneath the table, withdrew four pens, handed them to James and then myself and James walked into the main hall. James put the forms, pens and his backpack on the windowsill. "Let's play a game of pool while we wait for the participants," James stated. "Sounds good," I replied. James started racking the pool balls. "So do we need to get the participants to fill out these forms tonight, mate?" I asked. James stopped racking the balls, leant against the edge of the pool table and looked towards me. "Yeah, I need to get their details and I need to get them tonight. This is our last

session at this venue and if I don't get their details Get Active Community Coaching won't get their funding for delivering the scheme." "Oh, I thought that was what the register was for?" I replied. "Yeah, we have got the participation figures but we need the participants' details to go with it. We have to evidence both to get the funding. It's a pain in the arse getting participant details but Get Active Community Coaching needs their details to get the funding." I nodded. James finished racking the pool balls, walked to the opposite end of the pool table and took his stance to break. As he pulled the pool cue back two participants entered the hall. James jumped out of his stance, put his pool cue down, ran over to the windowsill, picked up two forms and two pens and walked over to the participants; "Jimmy. Sam. How are we doing? Before you start playing I need you to fill these forms out. If you don't fill them out you can't play. It won't take long." James handed the forms over to the participants. While they were filling the forms out six more participants entered the hall. James ran over to the windowsill, picked up six forms, the two remaining pens and rushed over to the participants. "Dan. Porky. Lucy. Charlie. Joe. Amy. How are we all doing? Before you start playing I need you to fill these forms out. If you don't fill them out you can't play. It won't take long." James handed the forms over to the participants. While they were filling out the forms three more participants entered the hall. James ran over to the windowsill and picked up three more forms ...

Given these observational findings, within the interviews I wanted to ask a series of questions in relation to KPIs and funding. In particular, I was keen to ask questions such as did Get Active Community Coaching have to deliver against performance targets to receive their funding? If so, what implications did that have for James's coaching practices? Did he implement various strategies? And why did he do this? At this time, I also wanted to explore why James frequently gave

the participants rewards and allowed them to choose the activities they engaged in. Specifically, I sought to ask questions along the lines of why did James offer the young individuals free sweets from the tuck shop? Why did he allow the participants to choose the activities they engaged in? Was he allowed to deliver sessions which incorporated non-sporting based activities? And if not, why did he do this?

When asked about KPIs, James explained how he believed that Get Active Community Coaching largely measured and reviewed his performance against participant feedback. His thinking on this matter was shaped through the various staff meetings he had attended during his employment with the company. At these meetings, the senior management team regularly told James and his fellow zero-hours contract colleagues that their working hours would be principally determined by the 'quality' of feedback the company receives from the individuals they coach. James also explained how the management team never suggested that his pedagogical effectiveness would be judged in relation to the number of participants that attended his sessions. Simply put, James believed that 'good' participant feedback would help to protect his job and increase the possibility of him securing additional coaching work with the company, whereas 'poor' participant feedback would potentially mean a reduction in his working hours and, resultantly, his earnings. He noted:

In every coaches' meeting I've been to the management team have told us that we have to make sure the participants have fun in our sessions and that the amount of coaching hours we get is dependent upon the quality of participant feedback we get when we get observed by senior staff members. Good participant feedback equals more coaching hours and bad participant feedback equals less ... They have never said that our jobs

at Get Active Community Coaching are dependent upon the numbers we deliver ... They never said that my wages are dependent upon the amount of participant details I get or that I would be promoted for delivering good numbers or sacked for delivering bad numbers, but in those meetings they did say that the amount of sessions and coaching hours I get will be dependent upon participant feedback.

Learning from these interactions, James explained how he engaged in strategies that he believed would address the demands and expectations of his employer. When discussing the taking of sessions, James explained how Kidz 'N' Games expected him to deliver multi-sports coaching practices, with a particular focus on boxing. However, due to a lack of boxing equipment, James chose to ignore these demands and, instead, organise and deliver sessions which were in keeping with what the young people wanted to do. James did this in an attempt to ensure that the participants had fun at his sessions. He felt that the young people were more likely to provide positive feedback if they enjoyed partaking in his coaching sessions. James ultimately hoped that these actions would help to safeguard his current wages and increase the chances of him gaining additional coaching work with Get Active Community Coaching. In his own words:

Because my wages were dependent upon participant feedback I needed to make sure that the participants enjoyed my sessions. Nearly everything I did was focussed around making sure the participants had the best time ever ... For example, this was originally advertised as a multi-sport session with a specific emphasis on boxing but the only boxing equipment Get Active Community Coaching gave me was one set of gloves and pads. How the hell am I meant to keep 30 odd kids happy with one set of gloves? How the f*ck am I meant to do that? I am not Houdini. I could have adapted my session and taught them footwork drills but kids don't want to do

footwork drills; they want to be punching sh*t. That's what boxing is to them. If I attended a boxing session and the coach only did footwork drills I would think that the session is sh*t and boring. So I scrapped boxing altogether and just did whatever the participants wanted. At the start of every session I would ask the participants what they want to do and then just do that. So say 10 people wanted to play football and 3 wanted to play pool; I would do football. I would always go with the majority as it keeps the majority of people happy. Yes the 3 people who wanted to play pool might be disappointed but 3 unhappy participants is better than 10 ... Everything I did was geared towards trying to keep as many of the participants as happy as possible.

Importantly, James explained how his employer, Get Active Community Coaching, did not take issue with the fact that some of these activities failed to conform to the requirements of the Kidz 'N' Games initiative. When discussing the PlayStation based session he delivered in the second week of the scheme (see 'What activities do you want to do?' fieldnote extract), James revealed how his line manager gave him permission to deliver non-sporting activities such as this. He explained how he rang his line manager after his first coaching session to voice his concerns about the limited amount of boxing equipment he had available to him. During the conversation, James was told that he did not have to prioritise boxing-focussed activity, or even sporting activity. His line manager told James that he should simply focus on delivering sessions which incorporated activities, either sporting or non-sporting, that were likely to lead to high levels of participant enjoyment and attendance. In his own words:

After the first session I actually rung my boss and told him that we need to rethink the sports that we do. I told him that I didn't have enough boxing equipment to do a good job, and that I either need to be given more boxing

equipment or deliver sessions which were not based around boxing ... My boss told me that I couldn't have any more boxing equipment, but it was not a problem if I didn't do boxing. He said that it didn't matter what sport I did. He said the only thing that mattered was that the participants had fun and we got lots of people at the sessions ... I then told him about the PlayStations and stuff and asked if I could use them. He said, "Yes, of course." He said that I can do whatever I want, as long as the participants had fun and attended every week.

In keeping with my observational findings (see 'Free treats' fieldnote extract), James described how he also used rewards in an attempt to ensure the young individuals experienced high levels of enjoyment at his sessions. He explained that he frequently offered the participants free sweets from the tuck shop when they met certain sporting criteria, such as being the first goal scorer in a football match. James held the belief that offering these types of rewards during his practices would not only encourage the participants to apply greater effort, but also likely lead to higher levels of enjoyment. As he explained:

I also used the tuck shop to increase participant enjoyment. I would always offer rewards out from the tuck shop. So if we played a football tournament I would say that the winner or something daft like the first goal scorer can get 50p's worth of sweets or drinks from the tuck shop. I did that because having a prize on the line made the games more competitive. There was something to play for which made them [participants] get fully involved and try harder and that makes the tournaments more enjoyable for the participants.

The calculated nature of James's coaching practices also extended to the non-sporting related interactions that took place between him and the participants. James described how he tried to manipulate the participants into both liking him

and enjoying his sessions by taking time to get to know them. He did this by carefully constructing his conversations with the participants to ensure that he presented himself as a polite coach, who was genuinely interested in their wider social lives. He explained:

The main thing I did was to try to build a rapport with the participants by showing an interest in their interests. I think that showing an interest in what the participants are passionate about is one of the best ways to make them like you and enjoy your sessions ... So at A1 Youth Centre I tried to find stuff out about the participants as soon as possible. For example, during my first session, one of the participants told me that he wanted to be a footballer when he is older. I made a mental note of that and then when I saw him the next week I was like "How's the football going? Did you watch the Manchester Derby at the weekend?" ... Doing that is like a way in; it makes the participants feel relaxed and like you. They expect coaches to be all serious and to ignore them so by doing that I became more than a coach to them. I become their friend and someone they can hang out with and have a laugh with. They like that and that makes them like you which means that they will enjoy the sessions more and say nice things about you when the bosses come down to observe the session.

While James felt that building a rapport with the participants was an important feature of his coaching practice, he described how these social performances were not without their difficulties. He explained that he was often faced with the challenge of regulating his publically observable facial and bodily image. James revealed that there were times when he found the discussions surrounding the young individuals' wider social lives boring, but explained that he refrained from disclosing such feelings. Instead, James attempted to present an image which gave the impression that he thoroughly enjoyed finding out about the participants'

hobbies and interests. He felt that he had to engage in such forms of “acting” to help facilitate the accomplishment of his personal goals. In his own words:

The only problem is that half of the time I had no interests in their interests. I hated half of the sports they talked about, especially football. But I couldn't be all enthusiastic about their hobbies in the first couple of weeks and then in the third week blank them because I didn't like their topic of interest. That would have demoralised them; it would have made them so unhappy ... So sometimes I had to pretend that I was really interested in them and their hobbies ... I had to engage in a little bit of Oscar winning acting to make it seem like I was really interested in their interests ... I had to manipulate the image that I portrayed to them ... I would look at them when they spoke to me, I would raise my eyebrows to show surprise, I would constantly acknowledge them with a nod or an “Oh yeah” to show that I am listening and then I would enthusiastically ask questions like “Oh wow, what happened? Tell me all about it?” ... It was challenging because I had to act every week but it was worth the effort because they seemed to thrive off of it ... They were always telling me that I was a really cool coach.

When asked about what informed his decision to implement the aforementioned strategies, James explained that he learnt to employ them through learning from his previous experiences. For example, when discussing his decision to allow the young people to choose the activities they engaged in, James highlighted how his own experiences as an athlete underpinned his approach. He explained that he experienced greater enjoyment when his coaches delivered sessions which incorporated the sporting activities that he wanted to engage in. In light of this, James believed that the employment of similar strategies at his own coaching

sessions would likely lead to his participants experiencing high levels of enjoyment. He noted:

I learnt to do this from when I attended various sports sessions as a kid ...

I had so much more fun at sports sessions when my coaches played the sports that I enjoyed the most. And as I was trying to make sure the participants had fun it seemed sensible to ask them which sport they wanted to play every week to make sure I did the sport they wanted to play and would enjoy the most.

James also described how his previous experiences as an athlete informed his decision to give rewards to the young people who attended the Kidz 'N' Games scheme. He explained how he perceived that the coaching sessions he participated in as an athlete were both more competitive and enjoyable when there was the potential to win a prize. Learning from these experiences, James felt that he could elicit similar types of behaviours in his participants through giving them the opportunity to win free sweets from the tuck shop. In his own words:

I decided to use the tuck shop as a reward in certain games and tournaments because of my experiences as a kid ... Whenever a reward was on the line the games were so much better because everyone cared. Everyone wanted to win and that meant everyone played with so much passion. I liked that. I enjoyed it much more when the games were competitive and obviously I loved it when I won the prize so I just thought why not use the tuck shop at this session.

In keeping with the abovementioned strategies, James also explained that his previous experiences as an athlete underpinned his determination to build a positive rapport with the young individuals at his sessions. James described how his rugby coach took time to get to know him on a personal level, not just as an

athlete. James revealed that these actions not only enhanced his enjoyment at these coaching practices, but also resulted in him affording the coach high levels of respect. As a result of these encounters, James explained that he also tried to display an interest in his participants' wider social lives in an attempt to command their trust and respect. He noted:

Again with the rapport thing, it's just from my experiences as an athlete ...

I had this rugby coach and I loved going to his sessions because he was really cool. He was like my best mate. We always laughed and joked. He seemed so interested in me and I really liked that. I respected him so much because of that ... I am sure that he probably wasn't that interested in me and my life but he made it seem like he was and I really liked him and his session because of that ... So whenever I coach a group of kids I always try to get to know them and build a rapport with them even if that means pretending that I am interested in their interests.

While James believed that his employer did not judge his performance in relation to the number of people who attended his sessions, he went on to explain how the funding awarded to Get Active Community Coaching was determined by such criteria. James shared how his view on this matter was principally shaped by a telephone conversation he had had with his line manager shortly before the start of the scheme. During this phone call, James was told that Get Active Community Coaching had to successfully deliver against pre-defined sessional participation targets to receive their public funding. His line manager told James that the company had to demonstrate the achievement of the required levels of participation through completed registers and participant details forms. Perhaps not surprisingly, James discussed how his line manager went on to accentuate the importance of the administrative element of his work as a community sports

coach. He divulged that she repeatedly stressed to him that it was imperative that he collected contact details and attendance registers, as failure to do so would result in the company's funding being reduced or removed. Interestingly, while his line manager suggested that James's performance would not be measured in this way, James believed that he had to successfully collate this information if he were to progress his career at Get Active Community Coaching. He felt that he was more likely to be offered a promotion to a senior coaching position if the company received their funding for delivering the Kidz 'N' Games scheme, as they would be financially stronger. In his own words:

My boss rang me before this scheme started and she said that Get Active Community Coaching has to hit participation targets to receive their funding for delivering this scheme ... She said that I don't need to worry about these participation targets but it is important that I collect participant details because without them they won't be able to evidence that they have hit their targets and get their funding ... She said that I needed to make sure that I got a register every week and that each participant had to fill out a participant information sheet [they only had to do this once during the scheme] ... While she told me not to worry about the numbers and my job was not tied to them, she expected me to collect participant details because that's what Get Active Community Coaching needed to evidence to get their funding ... I also knew that I was more likely to get a promotion if Get Active Community Coaching received their funding for delivering this scheme as that would put them in a stronger financial situation. So while my boss said my job wasn't tied to them, I knew that I had to make sure I collected them if I wanted to get a promotion.

James's recognition of these realities of working life was not a straightforward or unproblematic affair. He explained how he believed that it was difficult, if not

impossible, to attain positive participant feedback while simultaneously collecting sessional registers and contact details. James's thoughts regarding this matter were informed by his previous coaching experiences. He revealed that when he was required to prioritise the attainment of participant details and registers on a previous scheme, the young people frequently verbalised how they were unhappy with how James focussed his efforts on the administrative element of his job, rather than on delivering sporting activities. In light of this, James explained how the need to successfully carry out administrative duties as well as receive 'good' participant feedback to protect his immediate income and also impress his employers enough to be offered a senior coaching position in the future elicited strong feelings of worry, anxiety, and fear. These emotions were ultimately underpinned by the fact that James felt he could not guarantee the achievement of these workplace objectives. In his own words:

When I had to get similar information on a different scheme I previously delivered the kids hated my session. They hated me and gave me sh*t all of the time because I spent half of the session getting people's details ... So when Get Active Community Coaching told me that I had to collect participant details on this scheme I became very worried about my job and wages. I knew that collecting them would massively impact upon the participants' enjoyment. That was a big problem for me because my wages were dependent upon participant feedback.

In an effort to realise his employment objectives, James revealed how he implemented various strategies. He explained that he took weekly photocopies of the youth centre's participant registers and that he also purposely waited until his final coaching session before attempting to collect the young people's contact details. James ultimately hoped that the employment of these methods would

enable him to attain the documentation his employer demanded without it having a negative impact on the enjoyment levels of the young people. He noted:

Get Active Community Coaching gave me a register template that I was meant to use to get participant details but ... one of the youth workers also collected the same details when the participants first arrived at the centre ... When I realised, I asked the youth workers if I could get a photocopy of their register rather than making the participants give out the same information twice ... They said yes and then it was like boom; I managed to get the full details of the kids who attended each week without even collecting a register. That meant I could give Get Active Community Coaching the details they needed without it impacting upon the participants enjoyment ... I also waited until the last week to collect the participant information sheets ... I did this because I thought it would be the best way to get positive feedback from the participants if any of the senior management team came down to observe me ... I thought that if they came down to observe me in any of the previous weeks the participants would say nice things about me because we had played sport for the full duration of the sessions and then if my bosses came down in the final week the participants would probably still say nice things because they would have been thinking about the previous weeks ... By waiting until the last week to collect these details I tried to maximise the participants' enjoyment ... [and] protect my job.

While James felt that these strategies enabled him to achieve his desired goal of collecting contact information without it having negative implications for participant enjoyment, he discussed how the enactment was not always a straightforward affair. Most notably, James explained how some of the young people were less than willing to provide their personal details. In an attempt to

address this issue, James divulged that he intentionally manipulated his coaching image when interacting with these individuals. This ranged from portraying a “friendly” persona, where he displayed positive emotions and related verbal and nonverbal communication, to a more “threatening” persona, where he presented more negative emotions and behaviours. James ultimately hoped that these actions would persuade the young people to provide the information that he required. In his own words:

My idea was great until the kids didn't want to sign the forms ... That presented a huge problem as I needed them to fill out those sheets. If they didn't sign those sheets Get Active Community Coaching would have been pi*sed ... So I had to engage in a little bit of acting again ... I had to manipulate them [participants] into filling out the forms. I had to convince them to do it. It was almost like a sales pitch. I actually felt like a salesman when I was trying to make them sign the forms ... I had 4 phases to my sales pitch ... Phase 1 was called the 'Friendly approach'. I pleaded with the participants to sign the forms; I softened my voice, I was very polite and I nicely asked them to fill out the forms ... If they still refused I moved onto phase 2 ... Phase 2 was what I like to call the 'Compassion phase'. I tried to ease their concerns about the forms ... If they were like “I do not want to sign it” I just tried to find out why and I explained to them that they didn't need to worry about that and that it will be okay ... If phase 2 didn't work I moved onto phase 3 ... Phase 3 was called the 'Banter phase'. For example, if they were still like, “No, I am not signing it” I gave them some banter. I said stuff like “Why? Is that because you can't read and write?” And then some were like, “No, of course I can read and write.” And then I would say something like, “Prove it,” to force them into signing the forms ... [But] if that didn't work I moved on to the last phase ... I like to call this the 'Threat'. If they were still refusing to fill in the forms I said to them,

“Well, you’re going to have to leave the youth centre. If you want to be here and participate and use the equipment you have to sign the forms.” I was like, “Sign it or you’ve got to go.” I was very harsh and blunt. I only threatened their participation in the session purely because I was trying to push them into signing the forms. I didn’t want to come across a tw*t but I knew that would make them sign the forms and it did.

As highlighted throughout, James ultimately hoped that his engagement in these various strategies would help to protect his earnings and increase the possibility of his moving to a senior coaching position with the company. When asked about why he placed such an emphasis on the achievement of these goals, James revealed how his non-working ambitions and motivations informed his desires to protect and advance his employment. He explained how he wanted to maintain and progress his career at Get Active Community Coaching in order to have enough disposable income to buy commodities and engage in activities that would contribute to the successful fulfilment of his important non-workplace relationships. For example, James described how he wanted to safeguard his position and achieve a promotion in order earn enough money to be able to take his girlfriend out for meals, pay his mum rent, have beers with his mates, and keep up with the latest style trends, as well as to buy a ‘nice’ house and car. Learning from his previous experiences, James held the belief that failure to engage in these activities would result in him being abandoned by his friends and girlfriend. As he noted:

If you have nice clothes, a nice car and stuff people respond to you better, people want to interact with you and be your friend, essentially they will respect you. Whereas if you don’t have them things people will automatically think, “Oh, I bet he is doing sh*t in life, I bet he is a

unsuccessful person,” and because of that they won’t want to hang around with you ... So I obviously want to look successful and that means I need to have a whole host of materialistic things. I need to have nice clothes, a good looking bird, a nice house, I need to look nice and smell nice, and I need to have a good car. If I have those things I will get lots of attention, people will want to talk to me and be around me and that makes you feel great ... I also need to be able to afford to take her [James’s girlfriend] away and do nice things for her. I need to be able to earn a wage that will allow me to buy her clothes, take her out for meals, buy her diamonds, take her on holiday, and buy her flowers and lots of other presents ... In order to keep a girl you need to do things like this. My mum always tells me that I need to buy her things and take her out to show that I care about her and that she is on my mind ... And then on the flip side, I have seen my friends not do these things and 9 times out of 10 they end up getting a ‘slap in the dish’, they end up getting dumped. So I have realised that you have to take your missus out and stuff to be classed as a good and successful boyfriend. If you don’t do these things you will get finished. In your missus’s eyes you become useless and worthless, an unsuccessful waste of space, and therefore she will go and look for another boyfriend ... It’s the same with my friends really. I have to be able to afford to go on nights out, booze ups in the day, holidays, city breaks, and all that ... I remember we used to have this friend and he smelt horrific, always wore scruffy clothes, and hardly ever came out. We kept telling him to do something about it but he didn’t and eventually we just abandoned him. We didn’t want to hang around with that anymore. You just don’t want to spend time with people like that. So I have to earn a wage to be able to keep up with my friends. I have to keep up the style trends, I have to have to right pair of trainers on. It’s awful to say, but it is just the way it is ... I also need to be able to give my mum £200 a month board ... It not only

makes you feel good because you're contributing, but it also makes your mum feel good because she feels like you're a success which makes her feel like she has been a successful mum ... These are the real reasons why I wanted to protect my job and achieve a promotion. Ideally you want to have a job that you enjoy, and I do love coaching, but really it's not about the enjoyment; it's about earning enough money to be able to do all of these things.

4.3.2. Misbehaving participants, emotions, and personal goals

A striking feature that I took from my engagements with James in the participant observation phase was the apparent importance he attached to addressing anti-social behaviour. A good example could be seen in the way that James acted when the participants smoked cigarettes. James attempted to bring such events to an immediate halt and evidence to the young people the dangers associated with such behaviours. To do this, James typically presented a stern demeanour; he was serious and strict, and demonstrated a strong disapproval of the young individuals' behaviours. The following fieldnote excerpt is typical of how James attempted to address such incidents. James and I had just arrived at the youth centre when we saw a participant, Simon, smoking:

30th May 2013: Smoking? "It's not big and it's not clever ..."

Simon didn't hear us coming as we approached him from behind. James flicked Simon's hat off of his head and onto the floor. Simon quickly turned round and said "For f*ck sake, James, what did you do that for?" "Well, what are you doing that for?" James replied, while pointing towards the cigarette. "It's not big and it's not clever, you're paying to make your life shorter. Do you want to die before you're 50?" he continued. Simon didn't reply as he crouched down and picked his hat up off of the floor before placing it back on top of his head. "Well, do you?" James proclaimed.

Simon looked towards James and said "Of course not" as he flicked the half smoked cigarette to the floor and started stamping it out. "Well, stop being an idiot then and pack that in. Last week you were moaning to me how you have no money to buy some trainers. If you stopped wasting it on that rubbish you'd be able to afford some," James responded [referring to the squashed cigarette on the floor]. There was a moment's pause as Simon turned his head towards me. He looked at me from head to toe before turning back to face James and said, "Okay, James, you've made your point. I have put the fag out. Now tell me who this is?" "I will tell you when you say sorry," James replied. "What for? I have put the fag out," exclaimed Simon. James looked directly into Simon's eyes and in a stern and authoritative tone said, "For swearing at me. You know I won't take that. You do that and you can leave." "Sorry, James, I didn't mean to swear at you. You just made me jump when you knocked my hat off," replied Simon. James leant towards Simon, patted him on the back and said, "No worries. Just stop smoking." With a beaming smile across his face Simon replied, "I will, James, I promise. Now can you tell me who this is please?" "This is Ben. He is a good friend of mine and he has come to help me keep control of you lot." Simon laughed before saying hello to me. We shook hands and then the three of us entered the youth centre.

As the abovementioned fieldnote extract highlights, it appeared that James was not only concerned with preventing the participants from engaging in smoking, but any form of anti-social behaviour. Indeed, throughout the observational period I witnessed James attempt to address a range of anti-social behaviours from smoking and swearing to fighting and vandalism. For example, during my fourth observation James seemed to present an angry and disappointed coaching display to stop two participants, Jimmy and Dan, from verbally abusing each other and vandalising the sporting equipment. Not only did James shout at Jimmy and

Dan in a deep raspy voice to gain their attention and bring these events to a halt, but once he had done so he also emphasised how such behaviours were not acceptable and that additional punishments would be enforced if it happened again. As my fieldnote excerpt illustrates:

20th June 2013: “You all know the rules.”

Jimmy had just taken his stance. His eyes were focussed on the pocket. The pool cue was trembling in his hands. You could feel the tension in the air. He had to make this pot to stay in the game. He slowly started to draw the pool cue backwards ... “You’re f*ck*ng sh*t Jimmy, you’re going to miss,” shouted Dan, a participant watching from the other pool table. Jimmy jumped up out of his stance, pointed the pool cue at Dan’s face and said, “I’ll f*ck*ng kill you if you do that again.” Looking down the length of the cue, Dan started to laugh at Jimmy. “I f*ck*ng mean it. I will beat the sh*t out of you,” Jimmy proclaimed again. “Boys, calm down. You know the rules. Respect each other otherwise you will be out,” James interrupted. “Now get on with your shot, Jimmy, and you stay quiet,” James continued as he pointed towards Dan. Jimmy turned back around and took his stance. The room fell silent and Jimmy made his stroke. Suddenly, the room cracked with the clack of the white ball hitting the yellow ball. Jimmy started to slowly rise up from his bent over position as everyone watched the yellow ball arrow towards the top left-hand corner pocket ... but it jawed the pocket and stayed out. As it jammed in the jaws of the pocket, Dan shouted out, “Told you, fatty.” Jimmy smashed the pool cue onto the edge of the table and screamed, “This is your fault. I am going to kill you.” “Come on then,” Dan replied while curling his left-hand index finger. Jimmy threw the cue over to the other side of the room, clenched his fist and started walking towards Dan. James instantly jumped up out of his seat and sprinted into a position between the two participants. Once there, he

turned himself side-on to both participants. He extended his right arm directly out towards Dan and his left towards Jimmy. In that position and twisting his head between both participants James shouted, "Pack this in now. You both know better." Both participants were completely frozen as James continued, "I have told you before, if you disrespect the equipment, you're out. I will not let you come here and destroy this place. This equipment is important for everyone here. It's not just about you." Jimmy started to speak, "But, but ...". However, James shouted over the top of his mumblings, "No, Jimmy. You can't behave like that." As James was addressing Jimmy, Dan started to chuckle out loud. James instantly turned to face Dan and in an aggressive tone said, "I don't know what you're laughing for. Who do you think you are? You're not big. You're not untouchable. If you ever do that again, I will ban you for life. What gives you the right to disrespect someone like that?" The room was silent as Dan bowed his head towards the floor. "Answer me, what gives you the right?" James continued to ask. As Dan started to raise his head to respond, his face came into view. It was flushed. It was radish red. "I am sorry, James. I shouldn't have behaved like that." There was a long pause as James stared deep into Dan's eyes before eventually saying, "I mean it. Next time you're out for good." Dan gave him a nod and then James turned to face the rest of the participants; "Let's carry on with the session but be warned if anyone behaves like these two, you will be out. You all know the rules."

While James often presented what can be best described as an angry and dissatisfied demeanour when attempting to address anti-social behaviour, there were also times when he appeared to transition between negative emotional displays and a more calm and friendly persona. This was perhaps best highlighted in my third observation when James strove to stop a participant, Sam, from vandalising the badminton equipment he was using. Here, James initially

presented his typical aggravated and displeased physical and verbal image. However, once Sam had stopped damaging the badminton racquet and had apologised for his actions and behaviours, James appeared to almost immediately calm down. His voice became softer and his flustered and perturbed face was quickly replaced with a more tranquil and friendly expression. As I noted in my fieldnotes:

14th June 2013: “Stop that now!”

Sam, a participant, had just thrown a badminton racquet towards the wall of the sports hall after losing a badminton match. James jumped up from his seat, clenched his fists and glowered at Sam. “Stop that now! What do you think you’re doing? You cannot behave like that here or anywhere else.” By the time James had finished berating Sam his face was red as lava and contorted with rage – his nostrils were flaring, his eyebrows were pulled down and together and his eyes were narrowed into slits, through which the barest glimpses of his dark contracted pupils could be seen. Sam raised his arms above his shoulders with his palms facing towards James, “I’m sorry, James, I didn’t mean it, it just happened.” With his eyes still riddled with fury James silently marched towards Sam. “James, I am sorry, I am really sorry,” Sam cried out again. James suddenly stopped two feet short of Sam, where he lowered his head, unclenched his fists and put his left hand in his left trouser pocket. After a moment’s pause for a deep breath, James raised his head and made eye contact with Sam. “Look, Sam, you can’t do things like that. You’ll get in serious trouble.” Sam looked up towards James. “I will, I promise.” James smiled towards Sam, “Get back to your badminton match. You can’t just smash stuff up because you’ve lost a game of badminton.” “I know, James, I am really sorry.” James raised his right arm and placed it about Sam’s left shoulder. “I am serious, mate, you’ve got to learn to control your anger otherwise you’ll get

in serious trouble.” Sam looked up towards James. “I will, I promise.”

James smiled towards Sam. “Get back to your badminton match.”

Within the interviews I wanted to better understand why James appeared to place such an emphasis on attempting to successfully address anti-social behaviour. From my perspective, his actions were in line with the policy documentation which stated that those individuals charged with the responsibility of delivering government-funded schemes will divert young people from drugs and anti-social behaviour (e.g. DCMS/SE, 2012; DCMS/SU, 2002). In light of this, I found myself wondering whether these non-sporting policy goals informed James’s coaching practices when dealing with anti-social behaviour? Were there other motivations that underpinned how he acted in these situations? At this time I also wanted to ask James about the emotions he felt and displayed in these situations. In particular, in the interviews I endeavoured to ask questions such as “What types of emotions did you actually experience when dealing with anti-social behaviour? Why? Did you strategically control and manage the emotions that you displayed to the participants? If so, how and why?”

Perhaps one of the most striking issues I identified in my interviews with James was that he suggested he had a poor understanding of the policy goals of the Kidz ‘N’ Games scheme. James claimed that he had “no idea” what objectives he was required to facilitate through this government-funded scheme. Interestingly, James explained that this principally stemmed from the fact that his employer did not brief him about the various sporting and non-sporting policy objectives of the initiative. He suggested that Get Active Community Coaching only provided him with basic information such as date, time, and location. He noted:

I couldn't tell you what they expected me to do. I just don't know. I had no idea about what they wanted to achieve through these schemes. Nobody told me about the aims of the scheme and my roles and responsibilities ... I didn't get briefed on it. I hardly got any information. They just said "There is a session on Thursday night at A1 Youth Centre; it's a multi-sport session with a specific emphasis on boxing. Do you want to deliver it?" I jumped at the opportunity and just went to the session. That was all the information I got.

While James felt that he had a limited understanding of his roles and responsibilities, further conversations revealed that he believed he was required to successfully manage his participants and effectively address the anti-social behaviour that occurred in his sessions. James described how his outlook was based on his understanding that his employer held the behaviour management skills of their coaching staff in very high regard. Prior to the start of the scheme, his line manager told James that failure to effectively manage his participants' behaviours might result in reduced working hours. In light of these conversations, James believed that he had to effectively manage the behaviours of the young people at his session to safeguard his employment at Get Active Community Coaching. He explained:

Just before the scheme started my boss rung me and told me that it was really important that the participants are well behaved. He said that if he found out that they were behaving badly, he would have to take me off of the session ... So I had to be really hot on the problematic behaviour to protect my job ... I knew that if I didn't handle the kids when they kicked off, the company would have got another coach in. I knew that I had to deal with it effectively to protect my career. If I didn't I would have f*cked myself out of some wages and maybe even my job.

In an effort to address the demands and expectations of his employer, James revealed how he engaged in numerous calculated coaching practices. He explained how he employed several approaches that were not only aimed at actively addressing anti-social behaviour when it occurred (which will be discussed at length later), but also designed to discourage the young people who attended his sessions from partaking in such behaviour. This included, for example, the implementation of a behavioural policy or 'rules system'. James hoped that this stratagem would promote an ethos which fostered discipline and mutual respect. In his own words:

I think that these types of participants need to know the rules and understand the boundaries and how far they can go. So at the start of my first session I sat the participants down and explained the rules of the session to them. The company didn't set me any rules that they wanted me to enforce, it was just something that I created to try to make sure that the participants behave and respect each other ... The main rules that I set were to respect me, respect the equipment, and each other. With regards to respecting each other that didn't mean that I banned all swearing. If the participants were swearing at each other as a joke I just let it go. I didn't care about that but if the participants were swearing at each other to offend each other and hurt each other then I would kick off. The session was designed for them to play sport and have fun. It wasn't designed for them to start fighting and smashing the place up. The rules that I set just tried to enforce that point.

James also explained how he utilised a range of disciplinary measures when the participants broke these behavioural rules. These varied from a loss of privileges, such as not being able to compete in the next game of 'killer pool' or football tournament, to being banned or removed from the coaching session. More often

than not, though, James verbally reprimanded the participants. He hoped that these actions would prevent the young people from engaging in further anti-social behaviour. He noted:

Most of the time I would just shout at them. I would try to make them look so small. I would do that to show the other participants that I am in charge and that I own the session. I set the rules and if you don't follow them you will be punished. It wouldn't just be about explaining to the particular participant that you can't behave like that, it's also about the other participants. I wanted to demonstrate to everyone that nobody can misbehave on the session. If everyone sees me rip someone to pieces when they misbehave they soon realise that nobody can get away with that type of behaviour. It reaffirms the rules to everyone and they will all think "Sh*t, we can't do that otherwise we will get punished."

James explained that he also carefully constructed the image that he portrayed when the young people misbehaved. James described how he purposely presented a confrontational image when sanctioning participants who broke his behavioural rules. James believed that his engagements in such acts would help him to demonstrate his authority and bring these events to an immediate halt. In his own words:

It all starts with the way that I approach them. If they are at the other side of the room I will walk directly to them and get right in their face and confront them. You have to get in their face and get close to them. Once I am there I will make myself as wide and as tall as possible. If I slouch or I don't puff my chest out they will think that they can do whatever and get away with it. They won't be intimidated by me ... I also made direct eye contact with them. I would stare into their eyes and if they looked away I would tell them to look at me. Again, the eye contact thing is just another

thing to intimidate them. I suppose I try to appear like a boxer during a face-off. It's me saying to them that I am in charge, I am not scared of you and you will not behave like this.

In addition to controlling his bodily and facial image, James also discussed how he deliberately manipulated both the tone and pitch of his voice:

You also have to manipulate your voice. You have got to make them realise that they can't behave like that and the tone of your voice plays a key role in that. If you don't sound like you're in charge they will not listen and will think "Who the f*ck is this joker?", but if you pitch your voice correctly they will realise that you're in charge and that they must abide by your rules. To do that I would just make sure that I am louder and my voice is deeper than theirs. I would be loud and brash and harsh in my words. I would also emphasise key words, so rather than "You can't behave like this" it would be "YOU CAN'T BEHAVE LIKE THIS!" It would all be about pitch control really. I would always make sure my voice is one pitch louder and one tone deeper than the participant. Doing that demonstrates control and it shows you're in charge. If they are shouting louder than you they think that they are in charge and they can dominate the situation, whereas if you dominate the situation from your body language to the tone and pitch of your voice they are soon going to realise that they can't misbehave.

When asked how he learnt the aforementioned strategies and tactics, James revealed how his previous experiences as a secondary school pupil largely informed his approach. He explained how he principally learnt to display a firm and confrontational image when addressing misbehaving participants through his previous engagements with his English, economics, and science tutors. He discussed how he not only afforded more respect to those teachers who displayed a stern persona when dealing with misbehaving pupils, but he also

engaged in fewer classroom offences. In light of these experiences, James believed that the adoption of an authoritarian and dissatisfied approach when addressing anti-social behaviour was more likely to command the respect of the young people and, in turn, reduce the likelihood of them reoffending. In his own words:

My English teacher at school, Mr Doyle, everyone was sh*t scared of him because he was so strict and he would shout at and humiliate anyone who misbehaved. So you would sit silently for the whole lesson. You wouldn't dare kick off. Everyone was so well behaved. Everyone had massive respect for him ... And then there was Mr Groves, my economics teacher. He was another person who commanded respect. I remember during one of my first lessons with him I was mucking about with my mate and I ended up busting his nose. I started laughing my head off and so did everyone else in the class, apart from Mr Groves. He went wild. He stood in front of me and made me feel so small. He was like, "Are you an idiot? Have you forgotten your clown suit today? Who do you think you are? I am not going to tell you what to do, but if you behave like that in my class again you're never coming back." I felt so bad and so small. From that moment I knew that I couldn't f*ck around in that class again and I didn't ... At the opposite end of the spectrum, I had a science teacher [Mr Marsh] ... Everyone used to take the p*ss out of him. He was very 'wet'. He just never enforced the rules. That's what I mean by 'wet'. He just never enforced his authority. He never scared you, he never made you think "I can't do that again." He never did that and that meant that I just never respected him. I would do whatever I wanted because I knew that I could ... I suppose that's how I learnt that I had to enforce my authority at my sessions. I knew I had to be firm and strict when the participants misbehaved otherwise they would

have walked all over me. I needed to be like Mr Doyle and Mr Groves rather than like Mr Marsh. I wasn't going to let people treat me like a mug.

While James felt that he had to display an angry and disappointed coaching image to stop the participants from engaging in further anti-social behaviour, he also discussed how maintaining his desired emotional display was not a straightforward affair. He explained to me how he often experienced intense feelings of anger in such situations, as he knew that failure to effectively bring these events to an immediate halt might result in reduced working hours. Despite wanting to "swear," "shout and bawl", and generally "go wild" at those misbehaving young people in his session, James decided to refrain from doing so. Learning from his engagements with a colleague, James thought that displaying his 'real' thoughts and accompanying emotions would not only be unproductive in terms of his desire to prevent further anti-social behaviour in the future, but it would also likely have resulted in him being disciplined or released from his position at Get Active Community Coaching. He noted:

Whenever a participant kicked off I would get so angry, I would be so pi*sed off and angry with the participant because they were putting my earnings and career on the line. If they kept kicking off and going crazy all of the time and I couldn't stop them I would have been removed from that session and I might have lost my job at Get Active Community Coaching. By them being idiots they were putting my job on the line and that made me extremely angry but I tried to hide 95 per cent of it. I knew that I couldn't present my true image. I knew that I couldn't just go crazy at someone and press my head against theirs and start going wild at them. That is not professional at all and I knew it would only have a negative impact upon me ... When I first started working at Get Active Community Coaching one of the coaches told me how he lost his rag with a participant and nearly

lost his job. He didn't get in a fight or anything, but he started swearing and screaming at a participant who had broken a cricket bat when he was being observed by a senior member of staff. After the session, the senior member of staff said that he acted irrationally and demoted him to an assistant coach. He wasn't allowed to take a session on his own for the next year. And obviously as he was only an assistant he didn't earn as much money ... So I knew that if I let all my emotions out and showed how angry I really was I would have ended up losing my job. Basically, I knew I had to control my emotions. I had to make sure that I toned my anger down. I had to make it productive. I had to make sure that I didn't swear and just shout and bawl. I had to make sure that I didn't display my true feelings.

At this point I was somewhat confused by the seemingly inconsistent and contradictory nature of James's coaching practices. On the one hand he was informing me how he believed that he had to display an angry and intimidating persona to effectively address anti-social behaviour. Yet on the other hand he suggested that he had to refrain from displaying his 'true' feelings of anger in order to safeguard his employment with the company. When I asked James to clarify his position on these issues he revealed that dealing with anti-social behaviour was ultimately an "emotionally challenging balancing act". James described how he initially sought to present angry and disappointed emotions. James hoped that doing so would bring events to a halt and evidence to the young people attending his session that such behaviour would not be tolerated. While James used negative emotional displays to gain the attention of his participants, he was also aware that the sustained use of such observable behaviours could alienate him from the group. This was something that he wanted to avoid for fear of the damage this could do to his reputation in the eyes his employers. In light

of this, James explained that he would quickly transition back to a more calm and friendly persona. He believed that this shift from a negative to a positive emotional display helped him to maintain the participants' respect, reduce the likelihood of them reoffending in subsequent sessions, and protect his position at Get Active Community Coaching. He explained:

I suppose it's just an emotionally challenging balancing act really as I wanted to intimidate the participants to stop them from misbehaving to protect my job but at the same time I didn't want to be overly aggressive as that will put my job in danger ... I think that you have got to come across a bit bipolar so when the kid first misbehaves you have got to come down on them hard to make sure that they know that they can't behave like that and that means presenting angry and disappointed emotions, but after that initial burst you have to calm it down a bit. You still have to be firm but just don't take it too far. Just control those emotions and be neutral. It's a bit like good cop, bad cop. Start off as the bad cop and make them know that they are in the wrong and get their attention and once you've done that you can calm down a little bit. You can lower your voice and lose some of that hard man image ... If you don't do that the participant[s] will just think you're a w**ker and won't take on board anything you say ... But by being angry at the start and then calming down you let them know that you're disappointed in their behaviours and that they are in the wrong, and you also maintain their respect which means that they are less likely to kick off again. Ultimately, you want to present a confrontational image that lets the participant know that you're disappointed in their behaviours and that they are in the wrong but not an overly aggressive image where they actually fear for their safety.

Finally, James hinted that he felt underpaid for the amount of effort that these situations required. While he acknowledged that these financial frustrations made him question his motivation and enthusiasm for his engagement with his coaching role, he explained that his perceived need to protect his limited earnings ensured that he engaged in the behavioural repertoire and emotional behaviour he felt was necessary. In his own words:

If a kid kicks off it's both physically and emotionally exhausting. I would just think "For f*ck's sake I can't be arsed to deal with this sh*t for £10 an hour. I don't get paid enough money to invest this much effort into a session." But then I would think £10 an hour is better than £0 an hour so I would man up and deal with their sh*t ... I didn't feel like I got paid enough to deal with their sh*t but I couldn't get paid nothing so I dealt with it. I had to deal with it to protect my wages and job.

4.3.3. Workplace enjoyment? It is not enough.

The final key issue I identified during the participant observation phase related to the large array of positive emotions James typically presented when coaching. When analysing the jotted notes that I made during the midst of the coaching sessions (see chapter 3, section 3.6.2. for further information on why I took jottings), I found that I often wrote words and phrases such as "positive", "full of energy", "banter", "always smiling and laughing", "happy", "upbeat", "loves interacting with the participants", "relaxed", and "enjoyment for all". Of course, there were times when James portrayed a coaching persona that was not in keeping with these findings, most notably when dealing with anti-social behaviour (see section 4.3.2.). That said, I would argue that for the vast majority of the participant observation phase James displayed a positive persona. His behaviour suggested that he thoroughly enjoyed engaging with his community coaching job

role and interacting with this particular set of participants. Importantly, from my point of view, James's upbeat and energetic coaching display had positive implications for the participants' experiences. The young people often suggested that they were 'happy' with the way that James engaged with his role, as they had lots of fun during his coaching sessions. The fieldnote extract presented below is typical of the types of interactions that occurred in this regard. We were in the final moments of a football match, the score was 3-3, and James had just awarded a penalty to Superstars United:

4th July 2013: Smiles, laughs, and giggles

Everyone on the Superstars United team was jumping for joy and a few were singing "Football's coming home, it's coming home, it's coming ..." while performing the 'Stir the Pot' dance move. James burst into laughter as he turned towards me and said, "Look at these jokers, they are hilarious." James continued to chuckle to himself about the participants' celebrations while retrieving the football, which had somehow ended up wedged in the bush by the left-hand corner flag. As James was walking back towards the penalty area where everyone was congregated he said, "Come on, stop celebrating like you've won the World Cup. You haven't even scored yet. Now who is going to take the penalty?" The Superstars United team members instantly stopped dancing and singing and quickly huddled together to decide their penalty taker. While they were discussing their options, James came over to me and with a beaming smile across his face said, "Watch this, this will be hilarious. I will make whoever takes the penalty miss." As he finished his sentence, Porky emerged from the group with the football under his arm. "Porky? You've chosen Porky? Well, you're not going to win now, are you?! He won't even be able to reach the goal with those sparrow legs," James exclaimed with a cheeky grin on his face. Everyone, including Porky, burst into laughter. Once Porky had composed

himself, he replied; "Please James, don't put me off. I am really nervous and I won't be able to score if you keep making me laugh." James bowed his head in shame and said, "Sorry, Porky ... But seriously, do you want me to move the penalty spot forward so you at least have a chance of reaching the goal?" "Stop it, James," replied Porky. James burst into laughter again which drew a huge smile across Porky's face. "But are you sure?" James asked again. "JAMES?!" exclaimed Porky in a pleading tone. James smiled and winked at Porky and said, "Okay, I will stop now. I promise." Porky bent down and placed the ball on the spot, turned his back towards the goal and took four steps forward and two to his right-hand side. As he turned to face the goal he took a moment's pause while he blew out his cheeks and then he started his approach to the ball. Porky was two strides into his run-up when James exclaimed, "Stop, Porky, stop!" Porky instantly broke his stride and ground to a halt. "What's up, James?" Porky asked. "Your shoelace. It's undone," James replied while pointing towards Porky's feet. As Porky looked down, James and the rest of the participants burst into laughter and started clapping and cheering. Porky's shoelace wasn't undone. With a red face, Porky looked up to James and said, "You're killing me, mate. You're in my head now." James smiled and in an exuberant tone said, "Come on, Porky. You can do it." Porky smiled at James before returning to his position four steps behind and two to the left-hand side of the football. He began his approach for the second time. As he neared the football, James covered his mouth and coughed noisily. Porky instantly started laughing. He started laughing that hard he fell to the floor before he reached the football. While rolling around laughing, Porky tried to talk to James: "James, please op it. I ca with this." "What was that, Porky? I can't understand you. You're laughing too much," James replied. "Ple stop, I ca cope." Porky laughtalked again. "Porky, stop talking nonsense and please tell me what's wrong," James replied for a

second time. Porky slowly stood up, composed himself and said “James, please stop it. I can’t cope with this.” “Of course, why didn’t you say sooner?” James replied in a giggling tone. Porky dusted himself down and began his run-up for the third time. Everyone was silent but Porky was laughing uncontrollably as he approached the ball. He placed his left foot next to the football and swung his right foot hard towards the back of it. Porky completely missed the football and ended up in a heap on the ground. Everyone burst into laughter. James was laughing so hard, he started crying. “That’s ... that’s time,” James mumbled out amidst his cries of laughter. As everyone started to calm down, James walked over to Porky. “That was amazing, Porky. Literally amazing,” James stated as he helped Porky to get to his feet. Porky laughed before replying, “You’re the best, James. I have so much fun on these sessions.” James smiled and said, “Don’t be daft. I have just as much fun as you guys.” He then turned to face the rest of the participants and announced that the session was over.

In light of these observational findings, within the interviews I wanted to better understand why James typically displayed such a positive image when coaching. His behaviours suggested that he experienced high levels of enjoyment when performing his community coaching duties. Indeed, in the fieldnote extract presented above James almost always appeared to be smiling, laughing, and joking. Interestingly, this seemed to have positive effects on the young peoples’ experiences. Not only were the participants frequently laughing and smiling, but Porky also explained how he felt James was an excellent practitioner who made sessions enjoyable and fun. It is perhaps important to note that this was not the only situation where James displayed a positive coaching persona. As highlighted above, I often felt that James portrayed a highly energetic and humorous image.

However, I purposely chose to present the ‘Smiles, laughs, and giggles’ within this chapter, as it was during my analysis of this observation that James’s actions and behaviours really started to make an impression on me. Indeed, it was not until after this coaching session that I started to have serious thoughts about the positive, upbeat, happy, and energetic coaching persona James typically displayed. Simply put, after these experiences I found myself frequently contemplating whether James enjoyed engaging with his coaching job as much as it appeared, and, if so, why? If not, why did he display such a positive persona when coaching?

One key issue that was identified in the interviews with James was that he anticipated being involved in community sport coaching for the duration of his career. He explained that he was determined to pursue a career in community coaching for the rest of his life and he had the long-term career objective of setting up his own community coaching company. James described how his outlook was based on the enjoyment he experienced when fulfilling his community coaching job. He revealed how his determination to work within the coaching profession was underpinned by his sense of enjoyment and satisfaction in the performance of his work. James also felt that his employment at Get Active Community Coaching was helping him work towards this long-term career goal. He described how he felt that it was providing him with the qualifications and experience required to successfully set up and manage his own community coaching company. Unfortunately for James this “invaluable learning curve” appeared to have financial implications, as he was not earning as much money as he desired. However, despite wanting a better salary, James perceived it was worth enduring these financial issues and concerns. James thought that the qualifications and

experience he was currently gaining with the company would, ultimately, lead to higher earnings and a more successful career. He noted:

Everyone has a long-term career plan and mine is to have my own coaching company. I want to stay in coaching for the rest of my life. I love it. Yes, other fields interest me but nothing comes as natural to me as coaching does and nothing is as enjoyable as coaching. That's really why I want to set up my own company and coach for the rest of my career. I really enjoy coaching and I love interacting with the kids ... Don't get me wrong, my current coaching role at Get Active Community Coaching isn't the best paid job in the world and I just get by. I have enough to pay the bills and stuff but I don't exactly have a lot of money. I couldn't go crazy with my pay cheque but that's okay as I see my current job at Get Active Community Coaching as a platform to getting my own coaching company and being stinking rich [said in a jesting tone]. I need to have lots of coaching qualifications and experience to have my own successful coaching company and Get Active Community Coaching is giving me that. They are paying for all of my coaching qualifications and obviously I am getting lots of experience. For example, since I have been coaching for them I have coached infants, kids, youths, adults, and disabled people. That is an invaluable learning curve that will only help my own coaching ability and career development ... So although my current wage isn't great, money is not my ultimate goal at the moment. Don't get me wrong, I like having money but getting experience and qualifications is far more important than short-term cash. For me, getting the qualifications and experience to be a more open-minded coach and learn about coaching is the most important thing at this stage in my career. Plus, I truly believe that getting all these qualifications and experience now will lead to a bigger, better, richer, and more successful career in coaching.

While James believed that he was getting invaluable experience at Get Active Community Coaching, he repeatedly stressed to me how he felt he needed to be promoted to a senior coaching position in the near future. He explained how he felt that it was impossible for him to continue to gain the necessary experience to enhance his curriculum vitae and become an expert coach unless he was promoted. He firmly believed that he needed the additional responsibility associated with the senior coaching position to further develop his coaching abilities and to continue to work towards his goal of having his own community coaching company. When asked about how he would achieve his desired promotion, James again revealed that he needed to elicit enjoyment in his participants to increase the chances of his moving to a senior coaching position. As discussed previously (see section 4.3.1.), James felt that his employer principally judged his performance in relation to participant enjoyment and feedback. As he explained to me:

The participants have to be enjoying themselves; that's how I am going to get promoted. If they enjoy my sessions and think I am the best coach in the world then I will be promoted ... The participants' enjoyment will make that happen for a number of reasons. First, word will eventually get back to Get Active Community Coaching that the participants are having a great time and that they think I am the best coach ever and that will encourage them to promote me. Second, if Get Active Community Coaching come to observe me and they see that I have a good rapport with the kids and that everyone is having a great time they will think that I am a good coach, doing a good job and that I can be trusted with extra responsibility, like being a senior coach.

James revealed that he had been partaking in various calculated coaching practices to help elicit joyful feelings in the participants. Such actions were driven

by his determination to attain a promotion. The majority of the strategies that James said he implemented have already been discussed above, such as the use of rewards and expressing an interest in the participants' wider social lives (see section 4.3.1. for further information). At this stage in the interview process, however, James explained that he also manipulated the emotions and image he presented to the participants. He described how despite sometimes harbouring contradictory feelings, he purposely displayed positive and upbeat emotions and behaviours to manipulate the participants into thinking that he thoroughly enjoyed engaging with his community coaching role. For example, James divulged that he sometimes experienced apathy towards his coaching role but rather than publically disclosing such feelings, he manipulated his bodily and facial image to give the participants the impression that he was having fun. He intentionally sought to deceive the participants about his true emotions to obtain his desired end of optimising their enjoyment. In his own words:

So basically I have to continue to make sure every participant enjoys my sessions [and] the best way to do that is to make sure I look like I am having a great time. If the participants think I am having lots of fun coaching them then that will make them feel happy and enjoy the session ... So I will just make sure that I look like I am having fun all of the time. I will make sure that I am always smiling, laughing, having banter with the kids [and] participating in the activities. You know I will just look like I am buzzing and that I am a ball of enthusiasm. If I look happy and enthusiastic they [the participants] will be happy and enthusiastic ... For example, I bet you thought that I loved delivering football sessions? Well, I didn't. I don't particularly like football ... I could never be bothered to coach football. I had no motivation to do it but I know that practically every kid enjoys it so I made sure that I looked like I loved football. I made sure that I participated

in the games, I ran around like a headless chicken and I encouraged and bantered with the participants ... Much like when I was dealing with the kids when they kicked off, I manipulated my voice, body language and actions to make sure that I looked like I was having fun and enjoying myself as I knew that would make the participants enjoy themselves and basically help me to get promoted and get what I wanted.

Although James felt that he had to pretend to enjoy delivering football related coaching practices, he went on to discuss how he began to experience joyous emotions when taking these activities. He explained that while he initially had to force himself to present a positive emotional display when performing football coaching practices at the initiative, he found that in the final few sessions he actually experienced these emotions. James felt that he had consciously worked on his feelings to the extent that he “taught” himself to experience the positive emotions he expressed in these situations. As he noted:

Towards the end of the scheme I actually started to enjoy myself when we were playing football. It sounds a bit weird, but it was like I taught myself to have a good time ... It is hard to describe, but basically because I knew that I had to be upbeat I always tried really hard to look like I was having fun and enjoying myself and in the end I kind of just did. I kind of forgot I was pretending and started to have fun.

When asked how he learnt the need to present positive emotional expressions and physical behaviours, James again revealed how learning from previous athletic experiences informed his approach. Interestingly, at this time James also described how his own coaching experiences influenced the various tactics and strategies he employed throughout the Kidz ‘N’ Games scheme. By way of example, James described how he initially developed the belief that an upbeat

coaching persona would potentially have positive implications for his participants' enjoyment through his previous interactions with his secondary school PE teacher, Mr Collin. James explained how Mr Collin's positive and humorous approach ensured that James enjoyed partaking in sports which he perceived were boring and rubbish. Learning from these engagements, James attempted to implement this approach during his own coaching sessions. This trial-and-error method further reinforced James's beliefs that he needed to present a positive persona when coaching at the Kidz 'N' Games initiative. He explained how the young people had almost always had a fantastic experience and given him excellent feedback. James divulged that it was the combination of these experiences that ultimately underpinned his decision to present a positive emotional display when delivering the Kidz 'N' Games scheme. Simply put, the strategies James employed in the initiative were developed from and informed by his previous experiences as an athlete, working with mentor coaches, and speaking to other practitioners, and through simple trial and error. In his own words:

While I learnt to do these things from working with other coaches and my own experiences as an athlete, my own coaching experiences also influenced what I did. You know, I often try things out when I coach and if they work I keep them and if they don't I get rid of them ... [For example,] I probably learnt to look like I am having fun through my experiences in PE. We had a teacher, Mr Collin, and he always used to take us for sh*t boring sports like gymnastics, dance and hockey. You know the sports that lads never want to do but I had some of my best times at school in those lessons because Mr Collin was so f*ck*ng cool. He was always bantering us and making us laugh. He used to take part in the lesson and he just looked like he was having loads of fun ... And that's what made those

classes great, it was him. You forgot that you were playing a rubbish sport. I actually used to look forward to dance lessons. How sad is that? But it was because Mr Collin had fun, made us laugh and made a sh*t sport, good ... So when I started coaching I thought to myself "Who were the best coaches that I had?" And it was the ones who had fun, like Mr Collin. So since then I have just tried to coach in the same way. I have always tried to look like I am having fun, even when I am not, as that's what made me love sport when I was a kid. And, well, it has just kind of worked. I have pretty much always had amazing feedback from the participants. They always tell me that I am super fun and that they love my sessions ... So, obviously when I started coaching here I adopted the same approach as I had a good idea it would work ... Essentially, you learn stuff from other people, try it out, and if it works you keep doing it.

While the aforementioned interview data indicated that James's coaching practices were often rational calculated acts, later conversations revealed that there was a strong interconnection between the image he portrayed in the sporting context and his true feelings. James explained how although he felt that he had to display a positive persona to achieve his organisational goals, the happy and enthusiastic image I documented throughout the observational period was for the most part true. James repeatedly stressed to me that he "loved" engaging with his community coaching role and reiterated on numerous occasions that the positive emotions and behaviours he displayed were predominantly "real". He explained:

While I know that I need to make sure that I look like I am having fun to make the participants enjoy my sessions and get my promotion, I don't want you to think that I don't enjoy coaching, because I do. I absolutely love it ... I don't want you to think that I act all of the time, because I don't.

I love it. I think that it's the best job in the world. If I didn't enjoy my job I wouldn't do it ... So when you said that I looked happy and I was always smiling, laughing and joking, I actually was. Most of the time, those emotions were real. My laugh and smile wasn't fake ... To be able to go out and play sports with kids is fantastic. I love it, I love helping them to get better at sport and I absolutely love the banter with the kids. That's what I really love. I just love coaching and having a laugh with the participants ... Yes, there are parts of coaching that I don't enjoy as much, like you know I don't like taking football sessions, but at the same time I love the banter that football matches bring. Think about that incident with Porky, it was awesome, and that makes coaching the most enjoyable job in the world ... The banter with the kids is just brilliant, I love it and I don't want you to think that isn't true.

Given the nature of James's interactions in both the participant observation and interview phases, I would argue that James expected to be employed in the community coaching profession for the majority of his working life. While I recognise that James was experiencing some financial concerns, his comments suggested that these worries were outweighed by his job satisfaction and his belief that a career in community coaching would provide long-term financial security. He frequently explained how he thoroughly enjoyed his work as a community sports coach and reiterated on numerous occasions that he felt he could earn a successful and lucrative career in this profession, especially once he set up his own coaching business. The combination of these thoughts certainly seemed to suggest that James would seek employment in the coaching industry for the large proportion of his working career. Consequently, I was somewhat surprised when I received a text message from James explaining that he had not

only relinquished his role at Get Active Community Coaching, but the coaching industry as a whole. As his text message stated:

14th April 2014: Surprise, surprise

Now then Ben. Yeah I'm great ta, how are you? I don't work for Get Active Community Coaching anymore. I couldn't live off of the money I got off of them, ha ha, new job now though. Not in coaching, in an office. I can still meet you for a coffee and another interview if you'd like though?

In light of these events, the types of issues that I wanted to address within the interviews changed to a certain extent. I was now primarily concerned with shedding light on why James quit his post at Get Active Community Coaching for an office job. His text message suggested that financial issues and constraints underpinned his decision. It seemed that it was no longer financially viable for James to continue to pursue a career in community sports coaching. I was somewhat surprised by this, given that James had previously stated that the experience and qualifications he was gaining with the company were more important than his immediate income. He thought that this was more likely to lead to a successful and financially secure career in the coaching profession. Perhaps more importantly, James stressed on several occasions how he wanted to remain in the coaching industry as it was the "most enjoyable job in the world". Given such a glaring discrepancy between these comments and his decision to quit his job as a community sports coach, within the remaining interviews I was keen to explore topics such as when these financial concerns surfaced and what implications they had for James's motivations and enthusiasm to engage with his community coaching role. Did James need a better salary? Why? Why did he pursue employment in a different profession, rather than with a different community coaching provider?

The first key issue identified in the interviews with James related to the endemic vulnerability James suggested he experienced when fulfilling his community coaching role. James described how the insecure nature of his casual coaching position (zero-hours contract), or more specifically the irregularity of his coaching hours, ensured that his time at Get Active Community Coaching was always accompanied by financial concerns. He also highlighted that he attempted to reduce these financial insecurities by using his monthly rota (provisional list of coaching sessions/hours for the upcoming months) to calculate his salary. Unfortunately, this proved to be a fruitless endeavour and actually increased James's financial difficulties, as he rarely fulfilled his quota of coaching hours due to sessions being cancelled. Thus, despite trying to employ coping strategies, James's experiences at Get Active Community Coaching were fundamentally characterised by intense feelings of worry due to a lack of job security and control over his salary and/or coaching hours. In his own words:

I've always had money concerns, Ben. Ever since I started coaching as a full-time casual coach, money was a huge worry because I had no idea how many sessions I was going to get. One week they [Get Active Community Coaching] could be like do you want 20 sessions and then the next they only give you 5. I never knew how much I was going to earn ... I tried to budget based upon my monthly rota but half of those sessions would get cancelled. For example, my rota might have said that I've got 25 sessions in the third week of the month but then I'd get to that week and 10 of my sessions would have been cancelled so I'd end up with £150 for that week rather than £250. And then it was like "F*ck, what am I going to do?" Every single month was a worry like that. Every pay day I would frantically panic about how I am going to survive off of my wage and make it last all month.

Interestingly, James explained how his financial difficulties did not have a detrimental impact upon his desires to seek a career in community coaching. He highlighted how the enjoyment he experienced when coaching outweighed such issues. James also shared how his anger and frustrations about his financial situation did not impinge upon his motivation and enthusiasm for his engagement with his coaching role. He explained how these negative emotions were “erased” from his mind and were replaced with positive feelings as he was engaging with the job of his “dreams”. He repeatedly suggested that when he was coaching money didn’t matter and reiterated on numerous occasions that all he wanted to do was coach. It seems that the positive emotions and behaviours James displayed throughout the participant observations phase were not only genuine, but also the driving force behind James’s decision to tolerate such financial insecurities and pursue a profession within community coaching. He noted:

Even though the money was sh*t I could never bring myself to quit because I loved it far too much ... It’s strange really because I was so pi*sed and worried about how much I was earning and the amount of coaching hours I got but none of that impacted upon how I coached and the fun I had. I loved coaching and I still do. It’s the best job on the planet. To go and play sport with kids is fantastic. I loved the banter with the kids ... Yes, it made no sense to be a community coach as the money I was earning was disgusting but all I wanted to do was coach. Before I met you, I was living with a girl [ex-girlfriend] and I had to work two additional part-time jobs just to pay my half of the rent and the bills. I had to work 7 days a week just to live. If I worked in the bar [one of his additional jobs] full-time I wouldn’t have needed another job but I didn’t do that because I wanted to coach. I look back now and think “James, what the f*ck were you doing? You were a f*ck*ng idiot.” But at the time I couldn’t see that because I loved coaching

... When I was coaching money didn't matter, it was like all the anger and frustrations I had about my wages were erased from my mind. I simply forgot about that sh*t. It didn't matter because I was doing the job I loved ... So when you watched me coach and I looked happy, I was happy. My emotions weren't fake. I was doing the job of my dreams. I didn't even think about my money situation, I was just enjoying coaching and having a laugh with the participants ... That was why I did the job in the first place and why I put up with my sh*t money situation for over 3 years.

While James suggested that his inherent financial concerns were offset by his job satisfaction, he went on to discuss how reading his end of tax year payslip (received several months after the participant observation phase) triggered an immediate critical reflection about his overall well-being, inclusive of his happiness and prosperity. James recognised that despite enjoying coaching, his £5,000 a year earnings were having negative implications for the quality of his non-work life. He explained how he could not afford to partake in important non-workplace activities such as socialising with friends, taking his girlfriend on holiday, and learning to drive. The recognition of these realities elicited strong negative emotions in James. He explained how he felt that he was not only unhappy, but also a failure. In his own words:

I got my end of year payslip and do you know how much I got? Five grand for the whole year. I looked at that and thought that's f*ck*ng disgusting, it made me feel like a failure. I instantly felt awful about my life. It made me realise how unsuccessful I was. It made me realise how unhappy I was because I had no money and I couldn't afford to do the things in life I wanted ... I wanted to be able to provide for my family. I wanted to save some money for a rainy day. I wanted to go on holiday. I wanted to go on 'lads' weekends. I wanted to be able to take my girlfriend out for meals and

buy her presents. I wanted money to be able to learn to drive and buy a car. I wanted to be able to afford a mortgage on a house. I wanted money to have a social life but the reality was that I couldn't afford any of those things ... My girlfriend wanted to go abroad but I couldn't even think about taking her out for a meal or to Blackpool for the weekend let alone abroad ... I couldn't even afford to go out for a few beers with my best mates. And when I did I would get to the bar and pray we were not doing rounds as I couldn't afford one. Seeing that payslip just made me realise that and how sh*t the rest of my life was.

James continued to explain how he felt his failure to participate in these activities had negative implications for his relationships with his friends and girlfriend. He described how through conversations with these individuals he came to understand that his zero-hours community coaching salary, which was on average £415 a month, was not providing him with the necessary funds to partake in the social activities that were expected of someone in his position. James described how this situation resulted in his friends and girlfriend expressing anger and displeasure towards him. This led James to experience a range of strong negative emotions. He described how these engagements made him feel that he was an “embarrassed” “waste of space” who was about to be abandoned by the people who mattered. As he explained:

Well, whenever I spoke to my friends to tell them that I couldn't afford to hang out with them they were always like, “Why the f*ck are you still coaching? You're going nowhere with your life, you can't afford to come out with us, you can't afford a car and look what you're wearing. You look like a piece of sh*t, you've wore that same shirt for two f*ck*ng years.” When they were saying that I just felt so embarrassed, I felt such a failure, and that just started to make me realise that coaching was a dead end job,

a job that wasn't allowing me to keep up, a job that wasn't allowing me to buy the things I need to buy to be viewed as a success, a job that was eventually going to make me friendless ... My girlfriend was [also] putting pressure on me, saying, "Why can't you take me out, why can't we go on holiday? I am not happy, James, because you are not treating me like a lady." That made me feel like sh*t because I knew that if I wanted to keep her I had to do these things. It made me feel like I was a sh*t boyfriend who was going to get dumped in the very near future if I didn't start earning some more money. ... And then I would speak to my mum and tell her all of this and she would be like "Well, are you happy?" and I would be like, "No, no, I am not. I feel like such a waste of space because I can't afford to do anything." She was always like, "Well, you need to change something, don't you."

James's recognition of these realities of his non-work life underpinned his decision to quit his role as a community sports coach and seek employment in an alternative profession. James explained how through these interactions he developed the belief that he was "never" going to be able to earn a wage that would allow him to enjoy life outside of work and maintain his relationships with his friends and girlfriend. In light of this, James terminated his position at Get Active Community Coaching and sought employment in a call centre. He explained:

It made me realise that I was never going to be able to earn a living out of being a community coach and achieve the things in life that I want and that I was a mug for thinking that I could and for doing it for so long. Yes, I loved coaching but seeing that payslip and my conversations with my friends and stuff made me realise that having money to enjoy your own life is far more

important than enjoying your job and that's when I decided to quit and took a job at a local call centre.

Finally, when asked about why he chose to pursue a career in a call centre rather than seek employment with an alternative coaching provider, James explained how he felt he could not earn the monies he required to fulfil his non-workplace ambitions in this industry. Despite experiencing a strong sense of enjoyment and satisfaction when engaging with his community coaching role, he ultimately felt that it was impossible to earn a successful and secure career in the coaching profession. He noted:

Eventually I just realised that I was never going to make the money I needed in coaching ... I was trying my hardest to get a promotion, but it just wasn't happening. I did look at other jobs, but they were all sh*tty zero-hour contracts. You can't have a successful career in these jobs, you just can't earn enough money; I am living proof of that ... So I decided to get out when I had the chance ... The call centre doesn't sound great, but the salary is so much better and there is a proper career ladder. People actually get promoted, drive nice cars, and own their own houses. That's what I want and need ... Don't get me wrong, I loved coaching but at the end of the day you have to protect yourself and you have to earn enough money to make something of your life. The harsh reality is that community coaching doesn't allow you to do that.

4.4. Summary

This chapter presented the key findings from this research project addressing the everyday demands and dilemmas that Greg and James experienced when implementing the Kidz 'N' Games initiative. To do this, I initially discussed the findings generated from Greg's story. Here, three interrelated themes were

presented: (1) *Targets, vulnerability, and self-interest*; (2) *Anti-social behaviours? I ignore them. I have to*; and (3) *Peers, motivations, and non-work relationships*. After this, I turned my attention towards James's story. I divided this section of the chapter into three interrelated themes: (1) *Targets and tactics*; (2) *Misbehaving participants, emotions, and personal goals*; and (3) *Workplace enjoyment? It is not enough*. The findings within each of the abovementioned themes were presented in two distinct phases. Phase one drew upon data from the participant observations to explore the actions and behaviours of each coach as they attempted to enact the Kidz 'N' Games initiative at the micro-level of practice. Following this, data from the informal interviews were presented to offer a more in-depth insight into the thoughts and meanings that Greg and James ascribed to their community coaching experiences.

Chapter 5: Discussion

5.1. Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to make theoretical sense of Greg's and James's experiences as community sports coaches. Following this brief introduction, the chapter explores the social, micropolitical, and emotional features of Greg's and James's working lives. These accounts are principally understood in relation to Kelchtermans' (e.g. Kelchtermans, 2005, 2009, 2011; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002a, 2002b) work on micropolitical literacy and vulnerability, Goffman's (1990 [1959]) writings on the presentation of the self, and Hochschild's (2012 [1983]) concept of emotional labour. The literature addressing identity theory (e.g. Burke & Stets, 2009; Stryker, 2002 [1980]) and consumerism (e.g. Bauman, 2007) is then used to better understand how Greg and James sought to manage their various identities, as well as the societal expectations that are placed on them. Finally, a concluding section summarises the main points discussed in this chapter.

5.2. It is all about impressing significant others

When interpreting Greg's and James's career stories, I believe that protecting and advancing their respective community coaching positions constituted a major professional concern for each of them. Throughout the interviews, both coaches frequently suggested that their central objective was to be regarded as a competent coach in the eyes of key contextual stakeholders (e.g. line managers and participants), in order to safeguard their employment and improve the prospect of securing a promotion to a more senior position within their organisation. For example, Greg highlighted how he wanted his line manager to view him not only as a "valuable member of staff", but also as the "best part-time coach" at Community Coaching 'R' Us. He hoped that this would help to provide

job security and additional coaching hours, as well as increase the possibility of him moving from a zero-hours contract to a full-time position. Similarly, James also reiterated on numerous occasions how he sought to be considered a good coach by both his employers and his participants. He wanted to be viewed in this way as he perceived it would help to ensure that his employment at Get Active Community Coaching remained safe, while also increasing his chances of securing a promotion to a senior coaching role within the company. It seems, then, that Greg and James acknowledged the asymmetrical power relationship that existed between them and other stakeholders. For example, at this stage of their community coaching careers, both coaches believed that it was their line managers who were the ultimate arbiters of their career progress. They were acutely aware of the need to promote themselves as competent community coaches to their respective line managers if they were to obtain the promotion that they each desired.

Importantly, and as will be discussed at length later (see section 5.6.), I contend that Greg's and James's desires to fulfil these objectives were also fuelled by an ambition to earn a salary that would allow them to achieve various non-workplace related goals and objectives. They both highlighted to me how they strove to impress key contextual stakeholders by demonstrating their professional competence in order to earn a living that would allow them to fulfil various other non-workplace identities. Specifically, they explained how the underpinning motivation fuelling their determination to protect and advance their employment was a desire to buy commodities and engage in activities that would contribute to the successful fulfilment of their role as boyfriend, friend, and son. For example, James explained how he wanted to safeguard his position and achieve a promotion in order to earn enough money to be able to take his

girlfriend out for meals, pay his mum rent, have beers with his mates, and keep up with the latest style trends, as well as to buy a house and car. Similarly, Greg revealed how he wanted to protect and advance his job in order to be on a wage that would allow him to move out from his parents' house, buy a car, buy clothes, go on holidays, and go out with his friends and girlfriend.

Here, we might usefully draw on the work of Kelchtermans (1993) and Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002a, 2002b) to better understand why Greg and James attached considerable importance to not only protecting their employment, but also advancing their position. Central to Kelchtermans and Ballet's (2002a, 2002b) socio-political analysis is the view that the thoughts and actions of practitioners are, to a large extent, driven by various interests. In the case of teaching, for example, they suggested that "all teachers hold beliefs about what entails good teaching and what conditions they perceive as necessary or desirable in order to properly perform their professional tasks" (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002a, p. 756). They contend that these beliefs operate as *professional interests* for the organisational members involved (Kelchtermans, 2002a, 2002b). Importantly, Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002b) argue that *organisational interests* (i.e. "issues concerning roles, positions or formal tasks in the school as an organisation") comprise an important professional interest for teachers at the start of their careers' (p. 110). They conclude that 'getting a job and keeping a job' constitute the major organisational concerns for early career Flemish primary school teachers (Kelchtermans, 1993; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002a, 2002b). They further explain that leaving a good impression about their professional qualities and capacities in order to improve their job prospects in the future is an important objective for primary school teachers from the very start of their careers (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002a).

Using Kelchtermans (1993) and Kelchtermans and Ballet's (2002a, 2002b) micropolitical framework, it could be argued that moving from a zero-hours contract to a full-time position comprised the central professional concern for Greg, and that securing a promotion to a senior coaching role with Get Active Community Coaching constituted the major professional interest for James. Moreover, to achieve these *organisational interests* both coaches sought to impress key contextual stakeholders by demonstrating their professional capacity (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002a). Such findings lend further credence to performance coaching research that has already hinted at these issues (e.g. Huggan et al., 2014; Potrac & Jones, 2009b; Potrac et al., 2013a; Thompson et al., 2013). For example, Thompson et al. (2013) demonstrated how a neophyte fitness coach endeavoured to showcase his professional competencies to the manager, the goalkeeping coach, and the senior physiotherapists at the soccer club where he was employed. He believed that he had to impress these individuals if he were to establish, maintain, or advance his career at the club. Equally, the work of Huggan et al. (2014) highlighted how an early career performance analyst sought to impress key contextual stakeholders (e.g. his manager) in order to protect and advance his career, as he perceived that it was these individuals who had the power to determine the success and longevity of his career. Importantly, these findings also provide some initial exploratory insights into the ways two community sports coaches were influenced by their individual motivations, goals, and fears, and their determination to protect their jobs (Potrac & Jones, 2009a, 2009b).

From my perspective, it appeared that Greg and James came to understand that there were certain professional tasks they had to perform successfully if they were to be considered as competent practitioners, and, as

such, establish, safeguard, and advance their employment. For example, Greg revealed how he believed that his employer evaluated his performance in relation to the number of participants that attended his sessions. He understood that Community Coaching 'R' Us largely judged his pedagogical effectiveness against registers and participant details forms. Interestingly, Greg shared how his view on this matter was principally shaped through a 'meeting' he had with his line manager shortly before the start of the scheme. At the meeting, Greg was told not only that the income awarded to the company was determined by the achievement of pre-defined sessional participation targets, but also that his performance would be measured in this way. Simply put, the failure to demonstrate required levels of participation meant a reduction in the monies paid to Community Coaching 'R' Us and, resultantly, the wages that Greg would receive for his work. Importantly, Greg also revealed how the knowledge he gleaned from this meeting was continually reinforced through various conversations he had with his boss throughout the scheme.

Somewhat similarly, James discussed how his line manager also repeatedly informed him that Get Active Community Coaching had to produce quantitative evidence demonstrating the successful attainment of pre-defined participation targets if they were to receive their monies for delivering the scheme. During these conversations, James was also regularly told that two of his central coaching objectives were to attain completed weekly registers and participation information sheets. Unlike Greg's manager, however, James's boss never suggested that his earnings or position were measured against the production of such information. In fact, according to James, she reiterated on numerous occasions that his job was "not tied to them". Nevertheless, James believed that he was "more likely to get a promotion if Get Active Community Coaching

received their funding for delivering this scheme as that would put them in a stronger financial situation”.

While James came to understand that he had to successfully collect weekly registers and participant details forms to protect and advance his employment, he also appeared to be acutely aware that his organisational interests were simultaneously determined by participant enjoyment. James revealed how his thinking on this matter was chiefly developed through the numerous coaches’ meetings he attended. During these meetings, James was reportedly told that the number of part-time coaching hours he would be allocated each month would be largely influenced by the quality of participant feedback he received when senior members of staff observed his coaching practices. As a result of these understandings, James recognised that he would also have to maximise participant enjoyment when delivering the Kidz ‘N’ Games scheme if he were to achieve a promotion.

I also contend that Greg and James believed that their professional interests were also determined by how they addressed anti-social behaviour. For example, learning from his colleague who was suspended from his coaching duties after getting involved in a confrontation with a verbally abusive participant, Greg perceived that he would have to ignore the participants when they misbehaved to protect his job. He also felt that if he were to maximise participant attendance, and thus protect his earnings, he should not attempt to address anti-social behaviour. His thinking on this matter was developed through conversations with his various members of staff at the company who, apparently, told him that “shouting at them and saying that they can’t do this and that” will mean that the participation rates will “dwindle down more and more each week”.

In contrast, letting the participants misbehave was something that James wanted to avoid for fear of the damage this could do to his reputation in the eyes of the youth club staff and, importantly, his employers. James described how his outlook was based on his understanding that his employer, Get Active Community Coaching, held the behaviour management skills of their coaching staff in very high regard. Indeed, prior to the start of the scheme, his line manager told him how failure to effectively manage his participants' behaviours might result in reduced working hours or, worse still, him being 'released' from his position.

Finally, I argue that Greg believed that his organisational interests were also determined by his capacity to develop positive working relationships with his peers and, when being observed by his employers, his ability to deliver coaching sessions in accordance with their expectations. Based on various conversations with his line manager, Greg revealed that he learnt that his employers attached great importance not only to having a coaching taskforce who "got on" and could effectively work together, but also to having employees who are confident and take control when delivering coaching sessions. As a result, Greg perceived that a failure to develop successful working relationships with his colleagues and to deliver upbeat, positive, and confident coaching sessions when being observed by his management team would reduce his chances of securing a full-time position or even some extra coaching hours.

Greg's and James's experiences can be usefully understood in relation to Kelchtermans and Ballet's (2002a, 2002b) work on *micropolitical literacy*, which refers to "the competence to understand issues of power and interest in schools" (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002a, p. 765). Of particular relevance here is their concept of a *knowledge aspect*. This "concerns the knowledge necessary to acknowledge ('see'), interpret, and understand ('read') the micropolitical

character of a particular situation” (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002a, p. 765). When using this aspect of Kelchtermans and Ballet’s (2002a, 2002b) work as an analytical framework, I suggest that both Greg and James were ‘micropolitically literate’ community sports coaches. The stories they shared certainly indicated that they were capable of ‘reading’ situations through a political lens and understanding them in terms of their professional interests (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002a, 2002b). For example, Greg appeared to have developed the necessary *knowledge aspect* to understand that if he wanted to protect and potentially advance his position he needed to efficiently collect weekly registers and participation information forms, develop positive working relationships with his peers, avoid proactively attempting to address participant anti-social behaviour, and successfully project a positive and commanding coaching image when being observed by his management team. James appeared to understand that his organisational interests were dependent upon him securing positive participant feedback, successfully attaining completed registers and participant detail sheets, and effectively managing participant behaviour.

5.3. Vulnerability is endemic

When exploring Greg’s and James’s career stories I would argue that both coaches perceived that they were not always able to guarantee the success of the performance objectives demanded by their employers. Importantly, I believe that this was because they had limited control over the parameters that often determined whether they did, or did not, meet these performance measures. For example, Greg described to me how he felt that he could never be certain that he would successfully deliver against the participant targets. His thinking regarding this matter appeared to be exacerbated by his belief that he, ultimately, had little or no control over the number of people who turned up to his sessions each week:

“The numbers were out of my control. I can’t help it if something else is going on or they [young people] don’t particularly want to come to the session.” Somewhat similarly, James highlighted he felt that he could never fully guarantee positive participant feedback while simultaneously collecting weekly registers and participant information sheets. I argue that these experiences were underpinned by the fact that James perceived that he could not control how the participants would react to him collecting participation details: “When I had to get similar information on a different scheme I previously delivered the kids hated my session. They hated me and gave me sh*t all of the time because I spent half of the session getting people’s details ... So when Get Active Community Coaching told me that I had to collect participant details on this scheme ... I knew that I wouldn’t be able to do that and also get good positive feedback.”

When making sense of Greg’s and James’s experiences, I found Kelchtermans’ (2005, 2009, 2011) investigations addressing the vulnerability of teachers’ work to be particularly useful. From Kelchtermans’ (2005, 2009, 2011) perspective, the profession of teaching is fundamentally characterised by *structural vulnerability*. This refers to a reality whereby teachers are never in total control of the situation in which they find themselves, are unable to fully prove or guarantee the effectiveness of their choices and actions, and, as a result, occupy a position where their decisions can always be challenged or questioned by others. When exploring Greg’s and James’s stories in relation to Kelchtermans’ (2005, 2009, 2011) theorising, I contend that their community coaching jobs were characterised and constituted by a structural condition of vulnerability. For me, this vulnerability was caused by at least two elements. The first lies in the fact that Greg and James faced a reality where they did not have full control over the environment they had to work in. They repeatedly highlighted how their working

conditions were, to a large extent, imposed upon them (Kelchtermans, 2009, 2011). These included the policy objectives (e.g. high participation rates) that they had to attain, the settings where they had to coach, and the participants with whom they had to engage. According to Kelchtermans' theorising, this is a form of "formal or political vulnerability, which raises the agenda of power to influence and define one's working conditions" (Kelchtermans, 2009, p. 266). As will be discussed in more detail below, it appeared that Greg's and James's condition of vulnerability was intensified by contemporary society, where neo-liberal policy making emphasises individual effectiveness, efficiency, accountability, and the achievement of desired (policy) outcomes (Ball, 2003; Houlihan & Green, 2008; Kelchtermans, 2009, 2011).

I would also argue that the vulnerability in Greg's and James's community sports work was affected by the limited degree to which they could directly link their coaching practices to the participants' behaviours (Kelchtermans, 2005, 2011). For example, while Greg and James acknowledged that the attainment of high participation rates and participant enjoyment could be partially attributed to their decisions and actions, they realised that other personal (e.g. dedication, motivation, and 'love' of sport) and social (e.g. friends and the weather) factors were very difficult to control, influence, or change (Kelchtermans, 2009, 2011). This is perhaps why Greg felt that being primarily judged on participation figures was an unfair evaluation of his work, professional abilities and competence. Similarly, this could also explain why James perceived that it was difficult, if not impossible, to predict how collecting registers and participant details would affect the enjoyment of his participants.

While Kelchtermans (2005, 2009, 2011) argued that structural vulnerability is not an emotion but rather a condition that teachers find themselves in, he

suggested that such a reality can elicit a range of strong emotions in individual teachers. In keeping with this theorising, I also suggest that the coaches' understandings of the vulnerability of their positions led them to experience strong emotions. For example, Greg revealed how the organisational demands of demonstrating the successful attainment of participation targets, through completed weekly registers and participant details forms, provoked intense feelings of anxiety, frustration, and even anger in him. Similarly, James's story illuminated how the confrontation with the micropolitical organisational reality of maximising participant enjoyment while simultaneously collecting weekly registers and participant information sheets elicited feelings of worry, ambiguity, and fear.

I would argue that Greg and James experienced such profound and disturbing emotions because they perceived that these workplace expectations threatened their organisational interests (Kelchtermans, 1996, 2005, 2011). Both coaches shared with me that they felt their current positions and salaries, as well as the prospect of potential promotions, were under attack because they could not guarantee the achievement of all of their workplace objectives. These thoughts, in turn, led to Greg and James experiencing various negative emotions such as worry, anger, fear, and anxiety. Such research findings can be explained by Kelchtermans' (1996) work on teaching, which concluded that the "basic structure in vulnerability is always one of feeling that one's professional identity and moral integrity, as part of being a 'proper teacher', are questioned and that valued workplace conditions are thereby threatened or lost" (p. 319). It certainly appeared that the negative emotions that Greg and James experienced were provoked by the fact that they did not feel in complete control of the resources

which determined the achievement of their professional objectives, namely the protection and advancement of their community coaching careers.

As briefly discussed above, I also believe that Greg's and James's experience of vulnerability, and the thoughts and feelings it provoked, can be understood more broadly in relation to wider debates regarding neo-liberal working practices and the rise of precarious work in the UK. As discussed in chapter 2 (see section 2.5.), Houlihan and Green (2008) have outlined the radical changes to government spending in recent years. In particular, they identified a shift towards the competitive tendering of government contracts that required service providers to fulfil a variety of KPIs in order to obtain the full financial value of awarded contracts (e.g. DCMS/SE, 2012). This approach to funding has seen many public and private sector organisations and companies not only place heightened emphasis on the scrutiny and measurement of employees' workplace performance, but also use part-time and zero-hours contracts as a means of managing their financial flexibility, reducing staffing costs, and optimising profit margins.

I argue that Greg and James were exposed to these contemporary employment trends. For example, they highlighted how their employers had to demonstrate the attainment of pre-defined participation targets in order to obtain their monies for delivering the scheme, how they were employed on zero-hours contracts, and how their workplace performances and employment were measured against a variety of quality control systems, such as completed registers. Given the employment practices to which Greg and James were subject, it could be argued that both coaches were engaged in what Kalleberg (2009) defined as precarious work; that is, their employment was "uncertain, unpredictable, and risky from the point of view of the worker" (Kalleberg, 2009, p.

2). Considering the insecure nature of their work, it was perhaps unsurprising that Greg and James experienced a condition of structural vulnerability. I would certainly suggest that their vulnerability was affected by the times of performativity under neo-liberal governmentalities, with their seemingly exclusive emphasis on short-term contracts, targets, indicators, and evaluations (Ball, 2003; Ball & Olmedo, 2013; Houlihan & Green, 2008; Kelchtermans, 2009).

These findings add support to the growing arguments for better recognition of vulnerability as a fundamental condition in the careers of sport workers (e.g. Cushion & Jones, 2006; Huggan et al., 2014; Jones, 2009; Jones & Wallace, 2005; Potrac & Jones, 2009b; Purdy et al., 2008). Equally, they provide some initial insights into how precarious work in neo-liberal societies has impacted upon the subjective experiences of two community sports coaches. I hope that the acquisition of such knowledge will not only encourage additional scholarly debate and inquiry into the career experiences of coaching practitioners working in both community and professional settings, but also help to better prepare both neophyte and experienced sports coaches for the 'warp and woof' of organisational life.

5.4. Play the game to achieve your goals

In an effort to cope with the structural vulnerability of their respective positions, and to be seen as valuable and competent coaching practitioners, I believe that both coaches engaged in a repertoire of strategic coaching practices. For Greg, this included offering participants rewards (i.e. free water bottles and keyrings) in exchange for their attendance; providing multi-sport provision rather than adhering to the Kidz 'N' Games objectives of delivering rugby related coaching sessions; and prioritising the attainment of contact details and completed registers at the start of every session. For James, this included, for example,

photocopying A1 Youth Centre's attendance register rather than collecting his own; waiting until his final coaching session to obtain participant contact details; 'scrapping' boxing related activities and, instead, allowing the participants to decide what sports they played; and implementing a behavioural policy to help manage his participants' behaviours and promote sport within a fun-filled environment. Greg and James ultimately hoped that these strategic coaching practices would enable them to successfully meet their perceived organisational objectives, and so safeguard and potentially advance their community coaching careers.

Again, I believe that Kelchtermans' (1996, 2011) and Kelchtermans and Ballet's (2002a, 2002b) work addressing micropolitical literacy offers a particularly valuable sense-making framework for understanding Greg's and James's decisions to implement calculated coaching practices to help secure their desired goals. Kelchtermans' (1996, 2011) analysis of the professional biographies of primary school teachers brought him to the conclusion that teachers, in an effort to cope with the structural vulnerability of their teaching jobs, will engage in "political actions, aimed at (re)gaining the social recognition of one's professional self and restoring necessary workplace conditions for good job performance" (Kelchtermans, 1996, p. 319). According to Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002a, 2002b), the *operational aspect* of micropolitical literacy encompasses the political actions a teacher is able to skilfully and effectively apply in order to establish, safeguard, or restore desirable working conditions. While Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002a, 2002b) contend that practitioners can engage in *proactive* strategies (i.e. actions aimed at establishing necessary working conditions) or *reactive* strategies (i.e. actions aimed at safeguarding or restoring necessary working conditions), they stress that these variants of

micropolitical actions must be understood as cyclical; that is, “actions to restore lost working conditions are, for example, reactive in goal and direction of action, but they imply proactive strategies that aim at changing the situation” (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002b, p. 117).

When considered in light of Kelchtermans’ (1996, 2011) and Kelchtermans and Ballet’s (2002a, 2002b) theorising it could be argued that Greg and James, in an effort to cope with the vulnerability of their positions and to realise the demands and expectations of their employers, engaged in the *operational aspect* of micropolitical literacy; that is, they used a broad range of context-specific *proactive* and *reactive* strategies and tactics in an attempt to maintain and advance their careers. Greg’s and James’s thoughts and actions could perhaps therefore be best understood in terms of a *politics of identity* (Kelchtermans, 1996; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002a, 2002b). According to Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002a, 2002b), a politics of identity makes reference to the fact that establishing, safeguarding, and restoring one’s working identity is a central dynamic for new teachers, and, as such, self-interest plays a part in any and every micropolitical action. That is, “they strive for as many successful experiences as possible and often proactively look for opportunities to demonstrate their competencies and have them recognised by significant others” (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002b, p. 111). For me, Kelchtermans’ (1996) and Kelchtermans and Ballet’s (2002a, 2002b) notion of a politics of identity was clearly evident within Greg’s and James’s career stories. Indeed, I firmly believe that “developing a socially recognised identity” as a proper community sports coach in order to maintain and advance their positions constituted “a highly valued working condition” for Greg and James (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002b, p. 111).

These findings add value to research which has increasingly questioned the unrealistic functionalistic interpretations of sports coaching that have traditionally dominated the coaching literature (e.g. Jones et al., 2011a; Jones & Wallace, 2005; Thompson et al., 2013). In this respect, this study supports a growing body of research (e.g. Huggan et al., 2014; Potrac & Jones, 2009a, 2009b; Potrac et al., 2013a; Purdy & Jones, 2011; Roderick, 2006a, 2006b) which has demonstrated how, similar to practitioners' subjective experiences of organisational life in other settings (e.g. Buchanan & Badham, 2008; Lindle, 1994), sports coaches (and athletes) consider impressing key contextual stakeholders in order to maintain and advance their position to be a central tenet of their work. Certainly, the findings here, and those of recent performance coaching research (e.g. Huggan et al., 2014; Potrac & Jones 2009a, 2009b) and sport development research (e.g. Bloyce et al., 2008), suggest that sport workers often (and perhaps need to) engage in strategic micropolitical actions to secure their desired goals.

In addition to the micropolitical actions discussed above, I believe that both coaches intentionally managed their emotional, physical, and verbal expressions in order to guide and control the impressions that key contextual stakeholders formed of them. Through engaging in these cognitive and emotional activities, such as suppressing 'real' feelings, offering a supremely confident coaching display, and exuding an aura of authority, I contend that both coaches consciously tried to construct and maintain an idealised version of themselves in the eyes of significant others in order to reach their desired goals. By way of example, when discussing their coaching practices, Greg and James revealed that when their participants engaged in anti-social activities they often experienced intense feelings of anger towards the misbehaving young people.

Importantly, however, both coaches actively sought to downplay their negative emotional reactions and instead chose to present more calm personas to the offending participants. Greg and James thought that displaying their 'real' thoughts and emotions would not only be unproductive in terms of their desire to prevent further anti-social behaviour in the future, but would also likely have resulted in them being disciplined or released from their coaching position. Thus, by concealing their 'real' emotions and enacting others, Greg and James hoped to safeguard their community coaching positions.

James also revealed that he purposely manipulated his coaching display when engaging in conversations with the young people who attended his coaching sessions. Learning from his previous experiences as a sporting participant, James believed that he had to demonstrate an interest in his participants' wider social lives in order to maximise their enjoyment. Unfortunately, however, James often had "no interests in their interests". Consciously aware of how his 'real' thoughts and feelings could inhibit the facilitation of participant enjoyment, James purposely made eye contact with the participants when they spoke to him, intentionally raised his eyebrows to show surprise, and consciously asked questions to give the impression that he was interested. James ultimately hoped that this "little bit of Oscar winning acting" would "make it seem like [he] was really interested in their interests" and, in turn, help to ensure that his participants enjoyed his coaching sessions.

Somewhat similarly, Greg revealed how he strove to present an upbeat and excitable image when coaching. Importantly from my perspective, Greg described how offering such a coaching display was not a straightforward affair. He explained how, in these situations, he sometimes experienced opposing emotions, such as when it was raining. Learning from past experiences, however,

Greg believed that he could not display these 'true' feelings as he perceived that the participants, who were in attendance, "wouldn't have enjoyed themselves and come back" if he "acted how [he] actually felt". As a result, Greg explained how he would hide his emotions, preferring instead to present an appearance that was more likely to assist with the accomplishment of his personal goals.

Importantly, I contend that Greg did not solely reserve the management of his emotions and related verbal and nonverbal communications for his dealings with the participants. Rather, I believe that he purposely controlled his emotional, physical, and verbal behaviour while he engaged with all of the various stakeholders with whom he was required to interact. For example, when discussing the 'Return of the old guard' fieldnote extract, Greg described how he suppressed his emotional understandings and expressions, in addition to managing his physical and verbal behaviours, in order to offer Alan a coaching display that upheld the standards of conduct and appearance expected of someone in his position. Furthermore, Greg highlighted how he carefully managed his verbal communication when reporting participation rates to his line manager. He explained that when the participation rates were below the required target he would always tell his line manager that the low numbers were caused by factors such as cold weather, and not by his coaching practices. However, when the number of attendees was above the required participation target, Greg used it as an opportunity to promote himself and his coaching capability.

When making sense of Greg's and James's thoughts on this topic, I found Goffman's (1990 [1959]) work to be particularly useful. In *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Goffman (1990 [1959]) developed extended metaphors, namely those of social life as a game and as a theatre, to describe and explain what individuals do in the presence of others, and how those actions or doings are

understood (Jones, 2004; Williams, 1998). Two concepts that Goffman (1990 [1959]) uses to explain the dramaturgical metaphor of social life are *performance* and *impression management*. Performance refers to “all the activity of an individual which occurs during a period marked by his continuous presence before a particular set of observers and which has some influence on the observers” (Goffman, 1990 [1959], p. 32). The purpose of a performance is to provide the audience with a certain impression which, in turn, dictates future interaction (Jones, Potrac, Cushion, Ronglan & Davey, 2011c).

In his analysis of this ‘performance’, Goffman (1990 [1959]) introduced the concepts of *front*, *dramatic realisation*, and *dramatic idealisation*. Front was defined as “that part of the individual’s performance which regularly functions in a general and fixed fashion to define the situation for those who observe the performance” (Goffman, 1990 [1959], p. 32). Information about the performer’s personal front is provided by a variety of sources such as posture, sex, age, speech patterns, and facial and bodily expressions. In order to construct a compelling front which convinces the audience of the appropriateness of behaviour and compatibility with the role assumed, Goffman (1990 [1959]) argues that the social actor must effectively control those relatively mobile or transitory communicative signs, such as bodily and facial expressions. Hence, through the process of dramatic realisation, “the individual typically infuses his activity with signs which dramatically highlight and portray confirmatory facts that might otherwise remain unapparent or obscure” (Goffman, 1990 [1959], p. 40). In addition to performances being dramatically realised, Goffman (1990 [1959]) also contends that they are dramatically idealised; that is, performances are “put in the best possible light and shown to be compatible with a culture’s general norms and values” (Jones et al., 2011c, p. 20).

Goffman (1990 [1959]) also suggests that ‘the presentation of self’ is not without its perils, because if the front is misunderstood or ‘read’ incorrectly by the audience, the performer may be discredited. In other words, if the performance is not convincing enough, or is disrupted, *definitional disruption* may occur; that is, the interaction will come to a confused and embarrassing halt and the audience may feel hostile, ill at ease, nonplussed, out of countenance, or embarrassed (1990 [1959]). Consequently, social actors “must take care to enliven their performances with appropriate expressions, exclude from their performances expressions that might discredit the impression being fostered, and take care lest the audience impute unintended meanings” (Goffman, 1990 [1959], p. 73).

In light of the above, Goffman (1969, 1990 [1959]) argued that it was in the performer’s best interest to “act in a thoroughly calculating manner, expressing himself in a given way solely in order to give the kind of impression to others that is likely to evoke from them the specific response he is concerned to obtain” (Goffman, 1990 [1959], p. 17). To do this, Goffman (1990 [1959]) contended that individuals will often have to engage in impression management; that is, in order to present the ‘right front’ individuals must “possess certain attributes and express these attributes in practices” (Goffman, 1990 [1959], p. 207). A principal attribute at an individual’s disposal is, according to Goffman (1990 [1959]), adherence to *dramatic discipline*. Here, the social actor needs to remain conscious of the role they are performing even while being immersed or engrossed in it (Jones, 2004; Jones et al., 2011c). The performer must consequently “offer a show of intellectual and emotional involvement in the activity they are presenting, but must keep themselves from actually being carried

away by their own show lest this destroy their involvement in the task of putting on a successful performance” (Goffman 1990 [1959], p. 210).

Finally, Goffman (1990 [1959]) also introduced two regions where the behavioural performances are guided by two principles, namely, the *front region* (front stage) and the *back region*. The front region makes reference to the place where the actor gives their performance (Jones et al., 2011c; Turner, 2013). Here, certain parts of the performer’s activity are intentionally accentuated while those aspects that may discredit the fostered impression are purposely concealed (Jones et al., 2011c; Turner, 2013). The back region, however, is a private place where the performance is prepared and certain aspects of behaviour can be revealed (Turner, 2013). For example, it is where the personal front may be adjusted and scrutinised, the actor can practice their performance, and the performer can relax, drop their front and step out of character (Jones et al., 2011c). That said, Goffman (1990 [1959]) did not regard the back region as a place of authenticity where the ‘real self’ could emerge, as individuals still give performances here (Branaman, 1997).

When considered in light of Goffman’s (1990 [1959]) theorising, it could be argued that Greg and James strove to present the ‘right’ front to key contextual stakeholders (i.e. participants, peers, and line managers) not only by infusing their performances with appropriate dramatic signs, but also by offering performances that were idealised in that they endeavoured to incorporate and exemplify the officially accredited values of society. For Greg, this included expressing himself in an extremely confident manner when Alan observed his coaching practices, presenting himself to his participants as an upbeat and enthusiastic coach, and highlighting his coaching abilities when reporting the participation rates to his line manager. For James, this included exuding an aura

of personal enjoyment when engaging with his participants, showing a human side, and demonstrating an air of authority when the participants misbehaved or refused to sign the participant information sheets. From my perspective, the coaches attached a great deal of importance to presenting these various fronts as they perceived that they would encourage significant others to act, seemingly voluntarily, in accordance with their own plans. These findings, then, offer coaching-specific examples of Goffman's (1969, 1990 [1959]) claims that, when performing a leadership role, it might be in the actors' best interests to regulate the responsive treatment of themselves by controlling the perceptions and conduct of others.

Importantly, it would also appear that Greg and James were not completely free to choose the front or image they presented in these various contexts. Rather, it would seem that in order to present a compelling front, they had to behave 'like a coach' in the eyes of key contextual stakeholders. Indeed, their perceived understandings of the expectations of significant others appeared to be an important factor in determining the front that they constructed. Such findings are in line with Goffman's (1990 [1959]) contention that a performer might have to put on an act for the benefit of their audience, irrespective of its sincerity, to achieve sought-after goals. It certainly seems that both coaches put on an 'act' for the benefit of their audiences, sometimes regardless of its sincerity, to realise desired objectives. Such performances, however, should not be unproblematically referred to as cynical since "practitioners who may otherwise be sincere are sometimes forced to delude their customers because their customers show such a heartfelt demand for it – these are cynical performers whose audience will not allow them to be sincere" (Goffman, 1990 [1959], p. 29). Nonetheless, Greg and James appeared to present a front that was "socialised,

moulded, and modified to fit into the understanding and expectations of the society in which it was presented” (Goffman, 1990 [1959], p. 44).

On deeper inspection, I would argue that presenting the ‘right’ front was not a straightforward affair for Greg and James. Indeed, they both discussed how they often had to fake, modify, and control their physical and verbal behaviours in order to exclude expressions that would put their credibility and performances at risk, and hence the achievement of their desired goals. In Goffmanian (1990 [1959]) terms, then, I contend that Greg and James performed *impression management* through demonstrating adherence to *dramatic discipline*. For me, the stories that Greg and James shared with me certainly evidence how they had the ability to remain conscious of their respective roles and how they did not commit unmeant gestures in performing them, even while being ostensibly engrossed or immersed in them. In this respect, they demonstrated how they were aware that it was important to act only in certain ways for certain audiences. Hence, I would argue that both coaches segregated their audiences (i.e. participants and line managers) and themselves into what Goffman (1990 [1959]) describes as the front region. It certainly appeared that Greg and James accentuated some aspects of their activities and concealed those that they felt might discredit their performances when they were in the company of significant others. Such findings add further support to the view that coaches attach substantial importance to presenting the ‘right front’ to key contextual stakeholders in order that the latter will ‘buy into’ the coaches’ respective agendas and programmes (Jones et al., 2004; Jones et al., 2011c; Potrac & Jones, 2009b; Potrac et al., 2002). What’s more, they also add weight to the increasing view that coaches, regardless of the settings in which they work, often engage in

impression management to achieve desired ends (Jones et al., 2011c; Potrac & Jones, 2009b; Thompson et al., 2013).

While I acknowledge that Greg engaged in many 'defensive' practices to safeguard his image projections, I would argue that during the final weeks of the participant observation phase Greg failed to conceal his waning enthusiasm to engage with his coaching role (see chapter 4, section 4.2.3.). This resulted not only in him losing credibility in the eyes of the participants, but also in him being verbally abused and the relationship between him and the participants coming to something of an abrupt end. In relation to Goffman's (1990 [1959]) work, then, this finding provides a coaching-specific example of how failure to forgo or conceal expressions that were inconsistent with the audience's expectations can lead to the notion of *definitional disruption*. It certainly appeared that the participants did not 'buy into' Greg's performance which, in turn, resulted in them being hostile and the face-to-face interaction between Greg and the participants breaking down (1990 [1959]).

Although Kelchtermans' (2005, 2009), Kelchtermans and Ballet's (2002a, 2002b), and Goffman's (1990 [1959]) theorising has provided a high degree of utility in developing my interpretation of Greg's and James's experiences, I do not believe it has enabled me to fully explore and understand the emotional nature of their community coaching work. The challenges, tensions, and dilemmas they faced were not just cognitive or social in nature, but were also emotional phenomena and need to be understood as such. Consequently, I will now attempt to theoretically analyse and interpret the emotional aspects of their stories. I hope that these efforts will not only offer a more nuanced understanding of Greg's and James's experiences, but also go some way to answering the calls of various scholars who have argued that if we are to better understand, and more

adequately prepare coaches for, the complex realities of their work, we must develop an emotional sociology of sports coaching (e.g. Nelson et al., 2013a; Potrac et al., 2013b; Potrac & Marshall, 2011; Ronglan, 2011).

I believe that Hochschild's (2012 [1983]) work on the interrelationship between social interaction and emotion, as presented in her text *The managed heart*, can be fruitfully drawn upon to develop a more critical understanding of the emotional dimensions of Greg's and James's career stories. Like the other theorists in this discussion, Hochschild (2012 [1983]) did not directly research coaches or indeed sport in general. However, she indicated that her work can be applied to jobs that require the employee to engage in voice-to-voice or face-to-face contact with the public, to produce either positive or negative responses in another person, and to receive training and supervision from their employer about their emotional activities (Hochschild, 2012 [1983]). Given these criteria, I contend that Hochschild's (2012 [1983]) writings can be successfully utilised to help understand why Greg and James enhanced, modified, faked, or suppressed their emotional expressions in order to achieve desired goals. I am not alone in this sentiment as other scholars of coaching science (e.g. Nelson et al., 2013a; Potrac et al., 2013b; Potrac & Marshall, 2011) have recently drawn upon her work to develop a more grounded appreciation of the ambiguities, nuances, and emotional nature of coaching.

In building upon the work of Mills (1956) and Goffman (1990 [1959]), Hochschild (2012 [1983]) endeavoured to explore how emotion may function as a "messenger from the self, an agent that gives us an instant report on the connection between what we are seeing and what we had expected to see, and tells us what we feel ready to do about it" (p. xviii). She explored these issues and ideas in relation to flight attendants and bill collectors in the United States. As

Hochschild (2012 [1983]) engaged in these explorations, she came to understand how “workers try to preserve a sense of self by circumventing the feeling rules of work, how they limit their emotional offerings to surface displays of the ‘right’ feeling but suffer anyway from a sense of being ‘false’ or mechanical” (p. xviii). Through exploring the realities of these individuals’ daily working lives, Hochschild (2012 [1983]) developed the notions of *emotion management*, *feeling rules*, *display rules*, *emotional labour*, *surface acting*, *deep acting*, *emotional stamina*, and *inauthenticity of the self*.

According to Hochschild (2000 [1983]), emotion management makes reference to the “management of feeling to create a publically observable facial and bodily display” (p. 7). In the context of everyday life, then, emotion management is used to describe how individuals control their emotions to make sure that they are expressed in a way that is consistent with social expectations and norms (Isenbarger & Zembylas, 2006). The important point to note here is that emotion management requires emotion work (Potrac & Marshall, 2011). Here, Hochschild (2012 [1983]) made distinctions between the private and public spheres of social life. She argued that emotion work takes places in our private lives and at home, whereas emotional labour takes place at work. Hochschild (1979, 2012 [1983]) also claimed that emotion work or labour is guided by feeling rules and display rules. Feeling rules not only refer to the emotions that a person should experience and feel in a situation (e.g. sadness at a funeral), but also govern the direction (i.e. positive or negative), intensity (i.e. from weak to strong), and duration (i.e. fleeting to long lasting) of the emotion. In contrast, display rules specify how and when overt expressions of emotion in particular situations are to occur (Hochschild, 1979). Hochschild (1979) suggested that many work roles, such as those that require face-to-face or voice-to-voice contact with the public,

have display rules regarding the emotions that employees should show to the customer. Generally, these display rules are stated explicitly in selection and training materials, or known from observation of co-workers (Grandey, 2000).

When individuals modify their emotional display in order to advance organisational interests, they perform emotional labour (Hochschild, 2012 [1983]; Isenbarger & Zembylas, 2006). Hochschild (2012 [1983]) defined emotional labour as:

[Labour that requires] one to induce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others ... This kind of labour calls for a coordination of mind and feeling, and it sometimes draws on a source of self that we honour as deep and integral to our individuality. (p. 7).

According to Hochschild (2012 [1983]), an individual can perform emotional labour through two levels, or types, of acting (Potrac et al., 2013b; Potrac & Marshall, 2011). First, she claimed that a person can engage in what she termed surface acting (Hochschild, 2012 [1983]). This is where we deceive others about what we really feel, but do not deceive ourselves (Hochschild, 2012 [1983]). That is, we purposely manipulate our bodily and facial display not only to fool others about what we are actually feeling, but also to give the impression that we are experiencing the feelings our outward gesture suggests (Theodosius, 2008). Hochschild (2012 [1983]) also contended that an individual can do emotional labour through deep acting. This is where an employee consciously works on his or her feelings to the extent that he or she experiences the emotions being expressed (Hochschild, 2012 [1983]). Hochschild (2012 [1983]) suggested that there are two ways in which an individual can do deep acting. The first is through exhortations. Hochschild (2012 [1983]) stated that the following phrases are

examples of exhorting feeling: “I psyched myself up, I squashed my anger down, I tried hard not to feel disappointed, I forced myself to have a good time, I mustered up some gratitude, I put a damper on my love for her, I snapped myself out of the depression” (p. 39). In addition to exhortations, Hochschild (2012 [1983]) contended that a person can also engage in deep acting by using their imagination and memory so effectively that it becomes possible for them to believe the feelings they are experiencing (Potrac & Marshall, 2011). In these situations, an individual may be unaware of, or forget, the extent to which they had worked on themselves to experience such feelings (Theodosius, 2008). Finally, Hochschild (2012 [1983]) suggested that workers solely perform surface and deep acting for financial gain. As she noted:

Surface and deep acting in a commercial setting, unlike acting in a dramatic, private, or therapeutic context, make one’s face and one’s feelings take on the properties of a resource. But it is not a resource to be used for the purposes of art, as in drama, or for the purposes of self-discovery, as in therapy, or for the pursuit of fulfilment, as in everyday life. It is a resource to be used to make money. (p. 55).

When considered in light of Hochschild’s (1979, 2012 [1983]) theorising, I argue that both coaches regularly engaged *emotional labour*; that is, for a wage Greg and James managed their emotional displays in accordance with the perceived expectations of their respective employers. In this respect, I contend that both coaches had learnt through experience that there were certain *display rules* (i.e. those emotions that should and should not be displayed within this social setting) that they felt obliged to comply with if they were to achieve their career goals (Hochschild, 2012 [1983]). To maintain a presentation of the self that conformed to the various display rules of their respective workplace societies, I contend that

Greg and James sometimes performed emotional labour through the application of *surface acting* (Hochschild, 2012 [1983]). For example, while Greg and James acknowledged that they often felt angry towards those participants who engaged in anti-social behaviour, they had learnt that they were not expected to display such emotion. This understanding meant that Greg and James had to engage in a considerable amount of surface acting to hide their true feelings of anger at some of their participants' actions, comments, and behaviours (Hochschild, 2012 [1983]). That is, they consciously manipulated their bodily and facial display to conceal from the participants what they were actually feeling (and thinking) without deceiving themselves (Hochschild, 2012 [1983]; Theodosius, 2008).

I also argue that in addition to engaging in emotional labour through surface acting, there were certain occasions where the coaches performed such acts through *deep acting* (Hochschild, 2012 [1983]). I believe that there were situations where Greg and James worked on their feelings so effectively, through "conscious mental work", that they started to believe in the emotions they were expressing (Hochschild, 2012 [1983], p. 36). For example, while James acknowledged that he previously had to pretend to enjoy delivering football related coaching practices, he described to me how, after a period of time, he actually began to experience joyous emotions. Similarly, when discussing the 'Return of the old guard' fieldnote extract, Greg explained how he stopped himself from feeling nervous and made himself feel confident, upbeat, and positive. On deeper inspection, I would also contend that Greg and James performed deep acting through Hochschild's (2012 [1983]) notion of exhortations. From my perspective, Greg and James certainly evidence "acts of will" as they "tried to suppress or allow a change in feeling in order to consider or sense what was expected in a particular situation or setting" (Potrac & Marshall, 2011, p. 58).

Although emotional labour was a central theme across Greg's career stories, I would argue that the management of his emotions and behaviours was not without its difficulties. For example, while Greg felt that suppressing his true feelings of anger and presenting a calm image were important features of his coaching practice, he expressed how he found it extremely difficult to engage in this process of emotional labour when his participants were verbally abusing him: "Even though I was employing these strategies [e.g. ignoring the participants and displaying a calm persona] I found it really tough to conceal how I was actually feeling. I just wanted to snap. I was very angry. I was at boiling point." This was problematic for Greg as he perceived that he had to produce a calm emotional expression to achieve his goals. In response, Greg revealed that he would abandon sessions when he felt that he could no longer maintain his desired behavioural repertoire and emotional display (e.g. You talk and I will walk fieldnote extract). He did this to prevent his "real" emotions from inhibiting the facilitation of his personal objectives, namely, keeping his job.

This finding is in keeping with Hochschild's (2012 [1983]) conclusions that a number of problems or issues can occur when a job requires an employee to engage in emotional labour. She suggested that because emotional labour requires individuals to draw on the sense of their self, they may experience a subversion of their true selves that can lead to feelings of alienation, stress, burnout, deficiency, and cynicism (Nelson et al., 2013a; Potrac & Marshall, 2011). This can be particularly so when poor working conditions make it very difficult for the employee to perform their job well, or when they feel like they are presenting or masking emotional fronts solely for the benefit of other people (Hargreaves, 2000; Potrac et al., 2013b). It certainly appeared that Greg's engagement in emotional labour led to him experiencing not only various feelings of stress,

alienation, inauthenticity, and self-estrangement, but also a sense of burnout. That is, Greg felt that he could “no longer manage [his] own or others’ emotions according to organisational expectations” (Copp, 1998, p. 300). It could also be contended that Greg did not have the *emotional stamina* required to sustain a particular controlled emotion for a prolonged period of time (Turner & Stets, 2005).

James also appeared to experience the negative effects of emotional labour when his participants engaged in anti-social behaviour. Specifically, he pointed out how managing his emotional display in these situations led to him not only feeling “physically and emotionally exhausted,” but also questioning his desire to engage with his coaching role. Again, this echoes Hochschild’s (2012 [1983]) belief that engagement in emotional management and emotional labour can have significant psychological costs. I would also argue that James’s experiences are in keeping with the work of various scholars (e.g. Grandey, 2000; Nelson et al., 2013a) which suggests that “when a situation induces repeated emotional responses that the employee must regulate”, the employee may not only “experience emotional exhaustion or energy depletion and fatigue,” but also feel “negatively about themselves and their work” (Grandey, 2000, p. 104).

Although Hochschild’s (1979, 2012 [1983]) thinking has helped me to examine and better understand the negative aspects of Greg’s and James’s emotional labour, I would argue that their engagement in it did not always lead to detrimental or harmful consequences. For example, Greg discussed how doing deep acting when Alan observed him coach led to the rewarding experience of realising not only that he was a good coach who was doing his job properly, but also that his position at Community Coaching ‘R’ Us was safe. Similarly, while James discussed how he found demonstrating an interest in his participants’

wider social lives challenging because he had to act every week, he also expressed how “it was worth the effort because [the participants] seemed to thrive off of it”. Furthermore, I would contend that emotional labour helped both coaches to establish, maintain, or advance their professional interests (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002a, 2002b). In light of the above, it could be argued that despite having to regularly display ungenune emotions, Greg and James valued and sometimes enjoyed their emotional labour as community sports coaches. Such findings add further value to recent research which has suggested not only that emotional management and emotional labour do not necessarily have to result in negative outcomes, but also that individuals, such as coaches, may view such acts as a rewarding, fun, and exciting aspect of their job (Hargreaves, 2000; Isenbarger & Zembylas, 2006; Potrac & Marshall, 2011). For example, Isenbarger and Zembylas (2006) evidenced how an elementary school teacher was gratified by the emotional labour demanded in and by her job, as it helped in her quest to improve the performances, experiences, and lives of her pupils. In a related manner, Potrac and Marshall (2011) highlighted how coaches might gain similar satisfaction in terms of athlete development and performance through engaging in emotional labour.

Through drawing upon Hochschild’s (2012 [1983]) theorising of emotions, I have endeavoured to provide some explanatory insights into the emotional challenges faced by two community sports coaches when implementing a government-funded initiative aimed at increasing young people’s participation in sport and physical activity. My efforts to explore Greg’s and James’s experiences in this way have considered how “emotion and cognition, self and context, ethical judgement and purposeful action” (Kelchtermans, 2005, p. 996) are all intertwined in their day-to-day work as community sports coaches. Indeed, the

stories that Greg and James shared would suggest that, for them at least, community sports coaching is an emotional practice. I am not, of course, suggesting that it was 'solely' an emotional endeavour, but rather that emotions are an inevitable feature of their practice. In this respect, these findings build upon a small body of growing research which has suggested that emotions and micropolitics are inextricably interlinked features of coaching, be it in performance or participation settings (e.g. Nelson et al., 2013a; Potrac et al., 2013b; Thompson et al., 2013).

5.5. Coach education is far from optimal

Broadly speaking, thus far Greg's and James's accounts have illustrated at least some aspects of the inherently micropolitical and emotional nature of community sports coaching work and, relatedly, the messy nature of policy enactment within the context of youth sport. Their stories suggest that, far from being an unproblematic and straightforward process, community coaching is an everyday, power-ridden, social endeavour that requires coaches to use a large repertoire of strategies to manipulate those around them in an effort to reach desired goals. In this regard, this thesis builds upon the work of other coaching scholars (e.g. Huggan et al., 2014; Nelson et al., 2013a; Potrac & Jones, 2009a, 2009b) in highlighting the social complexity of coaching practice, particularly with respect to issues of power, politics, and emotions.

Importantly, in writing this chapter it became clear that Greg and James principally learnt the 'need' to engage in micropolitical actions (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002a, 2002b), impression management (Goffman, 1990 [1959]), and emotional labour (Hochschild, 2012 [1983]) in order to attain their objectives through 'informal' rather than 'formal' sources (Nelson, Cushion & Potrac, 2006). In other words, both coaches frequently discussed how they learnt that they had

to engage in these various social tactics and strategies through reflections upon their own experiences and through engagements with their peers, parents, and employers. Moreover, Greg and James also explained to me how they had limited understanding about the types of objectives and roles they were expected to fulfil as community sports coaches. Given the significant increase in the delivery of, and importance attached to, coach education provision in the UK over the past two decades this is perhaps a little surprising (Cassidy, Potrac & McKenzie, 2006; Cushion et al., 2003; Lyle, 2007). Indeed, it has been suggested that coach education “cannot be overestimated” as a vehicle for raising coaching standards (Lyle, 2002, p. 275), and that the training of high quality sports coaches to increase sporting participation and improve participant experience sits “at the heart” of government policy (DCMS, 2008, p. 15). In light of the above, and after writing the results chapter of this thesis, I conducted one additional interview with both Greg and James to see if they felt that the coach education courses they attended had helped to guide and underpin their practice.

During these meetings, both coaches criticised coach education provision as they perceived that it had failed to prepare them for the messy nature of their everyday practice. For example, James described how there was a large disconnection between the types of participants the coach educators perceive that community coaches will be coaching and the individuals who actually attend community coaching sessions, schemes, and programmes. Through his attendance on coach education courses, James developed the belief that he would be coaching individuals who were “raring to go and ready to learn”. However, when coaching in the ‘real’ world, he discovered that a large proportion of his participants were not interested in partaking in structured coaching sessions which focussed on skill development or performance enhancement. As

a result, James explained that he felt that much of the information contained within coach education programmes, which focussed on “warm-up games, stretching, having logical coaching points and coaching progressions, and how to improve someone’s technique in sport”, was not relevant for the ‘true’ reality of the activity. With the course content of coach education programmes being largely directed towards the promotion of athletic achievement, James also expressed how these courses failed to prepare him for what he considered to be the everyday reality of community sports coaching; that is, James felt that the courses he attended consistently failed to educate him about how to engage in micropolitical actions (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002a, 2002b), impression management (Goffman, 1990 [1959]), and emotional labour (Hochschild, 2012 [1983]) to achieve desired ends. Due to this large disjunction between the course content and his coaching experiences, James strongly emphasised that coach education did not help to prepare him for his community coaching job. As he remarked:

I remember the first time I coached on one of these types of sessions and I felt like I had been conned, I felt like coach education had had my pants down. I turned up with my session plan expecting the kids to be sat against the wall raring to go and ready to learn stuff, and when I got there the kids were wandering around the hall and playing fields, smoking and eating sweets. And when I set my session up and said what I wanted to do, the participants just told me to “f*ck off”. They didn’t tell me that this is what community coaching is like on my coach education courses. We didn’t get told that the first thing that a participant would say to you is “f*ck off”. It was all about warm-up games, stretching, having logical coaching points and coaching progressions, and how to improve someone’s technique in sport. They didn’t say that you would have to build up a rapport with participants

by showing an interest in them before even attempting to do any kind of sport, they didn't tell me what to do when the kids were trying to smash each other's brains out. In fact, they just didn't tell me anything that was useful ... The people who design these courses clearly have no experience of what it is really like in the field because if they did they wouldn't waste their time teaching us logical coaching progressions, they would instead teach us about how we have to manage how we come across to the participants to get them to stay and just do some kind of sport, how we have to act in certain ways when they kick off, how we have to talk to these kids about drugs and sex and offer them advice, and how we have to use little tricks like give them sweets and stuff to keep them engaged. ... Coach education courses do not prepare coaches for these types of jobs, it just doesn't. I learnt to coach through coaching not through attending these sh*tty courses. If we went and got a coach who had been on a coach education course this morning and took him to A1 Youth Centre tonight I guarantee he wouldn't be able to cope. It would just be like throwing him under a bus, there is no way he would survive.

Much like James, Greg also criticised coach education programmes for assuming that community coaching participants are “perfectly behaved and that they can't wait to learn new rugby skills or football skills”. First, he explained how this unrealistic conceptualisation ensured that the course content, which focussed on “techniques, drills, and coaching progressions”, was irrelevant as his participants did not want to develop their skills and sporting ability. Second, and in a related sense, Greg argued that by presuming that community coaching participants are perfectly behaved, coach education provision failed to prepare him for the everyday reality of his community coaching practice; namely, how to effectively manage and engage with misbehaving participants, how to encourage participant

enjoyment, and how to build positive relationships with attendees. As a result of this discrepancy, Greg stressed that coach education failed to prepare him for the 'true' reality of community sports coaching. As he explained:

They were all about techniques and teaching the basics, so like how to do a good warm-up, how to pass the ball in rugby or how to kick the ball in rugby, how to do a proper cool down. It was all about techniques, drills, and coaching progressions but you could never use any of that on these schemes. The way they showed you to coach on these courses was completely irrelevant for the Kidz 'N' Games scheme ... If I went down and tried to do a planned session, with logical coaching progression and stuff, they would have turned around and never come back. These participants didn't come down to be coached. They came down for a kick about ... [However,] the biggest problem with coach education courses is the fact that they don't teach you how to deal with problematic participants, how to address participants who are fighting or taking drugs. They don't tell you how to effectively interact with a big group of intimidating thugs or anything like that. On those courses, they seem to think that the kids we coach are all perfectly behaved and that they can't wait to learn new rugby skills or football skills. It's not like that at all. That's not what community coaching is about, I found that out the hard way ... When I started doing the Kidz 'N' Games scheme I was so underprepared. I really needed some proper training on how to manage my image when engaging with these people, how to interact with them, how to get them to participate and enjoy themselves, how to deal with idiots when they start fighting or vandalising the sheds. I didn't need to know how to throw a rugby ball, I needed to know how to deal with these types of kids. The coaching courses I attended was utterly useless in terms of preparing me for these types of sessions.

While the aforementioned data only offer tentative insights into Greg's and James's thoughts about the relevance, delivery, and impact of coach education provision, their comments start to paint a somewhat sobering picture. They suggest that they consider formal coach education courses to be rarely important or useful. This viewpoint appears to originate from the lack of fit between course content and the everyday realities of their community coaching practice. Indeed, both coaches suggested that the professional development programmes they attended, which emphasised the technical and tactical development of sporting participants, portrayed an unrealistic one-dimensional view of coaching which was completely divorced from the complex and messy reality of the activity.

Greg's and James's comments are in keeping with much of the existing empirical research which has suggested that coach education provision is far from optimal, with there often being a large discrepancy between what coach educators identify as being appropriate for the development of sports coaches and what coaching practitioners actually desire (Abraham, Collins & Martindale, 2006; Chesterfield, Potrac & Jones, 2010; Jones et al., 2004; Jones & Turner, 2006; Nelson, Cushion & Potrac, 2013b). Although this bleak situation has already led to numerous theoretically informed pedagogical approaches (e.g. competency-based, issue-based, problem-based, mentoring schemes, and communities of practice) being offered as potential solutions to overcome the ills of coach education (e.g. Cushion et al., 2003; Demers, Woodburn & Savard, 2006; Jones & Turner, 2006; Trudel & Gilbert, 2006), I would argue that Greg's and James's comments highlight the need for further research into the impact of coach education and how coach education might be made more relevant for community sports coaches. Echoing the eloquent thoughts of Jones and Wallace (2005), I suggest that it is "high time for researchers and theorists in this field to

engage in seeking for knowledge-for-understanding that would provide a more sophisticated grasp of the complexities of the [community] coaching process” (p. 123). Such knowledge, in my opinion at least, would provide a more secure foundation on which coach education could build to provide more reality grounded practical guidance for burgeoning community sports coaches (Jones & Wallace, 2005).

5.6. There is more to life than community sports coaching

I would argue that Greg’s and James’s desire to protect and advance their community coaching positions was largely fuelled by a determination to earn a salary that would allow them to buy various commodities (i.e. car, clothes, and holidays). The reason why Greg and James placed so much emphasis on having these items was because they perceived that their ‘life happiness’ was somehow inherently interconnected to them. Importantly, both coaches also explained how they felt that they needed to be able to afford various commodities, like those discussed above, to successfully fulfil the various roles they were engaged with outside of their coaching profession. The reason why Greg and James attached considerable importance to having these commodities was because they felt that they were ‘critical’ to sustaining successful relationships with their friends, girlfriends, and family. Through engagements with various media formats, their friends, and their family, both coaches developed the belief that failure to afford such commodities would result in them ‘losing’ their parents’ respect and being ‘abandoned’ by their respective girlfriends and friends.

Although Greg and James felt that they were engaging in the necessary actions and behaviours to successfully protect their coaching jobs (i.e. maximising participant enjoyment, managing misbehaving participants, and meeting participation targets), within the interviews they explained how their

employment was not providing them with the necessary salary to buy the commodities they perceived they needed to successfully fulfil their boyfriend, friend, and son roles. Greg and James explained how their failure to engage in these activities unfortunately had negative implications for their relationships with their friends, family, and girlfriends. These, in turn, triggered a series of negative thoughts and emotions in both coaches, as they perceived that they were 'failed' and 'worthless' members of society who either had been, or were about to be, abandoned by the people who mattered. Importantly, these experiences also led to Greg and James relinquishing their roles as community sports coaches and seeking employment in alternative professions. They did this because they perceived that it was their community coaching salary that was preventing them from successfully fulfilling their role as successful son, boyfriend, and friend. Notably, both coaches did this despite claiming that they thoroughly enjoyed engaging with their community coaching roles. They suggested that earning a salary which enabled the fulfilment of the friend, son, and boyfriend roles was far more important than job satisfaction.

When making sense of this aspect of Greg's and James's experiences, I found some of the central ideas from the *structural* (e.g. Stryker, 2002 [1980]) and *perceptual control* (Burke & Stets, 2009) research programmes within symbolic interactionist *identity theory* to be particularly useful. For Stryker (2002 [1980]), *role identity* refers to the internalised meanings of a role that people attach to themselves. He argues that we principally learn the meanings of a role identity in interaction with others. For example, through interactions with our friends, parents, peers, and the media, we may come to learn that the position of 'friend' has the *role expectations* of being trustworthy and supportive, whereas the position of 'lecturer' may be associated with being instructive and

knowledgeable. As individuals may have many different role identities at any point in time, identity theorists have claimed that individuals have *multiple identities* (Burke & Stets, 2009; Stets & Serpe, 2013; Stryker & Burke, 2000). For example, they propose that a person could be a father in one context, a son in another, a teacher, a friend, a triathlete, and so on (Burke & Stets, 2009). The idea that individuals have multiple identities derives from James's (1890) notion that an individual has 'many selves', as we have others with whom we interact (Stryker, 2002 [1980]). In more recent times, identity theorists (e.g. Burke & Stets, 2009; Stets & Serpe, 2013; Stryker & Burke, 2000) have used the term multiple identities rather than that of many selves, but they contend that the basic components of the concept remain the same. Although these researchers point out that not all situations invoke more than one identity, they contend that people often have many identities activated and interacting together in a social setting (Burke & Stets, 2009; Stets & Serpe, 2013; Stryker 2002 [1980]). When this happens, Burke and Stets (2009) argue, individuals organise their multiple identities into *levels of control*. They propose that people categorise them into either *lower-level identities* or *higher-level identities*, with the lower working in the 'service' of the higher.

Identity theorists contend that individuals verify their higher identities through *reflected appraisals*; that is, "others will communicate their views, individuals will perceive these views, and then they will infer that is what others think of them" (Stets & Serpe, 2013, p. 41). When others communicate positive views, *identity verification* exists, and positive emotions are likely to be experienced (Stets & Serpe, 2013). However, when others communicate negative views, *identity non-verification* occurs (Stets & Serpe, 2013). This not only leads to negative emotions, but also "translates into individuals working hard

to resolve the non-correspondence or discrepancy, doing whatever it takes to facilitate congruity” (Stets & Serpe, 2013, p. 35). In other words, individuals will engage in a variety of behaviours, such as lower-level identity change, in order to (re)verify their higher-level identity or identities (Burke & Stets, 2009; Stets & Serpe, 2013).

When exploring Greg’s and James’s stories in relation to identity theorising (Burke & Stets, 2009; Serpe & Stryker, 2011; Stryker, 2002 [1980]), I would argue that both coaches had *multiple identities*. For example, they both suggested that they were a community coach in one context, a friend in another, a son, and a boyfriend. Moreover, I would argue that in order to successfully live up to the *role expectations* of these various *role identities*, Greg and James perceived that they had to engage in certain actions and behaviours (Stryker, 2002 [1980]). Their stories certainly suggest how, through interactions with others (e.g. friends, family, and various media formats), Greg and James came to understand that attending social gatherings would contribute to the fulfilment of their friend role, paying board would help to demonstrate that they are successful sons, hitting participation targets would assist them in terms of demonstrating their competencies as community coaches, and buying their respective girlfriends various gifts (e.g. meals and holidays) would help to showcase that they are successful boyfriends. Furthermore, using Burke and Stets’ (2009) notion of levels of control, I would argue that both coaches categorised these various role identities (e.g. community coach, friend, and boyfriend) into either higher-level identities or lower-level identities. Specifically, I believe that both coaches classified their respective community coaching roles into a lower-level identity which was working in the service of their higher-level son, friend, and boyfriend identities (Burke & Stets, 2009).

Despite perceiving that they were successfully meeting their community coaching role expectations, Greg and James, through *reflected appraisals*, came to understand that their respective community coaching roles were 'failing' to provide a wage which would allow them to 'verify' their higher-level identities (Burke & Stets, 2009). In other words, through reflecting upon their negative engagements with their respective family, friends, and girlfriends, both coaches developed the belief that their 'limited' community coaching salary was preventing them from meeting the role requirements associated with these non-workplace identities. This identity non-verification (Burke & Stets, 2009) not only led to Greg and James to experience negative emotions, but also translated into them relinquishing their roles as community coaches and seeking employment in alternative professions. They did this to try to earn a salary that would allow them to successfully fulfil their higher-level friend, son, and boyfriend identities. These actions and behaviours are very much in keeping with the claims of identity theorists (i.e. Burke & Stets, 2009; Stets & Serpe, 2013) that people will engage in a variety of behaviours, such as lower-level identity change, when they perceive that their lower-level identities are failing to verify their higher-level identities. I would certainly contend that the coaches exchanged their lower-level worker identities (i.e. James changed his Get Active Community Coaching identity to a call-centre identity and Greg replaced his lower-level Community Coaching 'R' Us identity with a plumber identity) in an effort to earn salaries that would allow them to (re)verify their higher-level friend, son, and boyfriend identities.

I also believe that Bauman's (2007) work on consumerism offers a particularly valuable sense-making framework for understanding this aspect of Greg's and James's stories. In his book *Consuming Life* (2007), Bauman

contends that the advent of *liquid modernity* (i.e. “the growing conviction that change is the only permanence, and uncertainty the only certainty” Bauman, 2012, p. viii) has converted humans into a *society of consumers*, which he defines as:

[A] society that promotes, encourages or enforces the choice of a consumerist lifestyle and life strategy and dislikes all alternative cultural options; a society in which adapting to the precepts of consumer culture and following them strictly is, to all practical intents and purposes, the sole unquestionably approved choice; a feasible, and so also a plausible choice – and a condition of membership. (Bauman, 2007, p. 53).

Bauman (2007) argues that the most important feature of the society of consumers is that individuals are required to promote and sell an eye-catching and desired *commodity*; and that commodity is themselves. In his own words:

[Individuals] are, simultaneously, *promoters of commodities* and the *commodities they promote*. They are, at the same time, the merchandise and their marketing agents, the goods and their traveling salespeople ... The activity in which all of them are engaged (whether by choice, necessity, or most commonly both) is *marketing*. The test they need to pass in order to be admitted to the social prizes they covet demands them to *recast themselves as commodities*: that is, as products capable of catching the attention and attracting *demand* and *customers*. (Bauman, 2007, p. 6).

For Bauman (2007), becoming and remaining a notable, noticed, talked about, and impossible to overlook commodity is the most potent motive of consumer concerns. He contends that “in a society of consumers, turning into a desirable and desired commodity is the stuff of which dreams, and fairy tales, are made”

(Bauman, 2007, p. 13). Bauman (2007) suggests that it is one's self-identification with the *style pack* ("that is, the reference group, of the 'significant others', the 'others who count' and whose approval or rejection draws the line between success and failure") which determines whether an individual views themselves as a desired commodity or not (p. 82). Being ahead of the style pack carries the promise of recognition, approval, and inclusion, whereas 'being behind' the style pack "translates as the sentiment of being rejected, excluded, abandoned and lonely, and ultimately rebounds in the searing pain of personal inadequacy" (Bauman, 2007, p. 83).

In order to be and stay ahead of the style pack, Bauman (2007) argues that individuals must *discard* and *replace* outdated, faulty, merely imperfect, not fully satisfying or no longer wanted commodities for new and improved ones. In other words, to be issued with permanent residence permits for the society of consumers, individuals cannot settle for what one has or what one is, they must engage in the continuous "pursuit of the optimal selling price, promotion to a higher division, reaching higher ratings and advancing to a higher position in this or that league table" (Bauman, 2007, pp. 62-63). If some aspect "of the set of implements in daily use, of the current network of human contacts, of one's own body or its public presentation, of one's self/identity and its publically presented image" loses its market value or public appeal, it must be "excised, pulled out and replaced by a 'new and improved'" object (Bauman, 2007, p. 102). In the 'nowist' life of the society of consumers, it is imperative that individuals discard and replace failed, about to fail, or suspected of failing objects instantly, for "being burdened with heavy luggage, and a particular kind of heavy luggage which one hesitates to abandon for reasons of sentimental attachment or an imprudently taken oath of loyalty, would reduce the chances of success to nil" (Bauman, 2007,

p. 36). Importantly, for Bauman (2007), identities are no exception from this rule. He argues that in the liquid modern society of consumers, identities are merely commodities that must be discarded and replaced if one wishes to remain as an eye-catching and sought-after commodity (Bauman, 2007).

When exploring Greg's and James's stories in relation to Bauman's (2007) theorising of the society of consumers and his associated critiques of contemporary society, I would argue that both coaches were *members of the society of consumers*. I also echo Bauman's (2007) theorising by contending that as members of this society Greg and James were themselves *consumer commodities*. For me, turning into a desirable and desired commodity was perhaps the most potent motive for Greg's and James's concerns. Indeed, I argue that the principal motive prompting their desire to engage in 'consumer activity' was a "dream of turning into a notable, noticed, and coveted commodity, a talked-about commodity, a commodity standing out from the mass of commodities, a commodity impossible to overlook, to deride, to be dismissed" (Bauman, 2007, p. 13). Their stories certainly suggest that the underpinning motivation provoking their ambition to buy nice clothes, a nice car, and a house, in addition to going on holidays, and attending social gatherings was a determination to become valued and respected individuals.

Importantly, both coaches suggested that in order to become, and remain, a sellable commodity they had to meet the condition of eligibility as defined by their respective girlfriends, friends, and family. Unfortunately, Greg and James perceived that they fell behind the style pack, which, as Bauman (2007) predicted, translated into them "being rejected, excluded, abandoned and lonely, and ultimately rebounds in the searing pain of personal inadequacy" (p. 83). In an effort to 'catch up' with the 'style pack', Greg and James quit their jobs as

community coaches and sought employment in alternative professions. Their decision to exchange their community coaching identities for new ones is very much in keeping with Bauman's (2007) analytical critique of the society of consumers. Greg's and James's stories certainly suggest that they disposed of their community coaching identities and replaced them with new ones in an effort to re-establish themselves as a proper commodity. In other words, they discarded and replaced their community coaching identities as they perceived that these identities were "failing to deliver [the] instant and complete satisfaction hoped for" (Bauman, 2007, p. 36).

The aforesaid findings not only add increasing support to the critiques of representing coaching careers in functionalistic and linear ways (e.g. Christensen, 2013; Purdy & Potrac, 2014), but also open up a new vista of inquiry into the wider lives of community coaching practitioners. Although some initial research has hinted at the ways in which high-performance coaching identities are developed, advanced, maintained, or disrupted (e.g. Purdy & Potrac, 2014), we knew, prior to this study, very little about interconnections between community coaching practitioners' workplace and non-workplace identities and the impact that these interconnections may subsequently have upon their career experiences and trajectories.

To conclude this chapter, I want to give greater consideration towards the relationship between the dominant political thought of neoliberalism and its effects on Greg's and James's everyday lives. I have already outlined how neoliberalism, as expressed by its emphasis on quantitative production, was an inherent feature of Greg's and James's working environments (see section 5.3.). The objective here is to build on these discussions by exploring how neoliberalism

influenced the actions and behaviours of Greg and James, across both work and non-work settings.

As part of his discussions in *What about me? The struggle for identity in a market-based society*, Verhaeghe (2014) noted how there are several consequences of neoliberal organisation. First, although neoliberals stress that individuals make choices, there is an endless proliferation of rules, regulations, contracts, and monitoring systems. Second is what Verhaeghe (2014) calls the 'Big Brother' feeling. He believes that not only do these quantitative evaluations have implications for the well-being of workers, but also a perverse effect on how workers perform their duties. For him, "staff at all levels adapt their behaviour, ceasing to do things that 'don't count'. Everything is sacrificed to the juggernaut of measurability" (p. 134). This is connected to the third and, even more paradoxical symptom: workers focus more and more on meeting these quantitative measures and less and less on the work itself, which does nothing to improve the quality of their work (Verhaeghe, 2014).

When thinking about Greg's and James's experiences in light of Verhaeghe's (2014) writings, I would argue that Greg and James were governed by rules and regulations, along with a monitoring system and a heavy burden of administration. Their qualities and efforts were almost exclusively assessed against policy outcomes that were easily captured in quantitative terms, such as contact details and attendance registers. Knowing that they had to successfully meet these measures to survive in their working roles, did very little for the well-being of Greg and James. It created an atmosphere of personal frustration, anger, fear, and anxiety. The need to 'score well' also meant that they adapted their work to reflect the scoring system. Anything that fell outside the measuring system or

hindered the achievement of a 'good score' was deemed unproductive and so no time was wasted on it.

In keeping with Verhaeghe's (2014) theorising, it could be argued that there were many paradoxes and tensions that emerged from the neoliberal policies that governed Greg's and James's working environments. Being almost exclusively measured and evaluated in quantitative terms had negative implications for Greg's and James's experiencing of good feelings. This is particularly ironic given that these schemes were designed to improve the well-being of young people, yet the young people who were charged with the responsibility of enacting these policy objectives were subjected to workplace conditions that reduced their well-being and experience of a high personal quality of life. The need to realise these quantitative objectives in order to protect and maintain their positions also resulted in Greg and James focusing less on the work itself and more on administration and management. Thus, one could argue that the neoliberal evaluation systems overshadowed their attempts to facilitate the stated goals and objectives of the Kids 'N' Games programme that they were helping to deliver. These two issues warrant further examination more widely in the context of community sport coaching work.

Verhaeghe (2014) suggests that neoliberal practices are not confined to the macro-economy or business sector. He argues that neoliberal thinking now shapes almost every aspect of life and, with it, our identities. This is because people tend to mirror themselves in the dominant narrative, with its embedded norms and values. According to Verhaeghe (2014) individual success is the new moral standard in our neoliberal world. He claims that the current norm is "that everyone can (and must) make a success of their lives, and that everyone is responsible for their own success or failure" (Verhaeghe, 2014 p. 192). Moreover,

people must aim for success all of the time, not just at work or in exams, but also in relationships and on holidays. Crucially, this success must also be financially and materially visible. As Verhaeghe (2014) explains:

If we look at what is expected at an individual level, the answer is 'to enjoy life to the full'. The person who best meets this norm is the one who enjoys the most, enjoyment being explicitly linked with consumption and products. You must holiday in the right place, and have the right bike, the right mobile, the right laptop, and the right clothes ... It would be terrible to wear the wrong jacket or to be seen with the wrong mobile phone (unless it's amusingly retro). (p. 201).

When thinking about Greg's and James's narratives in light of Verhaeghe's (2014) theorising, I would argue that the neoliberal ideology effected both Greg and James, including the ways they understood who they were and how they lived their lives. Not only did they attach great importance to having the right car, house, and clothes, but they also sought success in every facet of their social life, from in the workplace and in relationships, to on holidays and when socialising. The way that Greg and James regarded themselves as "failures" for not realising these life goals also highlights how the neoliberal ideology saturated their thinking. They firmly believed that their lack of consumption deemed them unsuccessful, "the waste product of a consumer society" (Verhaeghe, 2014 p. 158). Their decision to quit their roles as community sports coaches for employment in an alternative profession is further evidence of how the neoliberal climate influenced Greg and James. They were willing to sacrifice doing a job they apparently enjoyed in order to earn a wage that would allow them to consume more. For Verhaeghe (2014), this makes complete sense given that

Greg and James, as modern individuals, were “first and foremost consumers, interested in what only benefits them” (p. 235).

The findings above have started to illuminate the interconnections between the neoliberal climate and challenges of everyday life for Greg and James. I hope this will serve to encourage further research into the relationship between neoliberalism and its effects on the lives of community sport coaches. Such knowledge has, for me, much to offer in both theoretical and practical terms and could be used to benefit those involved in the development, management, and enactment of sport policy.

5.7. Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to utilise various theoretical frameworks to better understand the everyday demands and dilemmas that Greg and James experienced when implementing a government-funded initiative aimed at increasing young people’s participation in sport and physical activity. Applying the work of Kelchtermans (e.g. Kelchtermans, 2005, 2009, 2011), Goffman (1990 [1959]), and Hochschild (2012 [1983]), it could be argued that the accounts offered in this chapter have illustrated at least some aspects of the inherently micropolitical and emotional nature of Greg’s and James’s community sports coaching work. There is no doubt these community sports coaches had to strategically navigate their way through their working context, and also manage their emotions and embodied experiences that were bound up in their engagements and interactions with others. Finally, through using the work of Bauman (2007) and various symbolic interactionist identity theorists (e.g. Burke & Stets, 2009; Stryker, 2002 [1983]) I was able to demonstrate how Greg and James were not solely community coaches, but rather individuals with various identities. Moreover, these theoretical perspectives allowed me to examine the

connections between the working and non-working identities of these two community coaching practitioners and the impact that these interconnections had on their careers as sports workers.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

6.1. Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to conclude this thesis. After this brief introduction, a review of the key research findings of this study is provided. Specifically, I discuss what I consider to be the major empirical and theoretical contributions of this work to our understanding of community sports coaching. Following this, I provide suggestions for future avenues of critical investigation into the social complexity of community sports coaching. Here, particular attention is given to the ways that various forms of representation and the research of Ball (e.g. Ball, 1987; Ball et al., 2012), Bolton (e.g. 2000, 2005), and Crossley (e.g. 2010, 2011) might be productively applied to exploring the everyday realities of community sports coaching.

6.2. Summary of major findings

This thesis sought to present some initial findings about the micropolitical and emotional challenges faced by coaches working in community sports settings. Specifically, this doctoral research project focussed on some of the everyday demands and dilemmas that Greg and James, two community sports coaches, experienced when implementing a government-funded initiative aimed at increasing young people's participation in sport and physical activity. When reflecting upon the findings of this investigation, I would argue that Greg and James attached considerable importance to the protection and advancement of their respective community coaching positions. Their determination to pursue these objectives was fuelled by a desire to earn a salary that would allow them to achieve various workplace and non-workplace goals and objectives. In this respect, it could be contended that Greg's and James's professional interests lay at the heart of their concerns (Kelchtermans, 1993; Kelchtermans & Ballet,

2002a, 2002b). Such findings provide initial exploratory insights into how two community sports coaching practitioners considered the profession to be largely, if not entirely, about maintaining and advancing their own positions in order to realise personal objectives (e.g. owning a house and car). In doing so this study gives further credence to a growing body of coaching research (e.g. Huggan et al., 2014; Jones & Wallace, 2005; Potrac & Jones, 2009b; Potrac et al., 2013a; Thompson et al., 2013) and, more generally, micropolitical literature (e.g. Ball, 1987, Blase, 1991; Bloyce et al., 2008; Fry, 1997; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002b), which has suggested that personal agendas often dominate practitioners' thoughts.

Learning from engagements with various contextual stakeholders (e.g. line managers and peers), Greg and James described how they believed that they had to successfully carry out a number of professional tasks in order to maintain and advance their employment (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002a, 2002b). These included, for example, maximising participant enjoyment and successfully meeting participation targets. Unfortunately, the recognition of these realities of working life was not a straightforward or unproblematic affair for Greg and James. Both coaches explained how this understanding led to them experiencing feelings of anger, anxiety, and frustration. Such experiences were, on one level, understood in relation to Kelchtermans' (1996, 2005, 2009, 2011) work addressing structural vulnerability in the workplace. On another level, the coaches' awareness of the vulnerability of their positions was understood in relation to wider debates regarding neo-liberal working practices and the rise of precarious work in the UK more widely (Ball, 2003; Ball & Olmedo, 2013; Houlihan & Green, 2008; Kalleberg, 2009). Arguably, these multi-level insights make an original contribution to the sports coaching literature by highlighting how

the employment demands of community sports work impacts upon the health and well-being of two community coaching practitioners. By generating such knowledge this study provides further support to the arguments for better recognising vulnerability as a fundamental condition of coaching practice (e.g. Cushion & Jones, 2006; Huggan et al., 2014; Jones, 2009; Jones & Wallace, 2005; Potrac & Jones, 2009b; Purdy et al., 2008; Thompson et al., 2013). Moreover, it adds value to the ongoing scholarly discussions which suggest that actor subjectivity, such as fears about job security, is a fundamental condition of work in the sporting sector (Brown & Potrac, 2009; Cushion & Jones, 2006; Parker, 2006; Potrac et al., 2013a; Purdy & Potrac, 2014; Roderick, 2013, 2014; Thompson et al., 2013).

In an effort to cope with the structural vulnerability of their respective positions and to protect and advance their professional interests, both coaches engaged in a repertoire of strategic coaching practices that they felt would impress key contextualised stakeholders. Their accounts offer some novel insights into the ways that community sports coaches attempt to navigate their working environment. These findings lend further credence to a body of research (e.g. Bloyce et al., 2008; Chesterfield et al., 2010; Huggan et al., 2014; Jones, 2004; Potrac & Jones, 2009b; Potrac et al., 2002; Thompson et al., 2013) which has demonstrated that sports workers will engage in micropolitical actions to impress contextual stakeholders in order to maintain and advance their positions. I am not suggesting that Greg's and James's interactions were solely built upon false fronts and false impressions. Rather, I contend that they engaged in strategic coaching practices when they felt that the achievement of their goals was dependent upon them constructing and presenting the 'right' front (Goffman 1990 [1959]; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002a, 2002b). In other words, I do not

believe that Greg's and James's behaviours were totally Machiavellian, but rather that their acting out of these actions represented their understandings of the need to perform certain strategies to meet, and even exceed, professional expectations (Branaman, 2000; Jones, Bailey & Thompson, 2013; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002a, 2002b; Potrac & Jones, 2009b).

Importantly, Greg and James explained how such performances were also very much emotional activities in which they faced the challenge of managing their emotional experiences and displays in accordance with the rules and ideologies of their respective workplace environments. Given the coaches' outlook, I drew on Hochschild's (2012 [1983]) theorising of emotions as I believe that it offers a particularly valuable sense-making framework for understanding this element of their community coaching practice. In regulating their emotional displays in accordance with the perceived display rules of their organisational settings, Greg and James engaged in emotional labour through the application of either surface acting or deep acting. The coaches' engagements in emotional labour sometimes led to significant 'human costs', such as a sense of burnout and various feelings of stress (Hochschild, 2012 [1983]). That said, their emotional labour did not always lead to detrimental or harmful consequences. Both coaches discussed how they also enjoyed their emotional labour as it helped them to obtain favourable recognition from the key contextual stakeholders with whom they worked and, as such, went some way towards safeguarding their professional interests (Hargreaves, 2000; Isenbarger & Zembylas, 2006; Potrac & Marshall, 2011).

By exploring the emotional aspects of Greg's and James's pedagogical interactions with various stakeholders, I have endeavoured to consider how cognition, emotion, and behaviour were interwoven and, ultimately, inseparable

in their everyday work as community sports coaches (cf. Kelchtermans, 2005; Potrac et al., 2013a). The stories that Greg and James shared would suggest that, for them, community coaching was an emotional activity (Denzin, 1984). I am, of course, not proposing that it was solely an emotional endeavour, but rather that it appeared to be “always irretrievably emotional in character, in a good way or bad way, by design or default” (Hargreaves, 2000, p. 812). For some coaching scholars, this is not a particularly new finding (see for example, Nelson et al., 2013a; Potrac et al., 2013b; Potrac & Marshall, 2011); however, as Potrac and Marshall (2011) have contended, we cannot assume that the understandings from the body of research addressing emotions in performance coaching can be naturally and unproblematically applied to the community coaching arena. As such, I believe that the findings presented within this thesis not only add further credence to the argument for better recognising emotions as an inherent feature of coaching practice, but also offer some initial explanatory insights into the emotional nature of practice in participation settings.

As I alluded to earlier (see chapter 2, section 2.3.), the study of emotions has become increasingly central to sociology in recent decades (Stets & Turner, 2014). A fundamental concern has been with understanding people’s emotional reactions to their jobs, with *The Managed Heart* motivating a tremendous amount of research (e.g. George, 2008; Godwyn, 2006; Sayers & Fachira, 2015). While this research indicates that all interactive jobs may require emotional labour in some generic sense, it is important to remember that jobs differ from one another in important ways (Wharton, 2009). Consequently, explorations into work settings that have yet to be explored are still required. As Wharton (2009) noted:

Understanding how interactive work is organised and the factors that shape it remain a necessary task, and research that identifies how

expectations about emotion and emotional expression are built into formal job requirements, informal expectations, and other aspects of work organisation can contribute to this effort. (p. 161).

By offering novel insights into the sociology of emotional labour in community sports coaching, I would argue that this thesis has made a positive contribution to the study of emotions more broadly, and the emotional understanding of interactive work and interaction at work in particular. In this regard, it adds further support to the body of research (e.g. George, 2008; Wharton, 2009) which suggests that emotional labour is a formal and/or informal job requirement, it shapes the workers experience of work, and that workers will strategically manage their emotions when interacting with others, including clients, managers, and coworkers, to achieve desired ends.

Despite their increasing engagements in micropolitical literacy, Greg and James eventually relinquished their community coaching jobs and sought employment in alternative professions. They did this as they perceived that their community coaching salaries were preventing them from fulfilling their various non-workplace relationships, goals, and ambitions. On one level, such experiences were understood in relation to theoretical and empirical research addressing the concept of identity (Burke & Stets, 2009; Serpe & Stryker, 2011; Stets & Serpe, 2013; Stryker, 2002 [1980]; Stryker & Burke, 2000). On another level, Bauman's (2007) notion of the society of consumers offered a fruitful analytical framework on which to peg this aspect of the coaches' career stories. Such multi-level insights have, arguably, highlighted how Greg and James were not only community coaching practitioners, but also individuals with multiple identities (Burke & Stets, 2009; Serpe & Stryker, 2011; Stryker, 2002 [1980]). Moreover, these findings have illustrated that the maintenance or development

of these various identities was something of a complex endeavour for Greg and James, especially when related to the protection and advancement of their commodity value and 'higher-level' identities (Bauman, 2007; Burke & Stets, 2009; Stets & Serpe, 2013).

These findings not only add increasing support to the critiques of representing coaching careers in functionalistic and linear ways (e.g. Christensen, 2013; Purdy & Potrac, 2014), but also open up a new vista of inquiry into the wider lives of community coaching practitioners. Although some initial research has hinted at the ways in which high-performance coaching identities are developed, advanced, maintained, or disrupted (e.g. Purdy & Potrac, 2014), prior to this study we knew very little about interconnections between community coaching practitioners' workplace and non-workplace identities and the impact that these interconnections may subsequently have upon their career experiences and trajectories. I hope that the findings presented in this thesis will not only encourage further scholarly inquiry into this under-examined area of sports coaching, but also help us to develop a more nuanced understanding of the demands and dilemmas, as well as the potential social and psychological issues, that individuals may face when they invest into a career in community coaching (Purdy & Potrac, 2014).

In summary, this thesis sought to provide some initial insights into the tensions and dilemmas that Greg and James experienced when enacting a government-funded initiative to increase young people's participation in sport and physical activity. In particular, I hope that the accounts offered have illustrated at least some aspects of the inherently micropolitical and emotional nature of community sports coaching work and, relatedly, the messy nature of policy enactment within the context of community sport. The findings presented here,

coupled with completed work to date (e.g. Huggan et al., 2014; Nelson et al., 2013a; Potrac & Jones, 2009a, 2009b; Potrac et al., 2013a, 2013b; Potrac & Marshall, 2011; Thompson et al., 2013), certainly suggest that coaching is a political and emotional activity which requires practitioners to engage in various forms of micropolitical actions, such as impression management and emotional labour, in order to survive, and hopefully thrive, in their working roles (Gilbourne, 2013). I am, of course, not suggesting that everyday coaching life, for Greg and James at least, was solely marked by political 'warfare', or that their political engagements were exclusively negative, or that they were politically active all of the time (Fry, 1997). However, like other scholars in the field of coaching (Potrac & Jones, 2009a, 2009b; Potrac et al., 2013a; Thompson et al., 2013), I do believe that we would be doing practitioners, policymakers, and educators a disservice if we ignore or 'whitewash' over its political and emotional nature. Indeed, if we are to effectively theorise coaching and continue to offer relevant suggestions for coaching practitioners, educators, and policymakers, it is imperative that our endeavours extend beyond the continuing rationalistic and 'heroic' accounts of practice by examining the "dark side of organisational life" (Hoyle, 1982, p. 87); that is, the day-to-day manipulatory and strategic side of coaching work (Potrac et al., 2013a; Thompson et al., 2013). To this end, I believe that this thesis has provided some new and, indeed, novel insights into the notion of community sports coaching as a political and emotional activity and, in doing so, has answered the calls of various scholars (e.g. Potrac & Jones, 2009b; Potrac et al., 2013b; Potrac & Marshall, 2011) who have argued that we need to develop a more 'reality' grounded understanding of community coaching from the perspective of the community coaching practitioner. Importantly, I would also argue that this thesis has offered a rich account of the connection between the

working and non-working lives of community sports coaches. To date, little, if any, attention has been given to the interconnections between the various identities that community coaches have. Arguably then, this investigation has provided some unique, and much needed, insights not only into how these individuals attempt to manage their workplace and non-workplace identities, but also into the wider social demands that are placed upon them.

While the concepts of micropolitics, vulnerability, impression and emotion management, consumerism, and workplace and non-workplace identities were often dealt with separately, it is important to point out that I did this purely for analytical clarity. I argue that these features of Greg's and James's career stories were inextricably interlinked. For example, I believe that the consumerist attitudes and monetary demands of social life in contemporary society underpinned Greg's and James's determination to protect and advance their community coaching employment. In an effort to achieve their objectives, both coaches strove to impress key contextual stakeholders by demonstrating their professional competence. This often required engagement in various micropolitical actions such as the management of physical, verbal, and emotional displays. Despite maintaining their positions, Greg and James did not earn enough money to buy the merchandise needed to fulfil their various non-workplace identities. This resulted in Greg and James discarding their community coaching identities and replacing them with new ones in alternative professions. They engaged in these micropolitical actions in an attempt to earn a wage that would allow them to recast themselves as desired and successful commodities.

While I acknowledge that coaching scholars have already explored micropolitics and emotions (e.g. Huggan et al., 2014; Nelson et al., 2013a; Potrac & Jones, 2009a, 2009b; Potrac & Marshall, 2011; Thompson et al., 2013), their

work has typically focussed on one of these concepts. As a result, it has failed to consider how the issues of identity, emotion, and micropolitics are all interconnected in the context of sports coaching. Moreover, the above-cited work has only considered these aspects in the context of professional sport. Consequently, I believe that this doctoral research project makes an original contribution to sports coaching knowledge not only through its unique empirical insights into the complex reality of community coaching, but also through its efforts to offer a multi-layered understanding of the interplay between micropolitics, identity, and emotion in coaching. While I appreciate that this analytical framework is embryonic in nature, I hope that it helps us to better recognise and engage with the challenges, tensions, and dilemmas of coaching practice (Potrac et al., 2013a, 2013b).

In light of the various points made above, I would argue this thesis is theoretical novel. For example, I have demonstrated how Kelchtermans' (e.g. Kelchtermans, 2005, 2009, 2011; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002a, 2002b) inter-related writings on micropolitical literacy, professional interests, and vulnerability can play a productive role in assisting our sociological understanding of community sports coaching work. While I acknowledge that a small number of scholars have already utilised Kelchtermans work to help explain and deconstruct the micropolitical nature of practice in sporting organisations (e.g. Huggan et al., 2014; Potrac & Jones, 2009b; Thompson et al., 2013), it has principally drawn upon his notions of professional self-understanding and micropolitical actions. Little, if any, attention has been given to his concepts of structural vulnerability, knowledge aspect, operational aspect, organisational interests, and self-interests. Moreover, his work has been exclusively utilised to make theoretical sense of the political underbelly of organisational life in performance sport. Thus,

this investigation is not only theoretically innovative in terms of highlighting how Kelchtermans theorising can play a valuable role in assisting our theory-building efforts of micropolitics in the context of community sports coaching, but also by using elements of his work that have not been previously employed in sports coaching research.

I would also contend that this thesis demonstrates certain degrees of theoretical novelty through its use of Hochschild's (2012 [1983]) concepts of emotional labour, display rules, and surface acting and deep acting. Like Kelchtermans, Hochschild's work has found some traction in recent years, particularly in terms of helping to further our understanding of coaching's dramaturgical nature (e.g. Nelson et al., 2013a; Potrac & Marshall, 2011). While this literature has illustrated how aspects of her work can assist our appreciation of the emotional nature of coaching practice, it has been exclusively utilised to highlight how and why elite coaching practitioners may engage in bouts of emotional labour. Therefore, I would argue that this study has demonstrated originality by showcasing how Hochschild's (2012 [1983]) theorising can assist our understanding of the emotional demands of community sports coaching.

Finally, I believe that this thesis has demonstrated originality through its collective use of Bauman's (2007) work on consumerism and symbolic interactionist identity theory (e.g. Burke & Stets; Stryker, 2002 [1980]) to make theoretical sense of how Greg and James attempted to manage their workplace and non-workplace identities, as well as the wider social demands that were placed upon them. While Bauman's writings have been previously used by Potrac and colleagues (2013a), this literature explicitly drew upon his metaphor of the 'hunter'. Indeed, prior to this investigation, no previous sports coaching study has utilised his notion of the society of consumers and associated critiques of

contemporary society as a sense-making tool. Likewise, coaching scholars have yet to draw upon symbolic interactionist identity theory to help explain, and give greater consideration to, the various identities that sports coaching practitioners hold. Therefore, this thesis has demonstrated theoretical novelty by providing an example of how Bauman's (2007) writings addressing consumption can be fruitfully combined with concepts from the symbolic interactionist strand of identity theory (e.g. Burke & Stets, 2009) to provide a critical perspective on the issue of identity in sports coaching work. Specifically, these frameworks have enabled me to offer novel insights into the interface between work and non-work life, between the dominant narrative of success and consumption, and the micro-level strategies employed to realise desired ends. Moreover, by purposely interconnecting the work of Bauman (2007) with interactionist thought, I have demonstrated how Denzin's (2001) notion of interpretive interactionism can be successfully utilised in sports coaching research. I certainly believe that weaving Bauman's work with symbolic interactionist theorising has enabled me to better highlight the "problematic lived experience of ordinary people" (Denzin, 2001 p. xi).

It is important to note that I am not suggesting that community coaching, or sport work more generally, should only be explored and understood from an emotional and micropolitical viewpoint, nor am I proposing that Greg's and James's lived experiences are uniformly applicable to the experiences of community coaches more broadly. However, I do believe that by shedding light on the emotional and political nature of Greg's and James's experiences, this thesis contributes to a developing epistemology of sports coaching that seeks to depict coaching as the problematic institution it is (Potrac et al., 2013a; Thompson et al., 2013). In other words, by offering insights into Greg's and James's

understandings of the minute and mundane actions of daily practice, I believe that this thesis can help improve our understandings of the ordinary yet significant practices that in many ways comprise coaching practice in participation settings (Gardiner, 2000; Jones & Wallace, 2005; Potrac & Jones, 2009a, 2009b).

I believe that the examination of the emotional and micropolitical nature of coaching practice is appropriate not only for relevant theory building, but also in terms of helping coach education provision more adequately prepare community sports coaches for the complex social realities of their work (Potrac & Jones, 2009a, 2009b). I hope that by illuminating how Greg and James managed and negotiated opportunities and constraints, as well as providing insights into how they perceived that coach education had failed to prepare them for the reality of their roles, the findings of this thesis will encourage coach educators to dedicate some curriculum time to helping community coaches acquire a better understanding of the inherent micropolitical and emotional features of their work, and how to manage them (Huggan et al., 2014; Potrac & Jones, 2009a, 2009b). I am not underestimating the importance of the procedural and technical features of the community coaching job role, but I do believe that an understanding of socio-political realities is essential for good coaching practice (Huggan et al., 2014; Jones & Wallace, 2005; Nelson et al., 2013a; Potrac & Jones, 2009a, 2009b). A potential way to educate coaches about the micropolitical and emotional features of practice is through the sharing of community coaches' stories, such as Greg's and James's, as narrative resources (Smith & Sparkes, 2009a, 2009b). Making such resources available to both neophyte and experienced practitioners might help them to develop a more reality grounded understanding of the political and emotional demands of their working role. Moreover, I would hope that by shedding light on the inherent vulnerabilities

revealed in stories such as Greg's and James's, we might inspire coaching practitioners, as well as those who are employed in similar forms of work (e.g. social workers and youth workers), to "think critically about how they, and others in these contexts, wish to conduct themselves and what implications, reactions and consequences such decisions and actions might have" (Huggan et al., 2014, p. 14). In this regard, I find myself in agreement Smith and Sparkes (2009a, 2009b) who argued that reflecting on narrative resources can encourage people to live in different and more socially sensitive ways.

Finally, I would also argue that the findings presented in this study have much to offer in terms of complementing related research in sport development, which addresses important issues such as the design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of various programmes and interventions (Coalter, 2013; Smith & Waddington, 2004). From my standpoint, this thesis probes beneath the glossy surface veneer of sport as a tool for development by challenging the predictive certainty that, some (e.g. Bloyce et al., 2008; Coalter, 2013; Penney & Evans, 1997) would argue, has typified the academic literature in this area. Indeed, it has highlighted how community sports coaches are not merely automatons or technicians engaged in the linear and straightforward delivery of particular policy goals, objectives, and initiatives. Instead, like all social actors involved in the enactment of policy, they have aspirations, hope, fears, and worries and are bound up in networks of relations that are influenced by economic and social forces, institutions, people and interests, and, sometimes, pure chance (Ball et al., 2012; Penney & Evans, 1997; Taylor et al., 1997). By recognising the realities of community sports coaching work and policy enactment, I would argue that this investigation can help policymakers, educators, and practitioners contribute to

the provision of positive and purposeful experiences for the young people in their charge (Coalter, 2013).

While producing generalisations were not a concern of this interpretive inquiry, several scholars (e.g. Booroff et al., 2015; Jones, 2006, 2009; Williams, 2000) have suggested that it is possible to generalise (to some degree) from interpretive investigations. One of the strategies available to interpretive researchers in this respect is what Stake (1995) labelled *naturalistic* generalisations. These are “conclusions arrived at through personal engagement in life's affairs or by vicarious experience so well constructed that the person feels as if it happened to themselves” (Stake, 1995, p. 85). Researchers hoping to open up a space for generalisation of this nature are “required to provide readers with rich, thick, descriptions of the case under study so that the readers themselves can reflect upon it and make connections (that is, naturalistic generalisations) to their own situations” (Sparkes & Smith, 2014, p. 184). In light of the above, I hope that my representation, and subsequent analysis, of Greg’s and James’s stories will enable readers to begin to develop an appreciation and understanding of Greg’s and James’s thoughts and actions from their viewpoints and, in doing so, allow those coaching practitioners who are reading this work to relate the presented material to their own coaching experiences (Booroff et al., 2015).

6.3. Suggestions for future research

Greg’s and James’s accounts lend further support to the need to engage with a “critical sociology of sports coaching” (Thompson et al., 2013, p. 16). Hence, it supports the writings that have increasingly challenged traditional coaching literature that has largely represented the activity as an unemotional, apolitical, and rationalistic endeavour underpinned by tactical, technical, and bio-scientific knowledge and methods (e.g. Cassidy et al., 2009; Cushion, 2007; Jones, 2006,

2009, 2011; Jones et al., 2004; Potrac & Jones, 2009a, 2009b; Potrac et al., 2013a, 2013b; Thompson et al., 2013). In other words, this thesis adds credence to the scholarly work which suggests that coaching should be examined in ways that do not “simplify, stereotype, and dull individual experience” (Jones, 2011, p. 634). However, while this work has extended our understanding of coaching in a community setting by providing some initial insights into the ways practitioners ‘feel’, ‘see’, ‘act’, and generally make sense of their day-to-day work, I would still contend that there is much work to be done before we can claim that we have a highly detailed picture of the social complexity of community coaching. Specifically I would urge future research to pay more direct attention to how community sports coaches understand the various coach education and development courses to have prepared (or not prepared) them for the everyday demands of this working environment, as well as to the type of assistance these individuals would like to receive in terms of enhancing their abilities to facilitate the achievement of various health and social policy goals. I believe that such knowledge would help policymakers and educators to develop community coaching practitioners that are not only better prepared for the realities of their working environment, but also perhaps more importantly better able to contribute to the provision of positive and purposeful experiences for the young people in their charge.

In exploring topics such as these, I encourage researchers to generate rich and detailed accounts of the experiences of both neophyte and experienced community sports coaches through various forms of representation (Groom et al., 2014; Huggan et al., 2014; Sparkes & Smith, 2014; Toner et al., 2012). While this study has demonstrated how modified realist tales (Purdy et al., 2009; Sparkes, 2002) can be used to explore the “nuances, mysteries, and complexities of

human interaction in coaching” (Potrac & Jones, 2009b, p. 564), I believe that (auto)ethnography, poetry, film, ethnodrama, photography, and confessional tales, among other forms of representation (Groom et al., 2014; Sparkes & Smith, 2014), could also conceivably help to uncover and convey rich and valuable insights (Groom et al., 2014; Huggan et al., 2014; Smith & Sparkes, 2009a, 2009b).

While I believe that such forms of representation can help to unearth the social complexity of community coaching, it is important to note that each form of representation is “not without its problems and that informed choices need to be made about when, where, and if they are utilised” (Sparkes & Smith, 2014, p. 177). Echoing the work of various sports scholars (e.g. Groom et al., 2014; Smith, 2010; Sparkes & Smith, 2014), I urge researchers to avoid “choosing a form of representation simply because it is novel” or personally interesting, for doing so increases “the danger of fetishizing form and elevating style, or panache, over content” (Groom et al., 2014, p. 94). Before using any of the genres discussed above, researchers need to consider a range of matters including, for example, the nature of the data, epistemological and ontological commitments, theoretical points wished to be made, the envisioned audience, the intended purpose of writing up one’s research, what truths can be told, and what the mode of representation can say that is of value (Groom et al., 2014; Smith, 2010). Of critical importance, from my perspective at least, is appropriately employing forms of representation and methodological approaches that help us to develop a more grounded understanding of the everyday realities of community coaching practice, as such inquiry could help more adequately prepare both neophyte and experienced community coaching practitioners for the multiple demands of their role (Huggan et al., 2014).

While this study and others (e.g. Huggan et al., 2014; Jones et al., 2013; Potrac & Jones, 2009a, 2009b; Thompson et al., 2013) have demonstrated the value of the work of Kelchtermans (1993, 1996, 2005, 2009, 2011) and Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002a, 2002b) in understanding some aspects of the micropolitical nature of coaching practice, I believe that a more extensive use of Ball's (e.g. Ball, 1987, 2003, 2012; Ball et al., 2012) work would prove fruitful in terms of adding additional detail and nuance to the current picture (Jones et al., 2013; Potrac & Jones, 2009b; Thompson et al., 2013). For example, I would argue that his micropolitical framework (Ball, 1987) which consists of the interrelated categories of *power*, *ideological disputation*, *political activity*, *interests*, *goal diversity*, *control*, and *conflict* could help us to better examine the 'behind the scenes' nature of everyday life for community coaches. This theorising may enable a deeper understanding not only of how the different views that contextual stakeholders hold about the purpose of government-funded community coaching schemes and their structures influence how practitioners operate at the micro-level of community sport, but also of how and why individuals engage in skilled strategic action, as various interest groups contest for control of the emerging situation. Furthermore, it may allow us to better recognise the issues that may arise from such disputes. I also believe that Ball's (e.g. Ball, 2012; Ball et al., 2012) more recent writings addressing policy enactment in education offers a potentially valuable lens for understanding not only how key contextual stakeholders at the coal face of sport policy enactment (e.g. administrators, coaches, and managers working for a delivery provider) cope with the multiple, and sometimes contradictory, demands of sport policy, but also how these actors, collectively and individually, interpret policy texts and translate them into practice.

While I believe that Hochschild's (2012 [1983]) theorising has enabled me to better understand the emotional nature of community coaching practice, I would urge that future coaching research considers using Sharon Bolton's (e.g. 2000, 2005) theorising of emotions. While Bolton acknowledges that Hochschild's (2012 [1983]) concept of emotional labour has enabled a much better understanding of emotions in the workplace, she takes issue with some of its key tenets. Central to Bolton's argument is that "emotional labour is appropriate for describing some but not all practices; it should be part of a repertoire of concepts designed to analyse the full range of emotion work enacted in organisations" (Bolton, 2009, p. 550). Building on this premise, Bolton developed an evolved analysis of emotional labour. She proposes that an individual can engage in four different types of emotional management in the workplace: pecuniary, prescriptive, presentational, and philanthropic (Bolton & Boyd, 2003). Bolton further explained that actors may also respond to different sets of feeling rules, which she broadly classifies as commercial, professional, or social feeling rules (Bolton & Boyd, 2003). Bolton argues that this typology of emotion management not only "displays how actors, whilst constrained by organisational structures, are still capable of possessing 'multiple selves,'" but also displays "how they are able to draw on different sets of feeling 'rules' in order to match feeling with situation" (Bolton & Boyd, 2003, p. 295). Bolton's (e.g. 2000, 2005) multidimensional typology of emotions, then, may enable sports coaching scholars to better capture how community sports coaching practitioners engage in "different emotional labour processes and the demands that they make and the complex motivations that lie behind [their] involvement with them" (Bolton, 2009, p. 557).

In the previous paragraphs I have argued that it would be to our considerable advantage for future inquiry to further examine community coaches'

understandings of their day-to-day experiences. While I believe that such endeavours will undoubtedly contribute to the production of rich accounts of community coaching practice, I also believe that we need to look beyond the community coach and engage more directly with the networked character of community coaches' social lives and policy enactment more broadly. In conducting this investigation it became apparent that Greg and James were just two of the many actors who made up the government-funded Kidz 'N' Games network. For example, there were the participants, other coaching practitioners, Greg's and James's employers, employees within the local authority, employees within Kidz 'N' Games, employees within Sport England, and employees within the government. It could therefore be argued that Greg's and James's thoughts, feelings, and actions were grounded in their relations with the array of other actors who comprised the Kidz 'N' Games network (Potrac, Nelson & O'Gorman, 2015). Despite such acknowledgements, this work did not directly consider how the complex network of relations in which Greg and James were located may have shaped their experiences and understandings of community sports coaching (Potrac et al., 2015). Furthermore, it did not give thought to how the vast network of stakeholders involved in sports policy and sports development work may have enabled, constrained, and shaped the enactment of the Kids 'N' Games scheme under study. I believe that such research is required if we are to succeed in developing more 'reality' grounded accounts of sports coaching and sports development work (Potrac et al., 2015).

I believe that Crossley's (2004, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2011) work on network analysis for symbolic interactionist theorising offers a potential framework for exploring the networks within community coaching and policy enactment more broadly. While Crossley accepts that the idea of networks is embedded in classic

symbolic interactionist theorising (e.g. Mead, Blumer, Goffman, and Cooley), his writings have a more explicit focus on networks which provide symbolic interactionists with an inroad to contemporary debates about complexity, particularly those which strive to highlight “that global patterns of order and organisation can be explained by reference to finely tuned localised interaction” (Crossley, 2011, p. 342). Central to Crossley’s (2011) argument is that “networks are what link the millions of actors in a complex structure” (p. 342). He contends that individuals are formed within and are inseparable from interactions, relations, and networks (Crossley, 2011). He further explains that networks provide “the link, conceptually, between small groups and large populations,” thus bridging the micro and macro divide (Crossley, 2011, p. 342).

In the current context then, Crossley’s (e.g. 2010; 2011) writings could be fruitfully drawn upon not only to understand how and why community coaching practitioners “seek to navigate their relationships with a variety of contextual stakeholders in the way that they do,” but also to “examine the emotions and embodied experiences that are bound up in their interactions and engagements with others” (Potrac et al., 2015, p. 11). In other words, this perspective offers a potentially valuable lens for understanding issues of power, identity, interaction, emotion, structure, and agency in the community sports coaching context (Potrac et al., 2015). Furthermore, the adoption of an explicitly relational approach may enable scholars of coaching science to better understand the connections between the working and non-working identities of coaching practitioners and how these individuals attempt to manage these various identities, as well as the wider social demands that are placed upon them (Potrac et al., 2015). Finally, Crossley’s (2011) theorising may enable sports scholars to better understand the multitude of interactions that occur across the network of people or groups of

networks within the enactment of sport policy. Indeed, while community coaches are at the coalface of policy delivery, it is perhaps important to recognise that they are just one of many stakeholders who contribute to the enactment of sports policy.

6.4. Summary

In this chapter I discussed the major empirical and theoretical contributions of this thesis to our understanding of community sports coaching. In particular, I demonstrated how this research study has made an original contribution to the field by illustrating the inherently micropolitical and emotional nature of community sports coaching work and, relatedly, the messy nature of policy enactment within the context of community sport, and by offering exploratory insights into the interconnections between the working and non-working lives of community sports coaches. Finally, in seeking to develop insightful and nuanced understandings of community sports coaching, I encouraged scholars to embrace a diverse range of qualitative approaches and to consider the utility of Ball (e.g. Ball, 1987; Ball et al., 2012), Bolton (e.g. 2000, 2005), and Crossley (e.g. 2010, 2011).

Chapter 7: Reflections on my experiences as a PhD sports coaching researcher

7.1. Introduction

The aim of this final chapter is to examine the inherently emotional nature of my experiences as a PhD sports coaching student. Following an introductory discussion of the published research that has addressed the emotional impact of research on researchers, I share some of my experiences of being a PhD student. Through these stories I demonstrate not only how I often managed my emotions and emotional displays during my encounters with various contextual stakeholders (e.g. participants and supervisors), but also how my sense of self was strongly influenced by the messages and perceptions that my supervisors mirrored back to me. These experiences are then understood in relation to some of the central ideas from symbolic interactionist identity theory (e.g. Burke & Stets, 2009; Stryker, 2002 [1980]), as well as Hochschild's (2012 [1983]) writings on emotional labour.

7.2. Purpose and background

As this thesis suggests, emotions are an important feature of everyday life (Damasio, 1994; Denzin, 1984; Elias, 1987). And yet, as Fitzpatrick and Olson (2015) have previously noted, there is a lack of scholarly activity addressing the emotional impact of research on researchers. Of course, there are exceptions (e.g. Carroll, 2013; Dickson-Swift, James, Kippen & Liamputtong, 2008, 2009; Emerald & Carpenter, 2015; Fitzpatrick & Olson, 2015; Hubbard, Backett-Milburn & Kemmer, 2001), but these investigations tend to be limited in terms of the type of researcher and the field of study. With respect to the former, research has principally focussed on the short- and long-term effects of doing research on emotionally sensitive topics (e.g. spouse caregivers of cancer patients, infertile

women, women who have a child with ASD or ADHD) with a tendency to frame discussions of researchers' emotions in terms of risks to their safety and well-being (e.g. Dickson-Swift et al., 2009; Emerald & Carpenter, 2015; Hubbard et al., 2001). With regard to the latter, published accounts have largely focussed on the emotional experiences of 'established' researchers (i.e. those with five or more years of research experience) (e.g. Dickson-Swift et al., 2009; Emerald & Carpenter, 2015).

Interestingly, apart from a few notable examples (e.g. Hughes, 2009; Morrison-Saunders, Moore, Hughes & Newsome, 2010), critical attention afforded to the discussion of the emotional impact of research on the postgraduate researcher remains relatively sparse. Furthermore, while some initial research has hinted at the effects of research on the sports coaching scholar (e.g. Purdy & Jones, 2013), there remains a paucity of inquiry addressing the emotional nature of conducting qualitative coaching research from the perspective of the researcher. Such neglect is unfortunate as it has been argued that the researcher's emotions are "vital" to the research process (Hubbard et al., 2001, p. 121) and that qualitative research is both emotional and intellectual work (Emerald & Carpenter, 2015; Fitzpatrick & Olson, 2015; Holland, 2007). In an effort to somewhat redress this situation, I will now share some of my experiences as a qualitative sports coaching PhD researcher. Following the presentation of these stories, I then make sense of my experiences in relation to Hochschild's (2012 [1983]) writings on emotional labour and some of the ideas and concepts that have been developed by various identity theorists (e.g. Burke & Stets, 2009; Stryker, 2002 [1980]).

7.3. The role of emotions in the PhD experience

17th February 2013: I am ready

It's the night before I start my participant observations. I am nervous but I feel ready for the challenge of data collection. Over the past few months I have submerged myself in the literature on research methodology aimed at qualitative researchers and I feel that this has adequately prepared me for 'fieldwork'. I am aware of the advantages and disadvantages associated with the 'participant as observer' and 'observer as participant' roles and I know that I need to establish a strong rapport with Greg and James to secure ongoing access and to obtain rich data, while at the same time maintaining some social and intellectual distance to minimise the dangers associated with 'over-rapport'.

While I felt ready to tackle the various demands of fieldwork, I was completely unaware of the fact that I would encounter intense and often complicated emotional experiences in the field. I experienced excitement and trepidation as I anticipated participant observations. And I felt joy, fear, anxiety, and anger as I engaged in them. Throughout the participant observations I also found that I vigilantly monitored and managed my emotions and emotional displays. Perhaps one of the most notable forms of my engagement in such activities was the way in which I controlled, suppressed, managed, and transformed feelings that I felt threatened my ongoing engagement in fieldwork and, as such, the completion of my thesis. The following extracts illustrate such encounters, the emotions experienced, and the emotional management performed.

18th March 2013: I can't be scared – but I am scared

Tonight's session (see Rocks like fireworks fieldnote extract) was crazy! The participants were throwing rocks against some nearby garden sheds and I was scared, really scared. I just wanted to run to my car and drive

away! But I knew I had to stay, I knew I couldn't run away – the completion of my PhD depends on me collecting this data. So I 'sucked it up' and 'toughed it out'. It wasn't easy but by participating in the games and by chatting to Greg I somehow managed to put my fear and trepidation to one side and I got through the remainder of the session.

11th July 2013: You shout and I'll shout (inside)

Tonight was challenging, very emotionally challenging. Matt, one of the participants, verbally abused me. I am not sure why he did it – I only told him that I needed to nip to the toilet before we played table tennis – but I was fuming about it. I wanted to snap, I wanted to shout in his face like he was shouting in mine but I knew I couldn't. I knew that I couldn't be seen to actively get involved in an aggressive verbal exchange, for doing so would have likely resulted in me being denied future access to this site and, as such, would have drastically reduced my chances of completing my PhD. So I refrained and instead tried to reason with him in a friendly and polite manner.

I found the participant observations to be emotionally and physically draining. Repeatedly managing my emotions and emotional display resulted in an accumulation of unexpected short- and long-term side effects. Immediately following participant observations I often felt extremely tired. During the later stages of fieldwork, I also noticed an unwillingness to attend participant observations. My unprompted reluctance to engage in fieldwork seemingly stemmed from a 'bodily refusal' to perform the emotional obligations I felt were necessary during these social encounters (Hochschild, 2012 [1983]). The following extract highlights the type of distress I often experienced in the hours and days leading up to a participant observation.

18th July 2013: I am emotionally exhausted

I need to get ready to attend my participant observation but I just can't be bothered. I don't want to go. Obviously, I know I will go, I will force myself to go, but I don't really want to go. I just can't be bothered to deal with the inherent fear, nervousness, and apprehension I feel every time I attend these observations. I can't be bothered to cover up these real feelings through displaying an enthusiastic, upbeat, and positive image. And I just can't be bothered to convey friendliness to James in order to 'butter him up' for the interviews. It all just requires so much effort, effort that I just don't want to give anymore. I just feel emotionally exhausted!

I also managed my emotional displays throughout the interviews. For example, during the initial phase of every interview, I bought my participant coaches a coffee and spent time talking to them about their wider social lives and the latest sporting news. These highly managed displays formed part of my 'self-presentation ritual' – to convey friendliness in order to dispel my own feelings of anxiety and nervousness, to ease the participants' apprehension, and perhaps most importantly to establish a strong rapport with Greg and James in an interview setting. I hoped that this would encourage the coaches to 'open up' and talk about their experiences in rich and detailed ways.

Within the interviews I also regularly drew upon my own experiences in an attempt to generate a more practical understanding of Greg's and James's stories. Obviously, I could not and did not fully share their experiences, but I do believe that by drawing upon my own memories I was able to develop a more embodied and emotional understanding of their experiences. The following diary extract offers an example of how I drew upon the emotions I experienced in the participant observations to 'connect' with the coaches stories.

16th October 2013: Emotional connection

A large proportion of today's interview was focussed around the emotions Greg experienced when his participants engaged in anti-social behaviour. He talked about how he was often very scared and angry and I totally get where he is coming from. I get it because I felt exactly the same in those situations. I feel like I know exactly what he means when he says he was scared and angry because I can connect with those emotions, I felt those emotions!

Throughout the interviews, I also found that I had to regularly manage and mask felt emotion in order to maintain the 'professional' image I was striving to convey, namely, a competent, detached researcher who does not judge or evaluate. As the participants shared their stories I often felt feelings of sadness, anger, guilt, joy, and excitement. Believing that displaying such emotions might have negative effects upon the participant-researcher relationship and thus upon the 'quality' of data obtained, I deliberately shaped my bodily and facial expressions in an attempt to conceal these feelings or express them in a modified form. The diary extract presented below offers an example of such an encounter.

20th October 2014: Hide how you really feel

Thirty minutes into Greg's interview we started talking about the implications of his 'poor' community coaching wage on his life outside of the working context. His hands started to shake and his voice rose several pitches and wavered as he struggled to explain how it resulted in his girlfriend 'dumping' him. I instantly felt a wave of sadness. I could detect that Greg was clearly upset. While I felt empathy for Greg, I also recognised that these were insights that have not previously been considered in the coaching literature and therefore would allow me to make an original contribution to the field. In other words, despite not

wanting to upset Greg, I knew that I had to encourage him to talk about these events in rich and detailed ways. To assist with this objective, I intentionally managed my facial and bodily display: I sat up straight, looked him in the eye, and nodded to assure him that it was 'appropriate' for him to continue to talk about his break-up with his girlfriend. His eyes began to well up and I leant forward and patted him on the knee, hoping to show him that I understood his sadness and it was suitable for him to carry on. Greg took a big sigh and continued to talk.

As this diary extract highlights, I sometimes experienced contradictory emotional responses when Greg and James shared distressing experiences. On one hand I felt sad when I could detect that they were upset; on the other, I felt a sense of purpose as I perceived that such data would help me to make an 'original' contribution to the sports coaching literature. Essentially, by exploring these issues I believed that my thesis would provide novel insights into the complex challenges, dilemmas, and tensions that community coaches face.

When critically reflecting upon my personal diary it is clear that it was not just fieldwork that was inherently emotional, but rather the entire research process (Morrison-Saunders et al., 2010). Through this journey I have experienced many highs and many, many lows; from the pain and anguish associated with perceiving that 'I am not good enough' to the pure ecstasy of feeling like 'I've cracked it'. It has been, and still is, a highly emotional and, at times, traumatic journey.

12th September 2011: What a mistake

I feel like I have fu*ked up, I feel like I have made a terrible decision. I look around this library and there is no one here, I am the only one left, the only one who thought it would be a good idea to continue to p*ss around being

a student, but it's not p*ssing around, it's impossible. I am meant to be giving a presentation to my supervisors in a few weeks about a theorist. But I just don't understand his work. It's like reading Chinese. I don't think I can do this, I don't think I am bright enough, it's just too hard. This is a nightmare! I have parted with a huge chunk of my life savings to invest in something I can't do. What a dickhead! What do I do now? Either way, I know I need to get out of this 'hell-hole'. Goodbye library!

Over the next few months, eleven to be precise, I 'buried my head in the sand'. I could not pluck up the courage to open an academic book or my laptop as they reminded me of the reality of my situation, a reality that I was not prepared to face. When my parents rang me to ask how things were going or when my supervisors 'texted' me to ask how I was getting on, I always offered the same positive reply: "Things are brilliant, I am loving it. Everything is going great." I was lying through my teeth, but I could not tell them the truth. I could not say that I had made a mistake: that the PhD was not for me. I thought that they would be so disappointed, and that they would think I am a waste of space, a failure. Even when I had the perfect opportunity to disclose my feelings to my supervisors in our next supervisory meeting I still tried to pretend that everything was 'okay'.

15th August 2012: We are concerned

"We are very concerned about your progress, Ben." I instantly felt a wave of guilt and disappointment. I felt like I had let them down. I felt like a failure. Those words crushed me! They tried to motivate me by telling me how Laura and Ash (PhD students who started their studies a year in advance of me) had produced literature reviews and methodology chapters by this stage of their studies, but that didn't help. It just made me feel worse, it compounded my misery! It just made me feel inadequate and stupid. Obviously, I concealed these emotions. I didn't want them to know that I

was so upset. I just put a brave face on and tried to hide how I felt. They then asked the most important question: “Is there a reason why you’re not engaging with your studies, Ben?” It was the perfect opportunity to tell the truth. To tell them that I am not doing any work because I am not smart enough to produce the type of work that they expect. To explain that I need extra help and that I need some extra guidance and an arm around me. To tell them that I am struggling to stay afloat. But I didn’t say a single word. Instead, I tried just to convince them that everything was fine through standing tall and exuding an aura of self-confidence. “Don’t worry guys. I will knuckle down and get the work done.”

Over the next few days and weeks, I started to come to terms with the reality of my situation and I told my parents that I was going to quit my PhD as it “wasn’t for me”. They were surprisingly supportive (probably because they saw this day coming) and helped me to set various ‘alternative’ career paths in motion. I started doing part-time coaching work for the community coaching company I was employed by prior to my undergraduate studies and my dad put some ‘foundations in place’ for me to embark on a ‘business’ career in his company. I was ready to inform the University of Hull that I would not be continuing into the second year of my postgraduate studies. Well, that was until I received a somewhat surprising phone call from Dr Lee Nelson.

8th September 2012: A change in circumstances

IS HE JOKING? I have just got off the phone to Lee and he wants me to apply for one of the three GTA [graduate teaching assistant] posts that have come up within the department [Dept. of Sport, Health & Exercise Science at the University of Hull]. Why the hell does he want me to apply? I have been the worst student in the world for this past year! I can’t actually believe it! I told him that I wasn’t sure if I am cut out for it but he assures

me that I am. He told me that I am a “very good student” and that he “firmly believes” that I can complete my PhD. Those words were so nice to hear, they were so comforting! It’s completely changed my perception about everything. Maybe I can do a PhD? Maybe I am good enough? If Lee still thinks I am good enough after my performance this year then I must be good enough. He wouldn’t tell me to apply if he didn’t think I was good enough, would he? I can’t believe that he still has faith in me, that he still believes in me, that he still believes that I can do this. It’s incredible, it’s the best feeling ever! I feel like I have just been offered the opportunity of a lifetime, the opportunity that I was, perhaps without knowing, searching for all along. No longer would I be a paying PhD student but someone who is paid to be a student – how cool is that! I know I haven’t got it yet but the thought just makes me feel brilliant about myself. I feel valued. I feel important. I feel like I have a purpose! I need to get this job and complete my PhD. I need to prove that Lee’s beliefs are not just a ‘leap of faith!’

From that moment, everything changed! I managed to secure a GTA position and I never looked back. I had a new-found motivation. All of a sudden I felt ‘good enough’ and my work very much reflected that belief. I ‘boshed out’ 25,000 words towards an introduction and literature review within two months of starting my GTA post, which was 24,500 more words than I had written prior to starting the position (yes, you read correctly, I only wrote 500 words in the first year of my studies!), and I learnt more about sports coaching and my research project in those two months than I did in the entire 12-month self-funded period. Obviously, things were not always ‘perfect’ but they felt pretty close to it, especially when I received feedback on the first draft of my introduction.

4th February 2013: [Probably] the happiest moment of my studies

I feel FANTASTIC; Lee's and Paul's feedback has made me feel brilliant! Obviously my work wasn't perfect, Lee's 'famous' red pen was all over it, but about three-quarters of the way through the meeting he rolled up my work, pointed it towards me, looked me in the eye, and said, "Ben, this is really good, it's not perfect but for a first draft it's very impressive, it's already a 7.5, its already 'probably' good enough to use for your final thesis, but with a bit of work it could be a 9 out of 10. With a bit of effort it could be excellent. You should be extremely proud of this because we are delighted with this. Keep this up and you will make a career out of this." I felt immersed in contentment, happiness, and relief; the fear of it 'not being good enough' that had crushed my body for the days leading up to this meeting has been released, it has relinquished its vice-like grip, it has been dissolved by a solvent of joy. Of course I didn't display how happy I was; I didn't want them to think that I was some over-excited child. Instead, I try to act professionally by simply giving him a nod of recognition and saying thank you in a soft and subtle tone.

The conversation with my supervisors led to an increased affinity with my role as a PhD student. I became more motivated, I worked longer hours, and I found increasing enjoyment in performing study-related activities. It also marked a significant turning point in my life as it opened up the prospect of a career in academia, a career direction that I had not previously considered: well, not seriously anyway. Over the next two years my experiences – namely, the (generally) positive feedback I received from supervisors, publishing a book chapter about my research findings with my colleagues (see Ives et al., 2016), and the opportunity to intercalate for 12 months to fulfil a module leader teaching role within our department – further contributed to my experiencing high levels of

motivation, satisfaction, and fulfilment. I was riding the crest of a wave! Unfortunately, however, the feedback I received in relation to the 16,500 words I had drafted for my discussion shot me off of this crest and sent me plummeting towards the ocean floor.

20th May 2015: It's really good but ...

“... we think you need to write the whole thing again.” Those words knocked the wind out of my sails. At that moment I hated everything to do with my PhD, including my supervisors. I was so upset and angry. I wanted to cry, scream, and shout. I wanted to bury my head in my hands. I wanted to throw their written feedback in the bin. Obviously, I never did any of those things. I never would have done those things. That's not what a 'good' PhD student does. Instead, I just sat quietly and listened intently to their feedback.

When critically reflecting upon my diary extracts I would argue that my PhD experiences have been inherently emotional. Much like Greg and James then, I found that I often had to manage my emotions and emotional displays to achieve desired goals such as establishing and maintaining professional relationships with my participants and supervisors. My story therefore, could perhaps best be explained through Hochschild's (2012 [1983]) concept of *emotional labour*. As discussed in chapter 5 (see section 5.5.), emotional labour refers to that labour which “requires one to induce or suppress feeling” in order to achieve objectives pertaining to one's work (Hochschild 2012 [1983], p. 7). While I contend that emotional labour enabled me to realise various objectives, there were sometimes consequences to doing such work. My repeated exposure to emotional labour promoted physical and emotional fatigue and an involuntary unwillingness to perform further fieldwork. These experiences are very much in keeping with

Hochschild's (2012 [1983]) concept of *human costs* which suggests that repeated emotional labour may lead to significant psychological costs such as burnout, guilt, and self-blame.

On deeper inspection I would also argue that my sense of self was strongly influenced and impacted by the messages and perceptions that my supervisors mirrored back to me. In many respects, this is in line with the experiences of my research participants who also verified their identities against the views of significant others. My PhD experiences, then, could also be fruitfully explained by *identity theory* (see chapter 5, section 5.7.). When considered in light of this theorising, I would argue that I verified my PhD identity through *reflected appraisals* (Burke & Harrod, 2005; Burke & Stets, 1999; Stets & Serpe, 2013). I certainly believe that I largely judged the success of my postgraduate student identity in relation to the feedback and comments my supervisors provided. Importantly, when these individuals communicated positive views, I would argue that *identity verification* existed and I experienced positive emotions (Stets & Serpe, 2013). However, when my supervisors communicated negative views, I would contend that *identity non-verification* occurred and I experienced negative emotions (Stets & Serpe, 2013).

I hope that my experiences add further value to a growing body of research which has recognised that research is an emotional endeavour for researchers (e.g. Bloor, Fincham & Sampson, 2010; Dickson-Swift et al., 2009; Emerald & Carpenter, 2015; Fitzpatrick & Olson, 2015; Hubbard et al., 2001; Lee & Lee, 2012; Lee-Treweek, 2000). For example, published accounts have documented not only that researchers may experience a full range of emotions, from sadness and frustration to joy and excitement, but also that they will also have to perform emotional labour to achieve sought-after goals, such as the establishment of a

strong rapport with participants (e.g. Dickson-Swift et al., 2009; Emerald & Carpenter, 2015; Fitzpatrick & Olson, 2015; Hubbard et al., 2001). Moreover, scholars have argued that repeated exposure to distress and ongoing emotional labour can result in researchers experiencing emotional exhaustion, vulnerability, a sense of powerlessness, and foregrounding (e.g., Carroll, 2013; Emerald & Carpenter, 2015; Fitzpatrick & Olson, 2015; Hubbard et al., 2001). Finally, I hope that these findings will make a contribution to the growing body of research (e.g. Cullen, Pearson, Saha & Spear, 1994; Guerin & Green, 2013; Hemer, 2012; Ives & Rowley, 2005; McAlpine & McKinnon, 2012; Morrison-Saunders et al., 2010) which endeavours to help students, and supervisors, to develop a more 'reality' grounded appreciation of the PhD process from the perspective of the PhD student. Such knowledge, for me at least, would seem critical if we are to help doctoral candidates to work successfully towards their goal of completing their programme of study.

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