THE UNIVERSITY OF HULL

An Autoethnographic Exploration Of The Working Practices Associated With Women's Football Performance Analysis

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Abstract

Background and Purpose

Recent research has shown sports coaching, and performance analysis in particular, to be a non-linear process characterised by complexity, ambiguity and negotiated interaction between athletes and practitioners (Jones & Thomas, 2015). While work has shed light on the performance analysis process itself, there have been recent calls to explore how performance analysts engage with, and navigate the social-political realities, that characterise organisational life in sport (Huggan, Nelson, & Potrac, 2015; Fairburn, 2016). This thesis aims to address this call by detailing my own experiences of working as a performance analyst in the context of elite women's football.

Method

Grounded in interpretivism, the study employs an autoethnographical approach (drawing on detailed diary entries) to detail the emotions, actions, and interactions that characterize PA practice. Authoethnographical vignettes are used to present a vivid portrayal "of the conduct of an event of everyday life" (Erickson, 1986, p. 149). Following Denison's (2016) criteria for quality narrative research, thick description is combined with rich theoretical analysis in order to explore the socio-political realities of PA practice.

Results and Discussion

Results reveal how I engaged in impression management (Goffman, 1959) and surface acting (Hochschild, 1983) in order to shape the head coach's perceptions of my competence as an analyst. My actions were also characterised by the use of 'feeling

rules' in an effort to regulate my emotions thereby ensuring that I did not offer any challenge to the coach's 'legitimised authority' (Cushion & Jones, 2006). The development of micro-political literacy was also evidenced by my ability to 'read' situations and create and maintain desired working conditions.

Conclusions

Findings cohere with recent research which has shown that PA practice is an inherently socio-political process and that analysts must learn how to navigate social networks in order to improve and maintain their standing in this sub-culture. In this incredibly competitive labour market – characterised by precarity and uncertainty (the hallmarks of neoliberal workplaces) – analysts use a host of strategies to manipulate impressions, manage emotions and build strong relationships with the stakeholders who wield the most power and have the greatest say over their destiny.

CONTENTS

1.0- Introduction

1.1- *Background*

24/06/2018- The First Day of Pre-Season

It's 9:45am and the first day of pre-season is upon me. I have a nervous excitement running through my body that I can't control, it must be giddiness for what lies ahead. Only one thing for it… a cup of tea and a generous portion of biscuits. I don't have to be at the training ground until midday but I'm ready. My new training kit is already on and I'm proudly wearing the badge of the club across my chest. This just feels right. I look the part, I feel fresh after a good break. I'm ready. Now it's time to relax, have my cuppa, catch up on the news. Minutes later my thoughts drift away from what i'm watching and hearing on the T.V… possibly because i've had enough of all this 'brexit' talk. My thoughts drift back to what is happening today, I've barely been in contact with the coaches except for the odd conversation here and there. I wonder if we've retained most of the squad from last year? I wonder if there are any new faces for me to get to know? I know subconsciously that I've already flipped back into work mode and I've still got a few hours until we actually start.

It's 11.30am, I'm now at the training ground, 30 minutes early. It's just like me to be in early, it sets a good example. If there are new players and staff I can create a good first impression and avoid awkward conversations before being introduced properly. This

reminds me a lot of my days as a professional player many moons ago, coming back from the summer break was like the first day of school, new uniform, new shoes, so much to tell everyone about what you've been up to, so much to catch up on with those around you, first chance to create the bonds that will last for the next 9 or 10 months. The weather is beautiful, the sun is really beaming, it must be pushing 25 degrees, this new black training kit isn't going to help me in these conditions. I walk onto the pitch to take it all in. Again, my mind races back to those days as a player. I recognise how lucky I was to have played at a professional level, yet these memories remain quite painful. What if I hadn't been injured? Where would I be now? Maybe it wasn't meant to be, I'm still proud of what I achieved and I'm proud of my new role in football. In reality though you don't grow up wanting to be an analyst, you grow up wanting to score winning goals, play for your country, the adulation of stepping on the pitch in front of thousands of people chanting your name. But this is still elite football and I've found my niche… Lee Wright, Performance Analyst.

1.2- *Academic Rationale*

Sports performance analysis technologies have grown in popularity in recent years (Nelson & Groom, 2012). As a result, Performance Analysts (P.A's) are now seen as a key component in the coaching process and in the sports science departments of elite sporting organisations (Huggan, Nelson & Potrac, 2015). P.A's use a variety of technologies to enhance athlete learning (Magill, Nelson, Jones & Potrac, 2017), develop training programmes (Bartlett, 2001), monitor athlete training load (Bartlett,

2001), inform team selection (Huggan, Nelson & Potrac, 2015), identify strengths and weaknesses of opposition for tactical use (O'Donoghue, 2010), aid with talent identification or scouting (Bennett, Maeyens & Fransen, 2018), and give real time statistics or feedback to coaches and athletes (James, 2006; Nelson & Groom, 2012).

Despite the developments in the use of performance analysis as a tool, there remains a paucity of literature addressing the role that PA's actually play in the coaching process. Previous literature regarding performance analysis has tended to focus upon the process by which analysts identify key performance indicators (Hughes & Bartlett, 2008) and develop athletes' physiological profiles (Reilly & Thomas, 1976; Eaves, Lamb & Hughes, 2008; Mohr, Krustrup & Bangsbo, 2002) amongst other things. These investigations have helped us gather a better understanding of the physical, technical and tactical demands placed upon athletes (Huggan, Nelson & Potrac, 2015). Despite this, calls have grown for a wider and better understanding of what working performance analysts actually do on a day-to-day basis (Nelson & Groom, 2012; Huggan, Nelson & Potrac, 2015) – in other words, the working realities of being a Performance Analyst (Huggan, Nelson & Potrac, 2015). Such a line of investigation would explore the socio-political demands of organisational life and how this influences their use of computer-based technologies (Magill et al., 2017). The call for such investigation comes from the practical and theoretical dissatisfaction surrounding the understanding of the working environments of PA's (Magill et al., 2017), and the effect the working environment has on the PA's work-life balance (Huggan, Nelson & Potrac, 2015).

Interpretivist and poststructural inspired investigations have responded to these calls (Purdy & Jones, 2011). They have, for example, focused upon the pedagogical use of PA technology and taken into account the contextual demands and expectations surrounding its use (Booroff, Nelson & Potrac, 2015). Similar investigations have focused on athletes' perceptions of the PA process and their experiences receiving feedback from coaches in particular (Nelson, Potrac & Groom, 2014; Williams & Manley, 2016). These investigations have provided further supporting evidence to the broader sports coaching literature. Sociologically-inspired coaching research has shed light on issues surrounding ambiguity and pathos (Jones & Wallace, 2005), the gaining of respect and trust (Potrac, Jones & Armour, 2002; Purdy, Potrac & Jones, 2008; Purdy, Potrac & Nelson, 2013), and how athlete's play an active role in resisting power (Purdy, Potrac & Jones, 2008; Purdy & Jones, 2011). This body of research has portrayed sports coaching as a constantly changing, power ridden and inherently social activity (Purdy, Potrac & Jones, 2008) and how this requires individuals to implement strategies to manipulate specific contexts within the coaching environment (Purdy & Jones, 2011; Thompson, Potrac & Jones, 2013).

While this research has contributed to our understanding of the social nature of coaching practice, there remains a paucity of research exploring how performance analysts learn to navigate their working environments including how they forge relationships with players and other stakeholders (Groom & Nelson, 2013; Nelson, Potrac & Groom, 2014). A number of researchers have argued that adopting an interpretivist approach would allow a greater understanding of the everyday realities of practice (Huggan, Nelson & Potrac, 2015). This paradigm is often used to explore how

people individually and collectively make sense of the social worlds in which they live (Nelson, Groom & Potrac, 2016). Such research could, for example, help us understand the emotions that are experienced by PA's in their day-to-day work (Huggan, Nelson & Potrac, 2015). It is argued that this could offer multi-layered insights into the dilemmas and vulnerabilities that working PA's face (Thompson, Potrac & Jones, 2013) and the micro-political and emotional challenges associated with PA practice (Huggan, Nelson & Potrac, 2015).

1.3- *Aims of the Study*

The aim of the study is to detail my own everyday experiences working as Head Analyst at a Semi-professional Football Club who play in the 3rd Tier of the F.A (Football Association) English Womens' Football pyramid. In particular, the study aims to shed light on how performance analysts engage with, and navigate the social-political realities, that characterise organisational life in sport. An additional goal was to explore the emotional nature of practice within these environments.

In order to accomplish this, I will present my findings in the form of autoethnographic vignettes that will aim to provide a vivid portrayal of my attempts to negotiate my working environment. The investigation will address the following topics and questions:

1) How did I experience my interactions with all involved with the club?

2) What issues arose in my working relationships? How did I solve/manage these issues?

3) How did I feel in these situations? Did I confront these emotions or hide them away? Did I learn from these experiences?

4) What contextual and situational factors did I perceive to impact on my actions, thoughts and understandings of the social and emotional nature of my practice?

2.0- Literature Review

2.1- Introduction

The primary aim of this chapter is to provide a critical review of research that has explored the use of performance analysis in elite sports coaching contexts. The section starts by contextualising the current study by providing a brief overview of the coaching process. It then marshals a body of literature that has presented sports coaching as a social, political and emotional activity. The next section provides a review of performance analysis research that has been conducted from a number of paradigmatic perspectives including positivism, poststructuralism and interpretivism. The latter paradigm is of particular relevance to the current study given that interpretivists have sought to shed light on the socio-political realities that characterise organisational life working in sport. Finally, the chapter will conclude by providing a summary of research findings and provide a rationale for the current study.

2.2- Review Of Sports Coaching and Performance Analysis Literature

2.2.1- The Coaching Process

Increased attention has been devoted to sports coaching, and the coaching process in particular, as the discipline has become more professional over time (Groom, Cushion & Nelson, 2012). This increase in professionalism has been accompanied by

the expectation that coaches should be able to develop every minute area of an athletes arsenal of tools (Fairbairn, 2017). As such, sports coaches are no longer simply 'the person with the whistle' (Huggan, Nelson & Potrac, 2015) but are instead characterised as practitioners involved in a multi-disciplinary practice involving a coterie of specialists including performance analysts (Mills, 2015). These areas of sports coaching and athletic development (such as performance analysis and strength and conditioning) have only started to attract the attention of researchers in the last 10 to 15 years. As such, relatively little is known about what these specialised coaching roles actually involve, how these practitioners go about their work, and the results of such work (Nelson, Potrac & Groom, 2014). Despite this, it is also worth noting that sports coaching research has increased in volume in recent years and has begun to shed light on the complex, ambiguous and social nature of this practice. This review starts by considering how researchers have to come to understand what is known as the coaching process.

The coaching process can be defined as the direct, indirect, purposeful, formal and informal series of activities which enable competitive performance improvements and advances in learning and understanding (Lyle, 2018). Investigations on this topic have aimed to develop ideological representations of the coaching process and its use in the sports coaching field (Cote, Samela & Russell, 1995; Lyle, 1996). These investigations have predominantly utilised positivist, quantitative methodologies to provide objective representations of the coaching process and of the behaviours used within it. However, a number of researchers have argued that this approach fails to shed light on the socio-cultural factors that have such a profound influence on coaching

practice (e.g., Cushion, Armour & Jones, 2006). Presenting the coaching process in such an unproblematic fashion fails to consider how embodied experiences, feelings and emotions shape coaching practice and coach-athlete interactions (Jones & Armour, 2000; Potrac & Jones, 2009b). As a result, an expansion of the traditional inquiries into the 'who' of coaching, rather than just the 'how' and 'what' of coaching, has been called for (Jones, Armour & Potrac, 2004; Jones, 2006).

As such, calls have been made to adopt an ideographic approach which would allow researchers to develop an understanding of the social world of sports coaches through the collection of first-hand knowledge/subjective experience (Potrac, Jones & Armour, 2002; Jones, Armour & Potrac, 2004). It has been argued that assuming a sociological perspective within sports coaching would encourage researchers to look beyond the parameters of simple physical performance issues and to understand how coaching practice is "linked to a wide range of significant others (such as athletes, managers, and colleagues) in a particular social and cultural context" (Potrac, Jones, & Armour, 2002, p. 184). This approach is vital in understanding the negotiated nature of coaching practice (Potrac & Jones, 2009a). In doing so, a greater understanding of the dynamic and complex coaching environment may be produced (Cassidy, Jones & Potrac, 2009).

2.2.2- Understanding the Social Complexities of Coaching Practice

Researchers have recently sought to develop our understanding of the social complexities of both professional practice and the nature of coach-athlete relationships

within a variety of sporting contexts (Cushion & Jones, 2014; Mills, 2015). Qualitative methodologies such as autoethnography and ethnography have proven to be illuminative when researching topics such as power, impression management, trust, respect and the ambiguities that exist within everyday coaching. This has led to the development of a greater understanding of how coaching practitioners manipulate and deal with varying issues that exist within their personal coaching context (Jones, Armour & Potrac, 2002).

Let us briefly consider how ethnographical approaches have shed light on the complex nature of coaching practice. This methodology involves the researcher participating in peoples' lives, either overtly or covertly, for an extended period of time (Wax, 1971). In doing so, they watch, listen, and record social interactions and behaviours in order to provide rich and holistic insights into people's perceptions and actions as well as the nature of the location they inhabit (Sparkes & Smith, 2013). In the sporting domain, this methodology has been used by researchers such as Cushion and Jones (2006) who conducted a ten-month analysis (using observations and interview data) of the triangular interaction between coach, athlete, and context in a Premier League Academy. Their findings revealed the effect that the external pressures of results, player development and continued employment had on the coach's behaviour. The coach's used what the authors referred to as "symbolic violence" as a means of ensuring the athletes remained obedient (Cushion & Jones, 2006). The players were found to accept these behaviours as they realised these coaches were the gatekeepers to their success within the game.

Purdy, Jones and Cassidy (2009) used the same methodological approach to examine how power was acquired and used by athletes in an elite rowing environment. The investigation focused upon an athlete's perception of their coaches' behaviours. Purdy, Jones and Cassidy (2009) utilised in-depth interviews and field notes to gather data and analysed the findings using Bourdieu's notion of capital (1977, 1989, 2004). Findings revealed how various aspects of capital were used by the rower to get him into the squad and how the coach used authoritarian practices when he perceived his power as being under threat. The findings point to the transient and dialectical nature of power.

Building on their previous work, Cushion and Jones (2014) conducted a season long ethnography at an elite football academy. Findings suggested that coaches' saw integration of habitus and field (Bourdieu, 1977) that is associated with a professional footballer to be integral in succeeding in the job role. In this respect, the athletes are covertly taught the technical, tactical and physical demands of becoming a good footballer. The athletes are expected to take on this information through the production, and subsequent re-production, of 'normal' actions or social legitimacy (Cushion & Jones, 2014). In behaving in this manner, the coaches created an environment where the social actions espoused became embodied by the athletes as a means of pursuing their own goals of 'making it' as a professional (Cushion & Jones, 2014). The authors concluded that this form of compliance merely legitimises the use of authoritarian behaviours. In this respect the culture had been created for the coaches to retain control over the environment rather than to prepare the players for the reality of the professional game (Cushion & Jones, 2014).

Autoethnographic research has also furthered our understanding of coaching

practice – including how coaching identities are constructed (Sparkes, 2002), the complexity of coach-athlete relationships (Purdy, Potrac & Jones, 2008), and coaching behaviour in general (Jones, 2006). This form of writing aims to systematically analyse an individual's experiences (see methodology for more detailed coverage). Jones (2009) argued that autoethnographic texts can be used to document the social, ethical and ambiguous nature of coaching practice (Jones, 2009). Take, for example, Jones (2009) paper which presents, in narrative form, his thoughts and feelings about an interaction he had with a young footballer a number of years previously. In previous work, Jones (2006) documented his thoughts and feelings before, at half time, and following one particular match. Jones' legitimised his cognitions and emotions based on the contextual pressure he felt to get the desired result. In attempting to portray himself as upbeat, focussed, and confident, the coach was putting on a 'front' (Goffman, 1959) which contradicted his real feelings (Jones, 2006). The coach recalled feeling vulnerable that the 'front' he had put on would be seen through by the athletes under his charge. Jones (2006) interpreted these experiences through the framework presented by Goffman (1959, 1969), concluding that like other research (e.g., Potrac, Jones & Armour, 2002; Jones, Armour & Potrac, 2002), maintaining a desired image whilst managing athletes' impressions were considered important to personal coaching success. Jones (2006) also concluded that by presenting a competent 'front' he was trying to gain and maintain a level of respect. Jones (2006) suggested that using Goffman (1959, 1969) as an interpretive lens showcased how constant uncertainty characterises much of coaching practice.

Building upon the work of Jones (2006), Purdy, Potrac and Jones (2008) used a similar methodological approach when investigating power, consent and resistance in the context of semi-professional rowing. The narrative details an athlete's feelings, thoughts and actions in response to working with a new coach. Within this investigation the authors drew upon notions of power, agency and dialectical control (Giddens, 1984), and the concept of power over power (Nyberg, 1981). The first narrative explains the athlete's initial excitement at the appointment of the coach. These feelings were largely influenced by the athletes need for more professional training, something that the new coach wanted to implement (Purdy, Potrac & Jones, 2008). The athlete suggested that the coaches practices provided her with a sense of comfort and security, therefore developing ontological security (Giddens, 1977), or a sense of trust (Purdy, Potrac & Jones, 2008). However, the relationship eventually broke down due to the autocratic behaviours and condescending remarks used by the coach. Here, the athletes were found to use derogatory remarks about the coach as a means of regaining power.

Together, the preceding body of research has shown that the coaching process is a social activity and that coaching practice is subject to the various societal and social structures within which it operates (Jones, Armour, & Potrac, 2002). Coaches are social beings operating within a social environment and, as such, it may come as little surprise that their interpersonal relationships are fraught with the same tensions that characterise social interaction in other spheres of life. These interpersonal tensions mean that coaching is inevitably a power-ridden pursuit where practitioners' management of micro-relations with a wide variety of stakeholders forms the main aspect of their duties

(Potrac & Jones, 2009a). It is to the means by which coaches manage these tensions that I now turn my attention.

2.2.3- Coaching as a Micro-Political Process

Potrac and Jones' (2009a) work has been highly influential in drawing attention to the contested and negotiated nature of coaching practice and the micro-political strategies used by coaches to protect and enhance their position. Potrac and Jones (2009b) responded to their own call to explore micro-politics in sports coaching. The work explored a semi-professional football coaching environment where the coach employed micro-political strategies to persuade the chairman, assistant coach and players to buy into his philosophy on how football should be coached. The specific strategies aimed at persuading the players to buy into him as a coach were interpreted using the frameworks of micro-political literacy (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002a, 2002b), micro-political perspective (Payne & Ball, 1988) and the presentation of the self (Goffman, 1959). It was reported that the coach, Gavin (a pseudonym), understood the need to recognise, and be sensitive to, the different coaching ideas and expectations of his colleagues (Potrac & Jones, 2009b). The coach also reported the need to maintain a coaching 'front' that was professional (Goffman, 1959). The coach did this by avoiding potentially harmful interactions, manipulating situations to promote his own agenda, and engineering training sessions to highlight the weaknesses of high-profile players who questioned or rebelled against him. Potrac and Jones (2009b) concluded

that the process of gaining support from contextual stakeholders is forged and re-forged, which eventually leads to the achievement of contextual goals.

In a more recent study, Potrac and colleagues (2013) drew attention to the contested and negotiated reality of working within a professional football coaching context. The lead author's experiences of coaching at the elite level of football highlighted the various vested interests that drove coaching behaviour (Potrac et al., 2013). Here, the autoethnographic narrative allowed the lead author to discuss how he was undermined by colleagues before detailing his own shame, guilt and regret that he had due to acting in a similar manner to further his own agenda (Potrac et al., 2013). The narrative highlighted the competitive and calculating behaviour which coaches can engage in when attempting to upstage their counterparts. These findings shed light on the darker everyday strategies and manipulatory actions that can arise in these contexts (Potrac et al., 2013).

Thompson, Potrac and Jones (2013) further explored the micro-political landscape and working practices within professional football. The narrative detailed Adam's (a pseudonym) understanding of the complexities, ambiguities and the micro-political nature of his social interactions with key stakeholders at one professional football club whilst working as an assistant coach. The coaching environment was seen as an arena of struggle that was characterised by potential and actual conflicts (Ball, 1987). It was also reported that Adam was willing to subscribe to the shared goals of the organisation which focussed around developing players (Thompson, Potrac & Jones, 2013). Adam's practice was initially characterised by a certain degree of naivety. That is, he was unaware of the extent to which the other coaches acted to reinforce or

advance their own positions (Thompson, Potrac & Jones, 2013). For Adam, this experience revealed other coaches' propensity to ignore and sabotage as they deemed necessary, in order to further themselves and their agendas (Thompson, Potrac & Jones, 2013). These findings were further developed alongside the work of Goffman (1959). In this respect, Adam's initial choice to engage with his colleagues in a confident and professional manner led to inter-personal tensions (Thompson, Potrac & Jones, 2013). In doing so Adam failed to observe the rituals of deference (respect for others) and demeanour (respect for role) which was required to maintain the order of interaction (Goffman, 1967; 1963). This point was further developed to suggest that first impressions are significant in creating good relationships (Goffman, 1959; 1969).

2.2.4- The Emotional Nature of Coaching

The studies outlined in the preceding section have provided valuable insights into the strategic actions coaches use to persuade, entice and manipulate others to buy into their personal and philosophical agendas (Cushion & Jones, 2006; Potrac & Jones, 2009b; Thompson, Potrac & Jones, 2013). While coaching has been found to be a political process (Thompson, Potrac & Jones, 2013), it has also been characterised as deeply emotional in nature (see Potrac & Marshall, 2011). And yet, there is a surprising paucity of research on emotions in sports coaching. In fact, Potrac, Jones, Gilbourne, and Nelson (2013) argued that previous research has tended to portray coaches as dispassionate and rational beings, almost entirely devoid of emotionality. This seems to

represent an important oversight given that coaches undoubtedly experience a variety of strong emotions as they negotiate the challenges and opportunities of dynamic sporting contexts (Potrac & Marshall, 2011). Coaching involves "intensive personal interactions and an investment of the self in practice" (Potrac & Marshall, 2011, p. 62) and, as such, it is unlikely that coaches can separate "feeling from perception" and "affectivity from judgement". A coach's decision-making process, then, is invariably shaped by the particular emotions they experience in a given context.

In one of the first studies to explore the emotional nature of coaching practice, Potrac and Marshall (2011) drew upon autoethnographical data to examine how coaches experience different emotions as they work in a dynamic coaching environment. Hochschild's (1983) concepts of emotional management, surface and deep acting, feeling rules, and emotional labour were used to make sense of the autoethnographic findings. Potrac and Marshall (2011) suggested that the coach aimed to manage his feelings so that he could create a facial and bodily display that was observable to the athletes (Hochschild, 1983). In this case the coach developed an understanding of which emotions it was okay to display and to what degree it was okay to be emotional in the first place (Hochschild, 1983).

Following on from the work of Potrac and Marshall (2011), Nelson et al. (2013) explored the relationship between emotion, cognition and behaviour within sports coaching. Through six semi-structured interviews a narrative account was created based upon the emotional experiences of the coach under investigation (Nelson et al., 2013). Nelson et al. (2013) utilised three main concepts to make sense of the findings. The concepts of cognitive appraisal (Folkman & Lazarus, 1988), emotional understanding

(Denzin, 1989) and emotional labour (Hochschild, 1979; Hochschild, 1983) provided an insight into how coach's efforts at the club could be seen to be an inherently emotional activity (Nelson et al., 2013). The findings revealed how the coach often suppressed his true feelings depending on the 'audience' but also how his previous experiences as a player helped him to empathise with the thoughts and feelings of those currently under his charge. These findings suggest that a degree of emotional stamina is required if coaches are to cope with the conflict, ambiguity and vulnerability that underpins much of their practice.

2.2.5- Performance Analysis in Sports Coaching – Positivist Research

We have devoted some attention to considering the emotional and micro-political nature of coaching but let us now explore the performance analysis process itself in a little more detail. The use of performance analysis within the coaching process to enhance augmented feedback is becoming increasingly widespread across sport. Indeed, it is now seen as central to coaching as it allows coaches to evaluate performance, identify problems and give corrective feedback to athletes. The use of PA is particularly prevalent in professional football where it has become a key component of athlete development, the accrual of technical and tactical knowledge, scouting, and talent identification (Booroff, Potrac, & Jones, 2016). The relative ubiquity of this form of analysis has prompted researchers to explore what the analysis process typically entails and how this information is used in coaching practice.

Research on the performance analysis process has typically utilised empirical investigations grounded in positivism (O'Donoghue, 2010). The aim of positivist research is to find a single reality or truth, which is objective and external to the singular person's mind (Sparkes, 1992). The truth, or reality, consists of objects or events that are stable and exist independently from people's interpretations of them (Denzin & Lincoln, 1995). From a methodological perspective, positivist researchers implement controlled data collection and the testing of hypotheses using statistical analysis in order to identify a singular truth - all the while remaining objective of the subject matter (Sparkes, 1992). As such, positivist researchers aim to establish direction and causality between variables (Sparkes, 1992). The primary aim of this positivist-inspired research was the analysis of performance patterns (Hughes & Franks, 2005; Jones, James, & Mellalieu, 2008), the identification of key performance indicators (Hughes & Bartlett, 2002; Jones, Mellalieu, & James, 2004; Jones, James, & Mellalieu, 2008), the development of physiological work rate profiles (Reilly & Thomas, 1976; Carling et al., 2008; Bangsbo, 1994), and the impact of rule changes on the playing patterns of a game (Eaves & Hughes, 2003; Eaves, Lamb, & Hughes, 2008).

Early work in this field predominantly focused on the analysis and identification of performance patterns. For example, Reep and Benjamin (1968) identified that 80% of goals scored in football matches came in under four passes. Here, analysis came in the form of notated passing data which was used to produce averages that explored specific patterns of play. Bate (1998) utilised the same form of analysis to identify goal scoring patterns from the 1982 FIFA World Cup. Similar to Reep and Benjamin's (1968) findings, Bate (1998) found that 94% of goals were scored in under four passes.

Neverthless, Bate (1998) concluded that adopting a possession first based style of football and a high pressing defensive game may be more effective in creating extra goal scoring opportunities. Building on this early work, sports performance researchers have begun to identify Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) that are important in determining the quality and quantity of athletic performance (Hughes & Bartlett, 2002). Take, for example, Hughes et al.'s (2012) work which revealed that KPI's are consistent across playing positions in football.

In addition to identifying key tactical and technical KPI's researchers have also used performance analysis to better understand athletes' physiological work rate profiles (Reilly & Thomas, 1976). Early exploration in this area was conducted by Reilly and Thomas (1976), where frame-by-frame video analysis was utilised to classify the in-game movements of football players. This was done alongside scaled game mapping, notational analysis and audio tape recordings (Reilly & Thomas, 1976). Using this approach allowed these researchers to develop profiles for individual playing positions that included the distance covered and what playing position involved the most "work" (Reilly & Thomas, 1976). Further study in this field has focused upon the importance of the energy systems used by football players in competitive games (Bangsbo, 1994) and an assessment of the relationship between physical fitness, match performance and development of fatigue over the course of a season (Mohr, Krustrup & Bangsbo, 2002). These studies have been hugely influential in informing training patterns and in the setting of physiological benchmarks that are required to play elite football (Bangsbo, 1994; Padron-Cabo, Rey, Vidal & Garcia-Nunez, 2018).

2.2.6- Performance Analysis in Sports Coaching – Post-Structuralist Perspectives

Whilst the preceding body of research has contributed to our understanding of what PA involves, and how coaches use PA to achieve specific goals, it has tended to portray performance analysis as a relatively linear and unproblematic process. This work has focused largely on how PA is used to provide athletes with technical or tactical information and to diagnose issues or problems (Taylor et al., 2015). But, as noted above, such an approach fails to acknowledge the social, political and emotional factors that shape practice in coaching contexts. It is also, by its very nature, a deeply reductionistic approach. Post-structuralists have sought to rectify this issue by challenging and problematising many of the taken-for-granted practices and modes of thinking that characterise traditional sports coaching practice. Adopting a post-structuralist stance means that one holds power as productive and relational (Markula & Silk, 2011). In doing so, one questions the 'dominant truths' that surround practice within a particular culture or sub-culture. To illustrate, this paradigmatic stance has recently been used to explore athlete's experiences of receiving performance analysis (Jones et al. 2016; Jones, 2019; Taylor et al., 2015; Williams & Manley, 2016). Specifically, these studies have questioned the received wisdom that the use of surveillance technology will automatically contribute to an improvement in athlete learning and performance.

For example, Taylor et al. (2015) investigated an international level hockey goalkeeper's experiences of receiving video-based feedback. Three main factors appear to have influenced the goalkeeper's perceptions about this process. The first related to

the goalkeeper's feelings about being filmed. Negative thoughts such as constant scrutiny, jealousy, the immediacy of other players' feedback, fear of experimentation with new techniques, and the need to externalise their thoughts were mentioned by the participant (Taylor et al., 2015). The second issue related to the vulnerability that the goalkeeper felt when receiving individual feedback from the head coach. He noted that he felt more secure and at ease when the goalkeeper coach was present. The final issue related to group feedback sessions. The goalkeeper felt anxious that personal mistakes would be highlighted in front of teammates and that they were unable to challenge the coaches in terms of what aspects of performance were focused on. Taylor et al. (2015) suggest that the coach had utilised the video technology as a form of surveillance to govern the actions of the athletes, which led to the goalkeeper becoming a docile body (Foucault, 1977).

In another study exploring the use of technology as a disciplinary tool, Williams and Manley (2016) investigated how coaches use GPS to govern players' actions. The work consisted of interviews with differing levels of rugby union players, from internationals to recent academy graduates. One of the key findings was the extent to which key performance indicators were used to judge athletic performance. Here the players revealed that they felt objectified and viewed as mere mechanisms. The authors suggest that the coaches' 'machine-like' mentality created a totalitarian regime where players were judged against arbitrary and ill-defined performance indicators (Williams & Manley, 2015).

Jones et al (2016) drew upon Foucault's disciplinary analysis to critique the use of GPS technology in elite Rugby League. The authors interviewed performance

analysts and strength and conditioning coaches working in this setting about how GPS data was used to inform the head coach's decision-making process. The findings revealed that although there were occasions when the data was used to protect the health and wellbeing of the players, the data was often ignored by coaches even when it suggested that further increases in training load were likely to significantly increase the players' chances of injury. The use of GPS technology in this case is merely tokenistic – an attempt on the organisation's behalf to appear contemporary and innovative when, in fact, they have little intention of breaking away from traditional practices. Jones et al.'s (2016) findings also revealed that GPS data was used to coerce players to perform a designated function. This often meant sidelining certain players because they hadn't met some arbitrary measures (e.g., total running distance) of performance proficiency. These findings reveal how the data generated by GPS devices are often used to impose disciplinary power upon elite athletes.

Similar findings emerged in Jones, Nelson, Groom, Taylor and Potrac's (2019) study in which GPS data was used by football coaches to ensure that their players were working hard or "pulling their weight". In a related study, Jones (2019) explored young footballers experiences of being subject to GPS analysis. The athletes noted that wearing these devices was just part of their daily routines and that they had become accustomed to seeing their results (e.g., distance covered) placed in the dressing room. Indeed, it was common practice for their performance data to be depicted in a leaderboard style display. The athletes also revealed how GPS data was used in the de-selection process and could be used to justify one's removal from the team. This form of surveillance promoted a cultural hierarchy based upon performance data which enabled

the coaching staff to classify the individuals according to performance indicators and a set of normalised expectations (Jones, 2019).

2.2.7- Performance Analysis in Sports Coaching – Interpretivist Perspectives

Whilst post-structuralists have sought to interrogate the 'dominant truths' that surround the use of performance analysis in elite sports settings, another group of researchers have adopted an interpretivist stance to challenge rationalistic conceptualisations of coaching that have dominated the field of enquiry. Coaching scholars have argued that an interpretive perspective provides a valuable lens for gaining rich insights into 'the often chaotic, complex, ambiguous and negotiated working lives of coaches and athletes' (Potrac & Jones, 2009a). Studies conducted from this perspective focus on the interests, motives and meanings people attach to their behaviours (Nelson, Potrac & Groom, 2014). In an attempt to understand the experiences of athletes, coaches and performance analysts Groom, Cushion and Nelson (2011, 2012) explored how analysts delivered feedback sessions. The authors suggested that delivery of video analysis was framed by contextual factors such as social environment, philosophy, session design, the athletes involved, and the delivery process (Groom, Cushion & Nelson, 2011). Groom, Cushion and Nelson's (2011) initial study aimed to find the grounded techniques used by coaches and analysts to enhance athletic performance to teams and players. The authors found that performance analysis delivery is based upon a number of key themes including contextual factors, delivery methods and targeted outcomes. This suggests that the analysis process is cyclical where design,

format, approach and outcome are connected by the means of the analysis process (Groom, Cushion & Nelson, 2011).

Groom, Cushion and Nelson (2012) examined the behaviours of one coach working at an elite football academy. Analysis of coach-athlete interactions during video-based feedback sessions revealed an asymmetrical power relationship. That is, the coach exercised control through the sequential organisation of sessions, controlling the topic of discussion, and using questions to select the speakers who would reinforce his interactional goals. The study also found that athletes accepted this form of feedback which maintained the existing power-relations between coach and his players (Groom, Cushion & Nelson, 2012). Here, the perceived power of the coach restricts athlete interaction which is likely to have a number of unintended consequences including a loss of respect or athlete resistance.

More recently, Nelson, Potrac and Groom (2014) explored how athletes respond to video analysis sessions. Based around an ice hockey player's experiences of video analysis, the authors found that the athlete afforded coaches differing levels of respect based upon how they prepared for the session and how they presented data and answered questions within the analysis process. The authors found that the respect afforded to the coaches was fluid and changed depending on the quality of the analysis that was presented to them on a week-by-week basis (Nelson, Potrac & Groom, 2014). It would seem that performance analysts must learn how to convey a front that creates the impression that one is approachable and caring on the one hand, but professional, rigorous and exacting on the other (Nelson, Potrac & Groom, 2014). Professional traits such as preparation, delivery, feedback and philosophy are key to both coaches and

athletes in obtaining respect from each party (Groom, Cushion & Nelson, 2012; Nelson, Potrac & Groom, 2014).

Magill, Nelson, Jones and Potrac (2017) built on the preceding work by exploring female footballers' experiences of being subjected to the analysis process. Their findings highlighted the emotional, embodied, and relational features of video-based feedback. Utilising Burkitt's theories on emotions (2014) and social relations (1999) the authors found that athletes engage in a process of emotional management based around three key factors. Firstly, the perception of their identity as professional footballers (Burkitt, 1999). Secondly, the beliefs of the individuals about the precarious nature of their employment within the world of professional football. And thirdly, the self-understanding of the dominant discourses related to the emotions they feel they should convey or hold back. The study also found that athletes' emotions range from positive (pride) to negative (anger, anxiety and guilt) based upon the social and contextual factors related with participating in the analysis feedback process.

2.2.8- Exploring the working practices of Performance Analysts

In the following section I will review findings from a number of influential studies that have investigated the wider contextual use, delivery and practices of performance analysts. These studies have contributed to a greater understanding of the challenges faced by performance analysts, including the social realities, the mis-conceptions surrounding the role, and the emotional issues that characterise practice in

this field. Huggan, Nelson and Potrac's (2015) study documented the experiences of a neophyte performance analyst trying to establish himself in the field. The analyst, Ben (Pseudonym), understood that head coaches and managers would be the ultimate judges of the work he produced and the time, resources, or space afforded to him within the coaching context (Huggan, Nelson & Potrac, 2015). Ben understood that developing his own professional self-understanding (Kelchtermans & Ballett, 2002a, 2002b) of his place in the club environment would benefit him in the long-run. Here the Authors noted that Ben tried to protect his own professional integrity through a variety of actions (such as trying to convince players that data was useful and impressing key contextual stakeholders to maintain and advance his position).

In the exploration of Ben's practices, the authors also concluded that the investment of time into creating positive working relationships with stakeholders and players led to the development of a socially recognisable identity (Huggan, Nelson & Potrac, 2015). Ben used this as a way to appear as a professional performance analyst, in part to secure advancement in his position and social standing in the working context (Huggan, Nelson & Potrac, 2015). Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002b) noted that this form of identity management is a highly valued working condition to the individual. Despite this, the management of the identity became more important to Ben than the actual sum of his work as a performance analyst in some of the experiences (Huggan, Nelson & Potrac, 2015).

Booroff, Nelson and Potrac (2016) explored how the head coach (Terry) of an academy football team used video analysis to inform his decision making. Results revealed that video analysis was often used to fulfil the coach's own objectives and the

outcomes expected of him within the club environment. Terry perceived that his main use for performance analysis was to facilitate youth players' transition to the professional team and to prepare them for the demands of elite-level football environments. Finally, Terry explained that he also used data garnered from the video analysis process to justify the club's decision to de-select or release players from the club. This form of professional self-understanding (Kelchtermans, 2002a; 2002b) was key in rationalising Terry's use of performance analysis processes and techniques.

Building on the work of Huggan, Nelson and Potrac (2015), Fairbairn (2016) explored the reality of working as a performance analyst at a professional Rugby League club over a period of two seasons. Craig (main character and first author) used autoethnography to document the day-to-day challenges of combining working life in professional sport with postgraduate study. This exploration focussed on the multiple identities associated with working in professional sport. One might argue that such an approach provides a more realistic depiction of how practitioners must negotiate the competing demands of work life, home life, social life and student life (Fairbairn, 2016). For Fairbairn (2016), working life was characterised by constant efforts to be accepted by coaches, athletes and stakeholders (Huggan, Nelson & Potrac, 2015). This led to Craig fully embracing his professional self (Goffmann, 1959) and role understanding (Kelchtermans & Ballett, 2002a; 2002b). Despite this, Craig also had to deal with the issues surrounding conflicting interests from others involved in the club. This was shown through experiences where Craig had to deal with other staff members whose primary goal was to advance their own agenda. This experience gave Craig micro-political perspective and a reality from the coaching context. From this Fairbairn

(2016) explained the need for an analyst to learn how to position themselves so that they avoid potentially detrimental experiences and how to implement strategies to further one's own position.

2.3- Review Conclusion and Research Problem

Within this chapter, I have reviewed a body of work which has recognised coaching, and performance analysis in particular, as a non-linear process characterised by complexity, ambiguity and negotiated interaction between athletes and practitioners (Jones & Thomas, 2015). Despite this, there has been a number of calls for researchers to conduct investigations that might better understand the realities of working as a performance analyst in a sporting context (Huggan, Nelson & Potrac, 2015; Fairbairn, 2016). In response to this call, the current study builds on the work of Huggan, Nelson and Potrac (2015) and Fairbairn (2016) to explore how performance analysts engage with, and navigate the social-political realities, that characterise organisational life in sport. Where Fairbairn (2016) based his study around the sport of rugby league and Huggan, Nelson and Potrac (2015) based theirs upon working in male professional football, I will base mine in the little-explored sporting context of elite women's football. It's likely that practice in this organisational context will be subject to a host of constraints (e.g., limited budgets, small coaching teams leading to role-crossover or ambiguity, organisational constraints) that don't exist in elite male football. The current investigation will shed further light on the realities of working within a small coaching

team including the socio-political realities that characterise working life in these environments.

3.0- Methodology

3.1- Introduction

One of the primary aims of this chapter is to provide a rationale for why I chose to use an interpretive and interactional approach to investigate the everyday experiences of working as a performance analyst in football. The chapter proceeds as follows. *Firstly*, I will explore the philosophical and theoretical beliefs that underpin the use of interpretive and interactional frameworks (Denzin, 2010). These forms of investigations seek to understand and interpret the phenomena of lived experiences that are constructed, de-constructed and documented by the subject and/or the author (Thompson, Potrac & Jones, 2013). *Secondly*, I will consider how autoethnographical writing has been used as a form of exploration within sports coaching and performance analysis research (Ellis & Bochner, 2006). Here I will provide a rationale for the use of autoethnography as a tool to promote critical reflection. I will also explain the need for autoethnographers to be able to reflect on the stories they write to enhance our theoretical understanding of the events that occur in the narratives that are presented. *Thirdly*, I will detail how I constructed the autoethnography in this thesis, expanding on my use of reflective practices to interrogate/make sense of my experiences as a performance analyst. I provide a rationale as to why I used certain reflective techniques such as keeping a reflective journal and why this was important in helping to make sense of my experiences. I also detail why I chose to present my experiences in the form

of a series of authethnographical vignettes (Humphries, 2005). I will conclude the chapter by providing the reader with criteria that may be used to critique and evaluate the quality of the results within this piece of research.

3.1.1- Details of the Study

The current study was granted ethical approval by the University of Hull Faculty of Health Sciences Ethics Committee. The study is self-reflective and focusses upon my own experiences working at an elite women's football club as a performance analyst throughout the 2018-2019 season. The results will be presented in the form of vignettes that will detail my experiences working at the football club. These experiences were then shared with Dr. John Toner (The University of Hull) and Dr. Luke Jones (The University of Hull) who helped me to identify the theoretical frameworks that might be used to interpret my experiences.

3.1.2- The Participant

At the age of eight I was selected to the academy of the local professional football club and remained there until the age of Sixteen. At this point, I had interest from other clubs around the country but decided to stay with the club and signed a two year deal on paid terms. My time as a young professional was enjoyable but undermined by a series of unfortunate injuries. A broken leg suffered late on in my second season at the club would keep me out of playing for six months. This ordeal came at a time when

my focus should have been on trying to perform well enough to receive a new contract from the club or at least putting myself in the shop window for other clubs.

At the age of Nineteen I was done, unable to play at the standard needed due the toll injuries began taking on my body. My overriding memories of this period are of feeling slow and being unable to get around the pitch as I once had done. Couple this with the extra days of rest compared to my peers and the restricted management of training. Deep down I knew my days as a professional footballer were coming to an end. The club decided that it was best for both myself and them to part ways, a move that I understood completely. We both knew full well that the injury was never going to allow me to fulfil my potential.

I left the club at the end of my contract, deciding to take time away from Football. In this period of my life I spent a lot of time trying to explore other interests such as travel and music. I coached children's football and also helped coach a Sunday football men's team in my spare time so I never truly left the sport behind. I worked meaningless jobs on basic money just trying to save up enough to enjoy an extended travel foray to the Americas and later across Europe. I went to festivals and gigs with friends. I got up in front of audiences with my guitar for the first time since I left school, performing solo and in bands. I see this period as my gap years, despite going against the grain and doing this before University. This period could not last forever though. I had always planned to go to University and knew I wanted to do something related to sport, I saw all the years having played in elite and professional sport as an advantage. I was extremely happy when I realised I could stay in Hull to study Sports Coaching and Performance Science. Having spent extended periods of time travelling the world, home

had a nice feel to it and having the course on my doorstep was perfect for me at this time.

So, after a few years away from the game, I started my undergraduate degree in sports coaching and performance science at the University of Hull, eventually gaining a first-class degree (with honours), a feat I am ultimately proud of. Throughout the course I was exposed to modules related to differing aspects of professional sport. Performance analysis really appealed to me, I realised I could use my previous experiences and knowledge to great effect. During this time I started a performance analysis placement at the same club that I worked at over the course of my MSc. My work at the club saw me win the club person of the year award at the annual end of the season awards night. On the pitch the team got promoted too, further justification (I felt) of the quality of the work I was doing.

3.2- Interpretive and Interactional perspective: Philosophical and Theoretical Beliefs

This section aims to situate the thesis within the wider debate regarding the philosophy of science. Presented here is a discussion of the research paradigm utilised within the current investigation. This section will also provide a brief discussion on some key concepts within the paradigm debate and summarise the developments that have taken place. Finally, this section will end with a rationale of how these developments have influenced the current investigation.

Scientific inquiry requires the investigator to position themselves in a process of engagement with the subject matter (Morgan, 1983; Sparkes, 1992), by interacting and

challenging through a reference point which, according to Sparkes (1992), involves the use of a particular set of lenses which are used to make sense of the world. This notion relates to the different research paradigms, each of which are grounded in a set of generically accepted positions such as ontology, epistemology and methodology (Mallett & Tinning, 2014).

The majority of sports performance analysis investigations have been underpinned by positivist approaches (e.g., Carling, Nelson, Bloomfield & Reilly, 2008; Hughes & Bartlett, 2002; Reep & Benjamin, 1968;). More recently, a number of qualitative researchers interested in the performance analysis process have grounded their approaches in interpretivism (e.g., Booroff, Nelson & Potrac, 2015; Huggan, Nelson & Potrac, 2015) or post-structuralism (Williams & Manley, 2016). While these approaches share the same aims (i.e., wanting to improve knowledge of the subject) they differ in terms of their ontology (i.e., the nature of reality; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and epistemology (i.e., how knowledge is acquired; Bryman, 2012).

The current study is grounded in the interpretivist paradigm so let us consider some of the assumptions that underpin this mode of inquiry. Interpretivism promotes multiple and relevant social realities based upon the participant's subjective consciousness (Burrell & Morgan, 1979; Sparkes, 1992). Interpretivist researchers believe the world can be discovered through the lens of the self (Goffman, 1959), by making decisions in real time and reflecting on social experiences (Denzin, 1989). An interpretivist methodology requires the researcher to adopt an ideographical approach to the study of society (Markula & Silk, 2011). As a consequence, interpretivist investigations are generally smaller in sample size, placing a higher emphasis upon the

insights of the main character instead of focussing on the outcomes of the situation (Denzin, 1989). The aim is to gain a first-person account of the phenomena as a conscious experience (Ellis, 2004). Denzin (1989) explains that interpretivism is characterised by being existential and biographical; that it is taken from a natural place (situated in the real world); and that it is based on sophisticated rigour, which is defined as 'the commitment to make the interpretive schemes as public as possible' (Denzin, 1989, p. 235-236). This means that interpretivism is deliberately non-positivistic and can be positioned as post-positivist (Denzin, 1989).

Because of this, I adopted an ideographic methodology to explore my experiences working as a performance analyst within a football club. I feel my interest in the subject matter, and my position as a performance analyst at a high-level club, lent itself to a subjective exploration of experience characterised by depth, intimacy and reason (Thompson, Potrac & Jones, 2013). It also allowed for the observation and understanding of the social context whilst fully embracing my role as a performance analyst. An additional aim of the current study was to capture the voices, actions and emotions of the various actors who operate within the environment (Denzin, 1989) through an *autoethnographic form* of interpretivist methodology. One way to achieve this is to become immersed in the environment and sub-culture (Huggan, Nelson & Potrac, 2015). Doing so required me to embrace my role as a performance analyst and to pay close attention to my lived experiences. Having constructed my vignettes, data interpretation involved an exploration of the social truths, ambiguities, rituals and meanings that are embedded within the environment (Goffman, 1972). Focusing on my own experiences as a performance analyst allowed me to explore in considerable detail

the emotions, actions, feelings and interactions that characterise sports coaching practice (Huggan, Nelson & Potrac, 2015). Heavily descriptive text was required to ensure that this study possesses authenticity and evidences a deep and meaningful understanding of the subject area (Denzin, 1989). Autoethnography was chosen as the means of representation as it is said to allow authors to give meaning to their experiences – a key ambition of the thesis given its interpretivist orientation.

3.3- Autoethnography as a recognised means of representation in sports coaching research

This section aims to discuss what an autoethnographic approach entails and its relevance to the current investigation. The term, autoethnography, is defined as the study of the self (Hamilton, Smith & Worthington, 2008) through an autobiographical style of writing (Ellis & Bochner, 2006), or as writing in the form of a personal narrative (Reed-Danahay, 2017) which aids in the critiquing of larger contextual issues such as society (Jones, 2009), culture and sub-culture (Allen-Collinson & Hockey, 1998; 2013).

Ellis, Adams and Bochner (2011, p. 273) argue that 'a researcher uses tenets of autobiography and ethnography to do and write autoethnography'. The aims of which are to systematically analyse lived personal experiences to gain a broader understanding of the lived cultural experiences (Ellis, 2004). Autoethnographers may use the art of storytelling to immerse the reader into the study (Gilbourne, Jones, & Jordan, 2011) – shining a light on the micro-reality that reveals the questions, doubts and concerns that

may occur in one's own practice (Jones, 2009). An important aim of autoethnography is to encourage/promote self-reflexive behaviour (Fairburn, 2016) which focuses upon the emotion and feelings that practice evokes (Sandstrom, Ellis & Bochner, 1999; although see Allen-Collinson (2003), for coverage of various accusations that autoethnographic practice is solipsistic in nature – that it is more akin to autobiographical writing than to scholarly or rigorous research). Ellis (2004) posits that for autoethography to be done correctly, it should consist of a layered consciousness (through one's own memories, dreams and goals, thoughts, feelings, and actions) that is *personal*, *descriptive* and *evocative* yet also be scholarly, theoretical and analytical. The approach has been used by a number of researchers to explore complex issues such as excessive exercising and anorexia (Stone, 2009), corporeal fragility (Sparkes, 1996; Sparkes & Silvennoinen, 1999) distance running and temporality (Allen-Collinson, 2003), coach-athlete relationships in competitive rowing (Purdy, Potrac, & Jones, 2008) and elite swimming and regulation of the body (McMahon, Penney & Dinan Thompson, 2012), amongst many others.

To be considered autoethnographic writing, Holman Jones, Adams and Ellis (2013) argued that authoethnographic texts should evidence four key principles: (1) purposeful commentating on or critique of culture and cultural practices, (2) contribution to the existing literature and research, (3) purposeful embracement of vulnerabilities, and (4) the creation of a reciprocal relationship with the audience/reader in order to elicit a response. Therefore, one of the principle aims of autoethnographic writing is to understand the self, others and to recognise where the self fits into possible oppressive environments or structures (Thompson, Potrac & Jones, 2013; Risner, 2002).

In doing so, autoethnographers may portray their experiences in words, poetry, drawings or journeys, before focusing upon particular words or individual fragments which are located within or underneath the narratives and scenes. A final step involves "zooming out" of their stories so that one can evidence emancipatory change (Risner, 2002). A failure to engage in this latter process means that little consideration can be given to the potentially shifting and changing reflective and reflexive, inter-personal and intra-personal experiences that accompany the autoethnographical writing process (Knowles & Gilbourne, 2010). The use of theory to make sense or to interpret authoethnographic texts should allow readers to recognise the change in the self or practice. That said, it's important to note that some authors have argued that the inclusion of theory within autoethnographical work may lead to the assumption or accusation of utilising the analysis to tailor what actually happened in the original events (Denison, 1996; Merryfeather & Bruce, 2014). Whilst I understand this argument, I agree with Denison's (2016) claim that 'if we want our narratives to do justice to our training as qualitative social scientists we need to bring theory into our accounts in more obvious ways' (p. 9). We can do this, according to Denison (2016), by blending thick description with rich analysis. As such, I intend to supplement my vignettes with theoretical analysis in order to explain the complex relations of power that operate in a high-level football environment. Reflecting my interpretivist orientation to enquiry, I have chosen to draw on the work of Kelchtermans (1993), Goffman (1959) and Hochschild (1983) to analyse and make sense of my experiences. At the heart of Kelchterman's interactionist work on (micro)political learning is the notion of micropolitical literacy which refers to how an individual 'reads' or 'writes'

into the political and inter-personal realities of the organisational landscape. This works provides an important lens for understanding how agents engage in micropolitical action to safeguard, restore or advance desirable working conditions (Allanson, Nelson, & Potrac, 2019). I also drew upon Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical theorising to explore and interrogate how I went about presenting myself to others, the tactics I used to manage the impressions formed by key stakeholders and how I sought to protect and, indeed advance, the version of the self I exhibited to others. Finally, I drew upon Hochschild's (1983) work on emotion management and emotional labour to consider the emotions I felt and those that were acted out for the benefit of others.

One key issue that relates to the use of autoethnography is that the author has a number of ethical responsibilities when using this form of investigation (Sikes, 2010). Autoethnographies are often thought to pose few ethical concerns (Ellis, 2009) but researchers need to be aware that there are a host of potential problems associated with the re-living of real-life events (Sikes, 2010). This includes, for example, the potential for a character's anonymity to be betrayed despite the use of pseudonyms (Ellis, 2009). Sikes (2010) offered a set of guidelines for autoethnographers to follow when considering the ethical implications of researching and writing in an autoethnographic or autobiographic style. According to these guidelines, authors should seek to 1) Protect the people whose lives are the focus of the research in a respectful way; 2) Remain alert to the potential misuse of interpretive power; 3) Show awareness of issues surrounding questioning the truth; 4) Avoid manipulating the narrative to fulfil a specific research purpose; 5) Respect the autonomy of participants and the voluntary nature of participation; 6) Be aware of internal and external confidentiality; 7) Treat the auto

ethnographical texts as permanent and try to attempt to anticipate your own future vulnerabilities; And finally 8) Assume that all people characterised in the texts will one day read them. By following these guidelines the author remains cognisant of their ethical responsibilities when seeking to protect those they write about (Sikes, 2010).

3.4- Constructing the Autoethngraphy

This section starts by considering how I constructed the autoethnography. Specifically I will detail how the reflective process informed how I wrote and constructed my authoethnographical texts. I start this process by explaining why I chose to present my data as a series of vignettes. The section concludes by outlining some of the theoretical frameworks used to interpret the findings.

3.4.1- Construction of the Autoethnographical texts

In this section, I seek to advocate the use of autoethnographic vignettes as a means of providing what Van Manen (1977) called 'the ethnographer's own taken-for-granted understandings of the social world under scrutiny' (p. 214) Researchers have argued that vignettes might serve as an alternative approach to representation and reflexivity in qualitative research (see Humphries, 2005). Vignettes have been described

as “vivid portrayals of the conduct of an event of everyday life” (Erickson, 1986, p. 149). I hope that by depicting my experiences in a series of “performance vignettes” that I might elicit “emotional identification and understanding” (Denzin, 1989, p. 124). Vignettes can be derived from sources such as diaries, free-writing and introspection. Following Erickson’s (1986) recommendations, my vignettes are based on journal or diary entries that were taken shortly after the events happened. The autoethnographic vignettes were based on data collected over an eleven-month period from June 2018 up until and including May 2019. The incidents and events that informed them took place at an elite football club playing in the third tier of the F.A women’s pyramid. To protect identities within the vignettes, each character has been given a pseudonym. A total of 9 vignettes are presented in the results section. Whilst each vignette is written as a stand-alone event or anecdote the vignettes are structured in such a manner as to create a collaborative journey between the author and the reader. That is, they portray how I continued to make sense and develop an understanding of the events happening around me. Within the following sub-sections I will introduce the techniques I used to depict and, ultimately make sense of, what happened during this period.

3.4.2- Reflective Journals

Reflective practice is often seen as a cornerstone of qualitative inquiry (Irwin, Hanton & Kerwin, 2004). Researchers and practitioners are actively encouraged to discuss their experiences, choices and actions to create better/more ethical practice (Schon,1987). Keeping reflective journals based upon one’s own experiences can

facilitate this (Cameron, Hayes & Wren, 2000). Reflective journals should be used to develop self-awareness through documentation of the learning journey that the researcher or practitioner goes through (Pavlovich, 2007), and to develop critically reflective practices for the self (Knowles, Tyler, Gilbourne & Eubank, 2006). These journals allow for the collection of thoughts, feelings and emotions at the time of the event, which can be preserved over time, reflected upon and re-analysed (Spalding & Wilson, 2002). The re-analysis of the journals can stimulate the continued learning of the researcher or practitioner (Allen-Collinson, 2003), allowing for a larger and greater depth of understanding into the contextual or behavioural issues that take place (Zehtner, McMahon & McGannon, 2019).

Gilbourne, Jones & Jordan (2014) explain that the re-analysis of the journals is part of the authors creative analytic practice. This form of pedagogical practice is cyclical in nature and helps in the understanding of the process of imagining/living experiences, documenting the experience, analysis/ reflection on the experience, and re-analysis/further reflection. It is key for autoethnographers to engage in this form of reflective practice so as to consider how these experiences may change over time.

Taking the above into account, it is now worthwhile noting how I used reflective journals within my own creative analytic practice (Gilbourne, Jones & Jordan, 2014). During the data collection phase of my investigation reflective journals were used to chronicle the day-to-day experiences and feelings that I encountered whilst working for the club. These reflective journals were kept in diary form and were written every 2-3 days, with the exception of days where a key incident took place which prompted me to note my thoughts and feelings with immediate effect. At the end of each week I would

summarise the week in the form of an extra diary entry where I sought to concentrate on depicting the specific events that had the greatest effect on me. These weekly summaries allowed me to track which weeks were most pertinent for re-analysis and/or worth talking about in supervisory meetings.

As part of the process of determining which incidents were worth re-analysing a set of vignettes were written chronicling the full season based on the key incidents that took place in the diary entries. These were then re-analysed after talking with my supervisors and narrowed down further into the set of vignettes that are offered in the results section of this investigation.

3.4.3- Supervisory Meetings

Supervisory meetings were an important element of the reflective process. These meetings allowed me to discuss certain key incidents with my supervisors. This helped me to question the situations that I had recorded, thereby aiding my understanding, analysis and reflection of the incidents. This supports the notion that reflection can be a process that is shared amongst supervisors, critical friends or mentors, with these individuals seeking to encourage the practitioner to explore their experiences in even greater detail (Knowles et al., 2007). My supervisors also challenged my thoughts, feelings and actions with the intention of extracting deeper meaning or interpretations of the experiences of the primary investigator (Anderson, Knowles & Gilbourne, 2004).

These supervisory meetings took place primarily on a monthly basis, usually in

an informal manner over a coffee and would last for 1-2 hours each. This would depend on the depth or re-assurance I needed whist talking through the experiences. Within these meetings we would discuss my experiences at the club. The meetings allowed me to be honest about my experiences and helped me to gain some confidence regarding the actions I employed whilst at the club. This form of secondary reflection on the critical events allowed me to further understand how my feelings from the original event also affected my subsequent actions in later situations. This helped me when constructing the vignettes as I was able to rationalise further the importance of the experiences alongside showing an emotional understanding that came from re-visiting each experience.

I found the process of using supervisory meetings helpful in relation to my own ability to recall such events. These meetings also allowed me to re-imagine some of the experiences seeing them in a new light.

3.5- Critical Analysis of Autoethnographical Data

In this section, I will detail how I believe the study might be assessed based on the work of Smith, Sparkes and Caddick (2014) and also upon the work of Fairburn (2016). I also provide a historical overview of how authoethnographic data has been assessed; how autoethnographic exploration has evolved in recent years; and the implications of this for the current study.

Many scholars have sought to judge the quality of interpretivist autoethnographic research against the traditional positivist assumptions of validity, reliability and generality (Fairbairn, 2016). However, one might argue that using these latter criteria does a disservice to this mode of inquiry as it ignores the capacity for autoethnographic writing to challenge political, social and/or cultural traditions (Denzin, 2014). As such, autoethnography can not be critiqued using criteria typically associated with the positivist paradigm.

A number of scholars have detailed various inter-related approaches to determining the quality of interpretive autoethnographic writing, including consideration for dimensions related to substance, aesthetics and literature (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Ellis, 2004; Ellis & Bochner, 2006). Lincoln and Guba (1985) presented one early method of determining the quality of qualitative investigation. These authors substituted the traditional trustworthiness measures of internal and external validity, reliability, and objectivity with a criteria-based approach consisting of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

Unfortunately, adopting a criteria-based standpoint that judges qualitative inquiry based upon the notion of trustworthiness, or establishing a criteriological approach can create problems for autoethnographers (Sparkes & Smith, 2009). To clarify, the feeling is that these approaches close down conversations, stifle creativity and blunt knowledge within the discipline (Sparkes & Smith, 2009). To combat this, Ellis (2009) created a literary aesthetic, advocating that the writing should conform with the concepts of authenticity and interpretation. If one follows this advice then creative writing should be constructed in a nuanced and engaging way that aims to draw in the

reader and leave a lasting effect (Ellis, 2009). Ellis (2009) also added that literary value must be understood within the criteria, that the pieces should conform with traditional elements of written literature such as strong plots and characterisation, dramatic tension, and flow. Finally, Ellis (2009) asked that the stories be steeped in the author's own questioning, and that they demonstrate how the narrator has progressed or learnt from the experiences as each story unfolds.

With the above framing my opinions on how to write the autoethnographical texts, I ask that when critiquing my vignettes, and the relevance of the investigation, it be done so in relation to the non-foundational list provided by Smith, Sparkes and Caddick (2014) and influenced by the work of Fairbairn (2016). *Firstly*, does the investigation make a significant contribution to the current understanding of social life (Smith, Sparkes & Caddick, 2014)? In relation to my work, does the investigation enhance the understanding about the everyday realities of working as a performance analyst within a football club? *Secondly*, is the topic worthy of scientific and social investigation? Is there a lack of inquiry or sufficient calls for exploration within the wider literature? *Thirdly*, does the investigation use sufficient, abundant, appropriate, and theoretical constructs whilst regaining a sense of rigour when appropriating the data collection or analysis, time spent in the environment, and the context? *Fourth*, does this investigation provide resonance? That is, does the study provide a better understanding of my social environment by enabling and welcoming you to experience moments from my life as a performance analyst within a football club? This also goes for questioning one's own situation. And *finally*, does the thesis provide heuristic significance in terms

of inspiring readers to question, probe and explore the realities of working as a performance analyst in a football club?

3.6- Section Conclusion

This section has provided an overview of the methodological approach that is implemented within this thesis. I have assessed the theoretical and philosophical beliefs associated with an interpretivist methodology, documented the rationale and validity of using autoethnography as a qualitative methodology, shown how I represented my experiences and offered a perspective on how to critique the results based upon the non-foundational list espoused by Smith, Sparkes and Caddick (2014).

4.0- Results

4.1- Introduction

Within this chapter I aim to present my experiences working as a performance analyst in the form of a series of autoethnographic vignettes. The opening vignette depicts the first day of pre-season and the final vignettes cover the culmination of a season working as the head performance analyst at an elite-level Womens' football club. Each vignette contains one or more standalone critical incidents that I experienced whilst working in this environment. Prior to the presentation of the vignettes, I present the cast of characters who feature in my stories.

4.1.1- Cast of Characters

As the chapter is based upon an autoethnographic text, a variety of different characters appear within each vignette. To allow the reader to fully understand each vignette I feel it is important to introduce each character and the role they played. Below, I present a list of pseudonyms and the associated role or relation to me in the order they appear.

Lee- Myself, the lead author, Head Analyst

John- First Team Head Coach- Uefa ‘B’ License coach with three years experience as Head coach at the club prior to the season start. In this three year spell as the head coach of the club John achieved two promotions and multiple cup runs. Despite these successes, John is experiencing his first season in the third tier of football.

Jen- Manager of Football Operations- Jen is the previous head coach of the team before John took over at the club. Jen stepped back from coaching to take on a role which allowed her to be involved in the day-to-day running of the club, keeping her as a key figurehead within the club structure.

James- Strength and Conditioning Coach- First paid role post-university, but working with the club for a second season. Already has built up relationships with the squad and head coach.

Anna- Senior First Team Player- Anna has played for the team for three seasons. Signing for the club when John took over from Jen. Anna is seen as a leader amongst her teammates.

Harry- Student Analyst- Undergraduate student looking to learn what it takes to be an analyst within a high level football club.

Ryan- Goalkeeper Coach- F.A level 2 goalkeeper coach and university student. This season was Ryan’s first experience working within a football club.

4.2- A Performance Analysts Tale

4.2.1- Vignette 1: Fitting in

A wall of heat meets me as I leave the clubhouse and step out onto the training ground. Everything seems so pristine. The pitch gleams in the brilliant sunshine. I sense movement behind me and turn to see John, Head Coach of the club, striding across the pitch. He's beaming. There's a swagger in his walk and he looks fresh, he appears ready for what is going to unfold over this coming season. We exchange some pleasantries and head inside to the training facility to meet the other staff members and players as they arrive.

Inside the facility the cool air of the air-conditioning unit hits me providing some welcome relief. Manager of Football Operations, Jen, arrives carrying some new footballs. She's even chirpier than John.

The time ticks away and the players start arriving one by one. They are all meant to be here for 12:30 at the latest so we can all do our welcomes, This opportunity also allows the coaching staff to set their expectations for the upcoming season. I go into the presentation room. This is where I generally do my team analysis sessions – it's here that I feel most comfortable. It also allows me to find some space – to get away from all the chatter outside as the players and staff re-acquaint themselves. I start by arranging the chairs in rows of six. I set up the projector and screen, get my laptop out and start playing a compilation of goals from last season on the big screen. Hopefully this will act as bit of extra inspiration for the girls as they walk in.

The girls and coaching staff appear right on cue. The players all take their seats in the rows I set out. They chat amongst themselves, talking through the goals that are being played on the big screen. I hear laughing and see smiling faces. It is great to see how engrossed they are by the clips I've put together. As I take a seat next to John he whispers into my ear how impressed he is that I set up the room and had a video ready for the players. I nod along and thank him for noticing as if it was nothing.

The welcomes are low-key. John sets his expectations in regards to attitude and commitment. Jen explains the importance of the coming season to the club. The senior players share jokes. The new players smile a little uncomfortably – unsure whether to join in or not. Then everyone around the room has to introduce themselves, John and Jen have already done so. Now it's the players' turn, one by one each girl stands up, says their name, the position they play and an interesting non-football related fact about themselves. Some of the responses have us all in hysterics. Each player reacts differently to being put on the spot. The younger players are visibly nervous. Some stutter or mangle sentences. None of them dare make eye contact with anyone. The older heads brush it off in a brash 'been there, done that' kind of way, retaining their social standings. This makes me nervous. Can't slip up around the players I already know, especially when they are in such a savage mood. The young players surely want to see someone who appears confident and calm. This first impression they get of me is massive. Now it's my turn, my heart beats really fast and I start to tap my feet beneath my chair, 'why am I so nervous' I think, 'you've spoken to most of these players before, presented to them'. I'm trying really hard to calm myself down, I can't mess up

something so simple. Luckily for me, the laughs that continue from the previous player carry on and provide me a little bit of extra time to steady myself. I take a few deep breaths and look at the time on the back wall, as the seconds hand ticks by I feel my nerves start to disappear, I'm in control.

"Hi girls, My name is Lee and I'm not a player…" everyone laughs. I'm so glad there isn't an awkward moment where I'm stood having made a joke and just blank faces staring at me.

"Well I'm your head of Performance Analysis, I'll be working with you over the season to help you progress as players and as a team. If you need any help with anything you can come to me and we can watch back on clips of games or training, whatever is needed to make you become better footballers." I've done it, shown that I can be funny and normal, on a level the players can feel comfortable with. And I've put myself out there to them, that I am there to benefit and help them.

"One fact about me is that I play the guitar." I sit down having conquered my first real moment of insecurity.

Vignette 2: Cometh the hour, Cometh the analyst

(We have been in pre-season training for a couple of weeks at this point, the team have worked hard and every session is a countdown to the first game. For myself, things have started well, I'm getting on with everyone and I'm enthused by the way the club is being run.)

The time is 5:30 PM, I'm all ready for tonight's training session. I know I don't have to be at the training ground until 6:30 PM for a staff briefing before the players start arriving at 7 PM. I've got my points written down for which I'll seek opinions on. I've thought long and hard about how these points can help improve the club.

I arrive at the training ground at 20 past 6, it's always good to be early. I head inside and into the analysis room. I get a round table set up with the number of chairs needed for myself, John, Jen and James. Next, I open my laptop up to have the evidence ready to support the points I had prepared, there's no way I can leave any stone unturned if I want to convince John that these should be implemented. John enters close to 6:30, boots in one hand and a football in the other. The usual welcome and handshake happens, which has become par for the course, the norm for us all.

"Mate, we won't bother with the meeting tonight, I've not brought any of my stuff with me." John seems oblivious that I'd set the room up and possibly had my own points all ready.

"That's fine mate, I can save my stuff for another time too." I force a smile yet inside I can feel my blood boiling, 'all that effort to get everything ready and we're not even bothering' I think, good job I'm not thinking out loud.

Jen and James walk in together, chatting about who knows what. John welcomes them the same as he did with me and tells them the same news. They both appear to just brush it off, 'surely it can't just be me who had prepared stuff'.

John pipes up “So the plan tonight, warm up with James and then we’ll go 11 v 11 for a full 90 minutes, see where everyone’s at.”

Everyone nods. I’m questioning why nothing has been planned, this seems a bit early in pre-season to be going full tilt?’. I don’t raise this concern though, I leave it be.

The players all turn up at 7 PM and get straight into the warm up set up by James, John notices that there are only 21 players.

“Lee, you fancy a game? we’re lacking a centre mid. You played there didn’t you?”

“Yeah I played there, been a while since I’ve played properly though, and what about the filming.”

“Don’t worry about the filming tonight, I want you to play.”

“Okay, let me get my boots on.”

I run to my car and get my boots out. My thoughts don’t revolve around the fact I’m getting to run around for 90 minutes but the fact that the filming didn’t matter tonight. Surely if we were looking to see where everyone was at then this night needed filming more than some of the other sessions I’ve recorded. I didn't know whether my frustration could be seen or not.

I return back to the pitch and shut away these thoughts to concentrate on this game, I’ve got a reputation to uphold, most of these girls know where I played in the past, the levels I got to. And if I can show them how good I was/still am then it might lead to them giving me and my analysis more respect than they already do. The pressure is firmly on…can't give these girls any reason to question my knowledge and

understanding of the game. I need to show them that I can play. This is my domain. This is what I always excelled at. I make a few cheeky comments to some of the ladies about going easy on me because I'd not played in a while. This was all part of my ploy though, tell them I'm not that great...lull them into believing that I'm not up to much… then show them how good I am even though I've long since stopped playing. John blows the whistle, he's playing de-facto referee from the sidelines. The game starts.

My first real opportunity to show myself comes after about 10 minutes. I receive the ball on the half way line after a turnover by the bibbed team we are up against. I spray the ball to the right back, immediately making an angle to receive the ball back. The ball comes back to me in 10 yards of space, I open my body up take one touch and boom… the ball sails 40 yards in between the opposition centre back and right back yet into the path of our on running winger. It was just like back in the day when this was my bread and butter stuff, inside I'm feeling overjoyed, on the outside I try to appear cold as if this is the norm and that I can do this easily. The winger hits the bar with her shot and subsequently thanks me for the pass.

I've now changed, I'm controlling play with every opportunity I get, demanding the ball as much as I can, opening the play up like a puppet master, nobody on the opposition team can touch me. I'm telling players where I want them, they listen, this has become my game, I'm no longer just making up the numbers. The second half is more of the same. Within moments of it starting my team's goalkeeper has the ball, the centre backs split and I receive the ball on the half turn just outside the 18 yard box. I see an

opportunity to hit what must be a 60-70 yard ball on the angle to the right midfielder, if this comes off we score, if it doesn't I could look silly. I take two touches and boom… the ball sails exactly where I want it leading to our player scoring, 1-0, my assist.

The game finishes after 90 minutes. I go down to my knees. I think I might be sick. Most of my team come to me, giving me high fives and numerous compliments, every one of the words massages my ego. Anna's complement fills me with the most joy "Best player on the pitch, by far". I'd done exactly what I wanted. Proved my capabilities. The debrief gives me more time to grab some air and a drink of water. In my head I know I'll be needing something stronger to drink later on in the evening. John finishes his debrief with the words "Thanks to Lee for stepping in to make up the numbers, but by the seems of things you was all playing in his game." All the girls smile and laugh in agreement. All I say is "Thanks for having me for one night Girls." Again the girls laugh and smile.

As we walk off the pitch I find myself talking to James.

"Mate I enjoyed that."

"Could tell mate, you absolutely bossed it" James enthuses back,

"Thanks James, I think I'll be a bit achy for the next few days though."

We both laugh, I get the sense he understands the importance of me showing my worth too.

“Well I’ll see you tomorrow Lee, well done tonight mate.” James shakes my hand as a sign of togetherness.

“yeah see you tomorrow… well as long as I can get out of bed.” We both laugh for one last time then get into our cars ready to go.

Vignette 3: Avoiding conflict

(We’re 2 weeks on from the training session where I played my part. The first friendly game was here, preparations for the game had gone well, focus had shifted from solely building fitness and more into tactical work. A time when I would really come into my own and be able to start doing team analysis sessions.)

The whistle blows for half time, I clamber down the tower knowing the half time team talk should be positive from John – the team has acquitted themselves really well. I head towards the dressing room with my notes in my hand, John waits for me outside the door.

‘’What do you think?” John exclaims with a look of slight disappointment on his face.

“Not a bad start considering it’s the first game back, intensity could rise and I think there’s been sloppy first touches at times but what do you expect it’s the first game. I think we just need every player to understand they've got to set the standards more.”

“Yeah that’s a good point.” John appears more chirpy.

We both head into the dressing room. The players remain silent. They listen to John, really taking every word in for what feels close to 5 minutes. Then John surprised me…

“Lee thinks we can improve our standards, be better. I agree with him.”

Inside I'm raging, at no point was I negative about the game or the way we was playing, if anything I'd been totally understanding of the context of the game, that it was our first run out, that mistakes do happen. He's shafted me. But was this an intentional ploy? Has he deliberately used my feedback as a way of riling the players and of casting me as the villain. My relationship with the squad is strong, I don't want that damaged just because John has his own agenda. My head drops and I avert my gaze from John. I can't pretend to agree, but I also can't show the players that I disagree with John. I fumble about with a tactics board and a pen, hoping that the players think I'm concentrating on something else.

As the referee knocks on the door and asks if the team are ready, I leave the dressing room, rushing straight back to the tower to film again. No words are spoken between me and anyone else. My words had been taken out of context, was I being pinned as the bad cop in John's good cop/bad cop routine. If so I'm not happy with that, it contradicts what I actually was thinking and compromises my relationship with the players.

Vignette 4: Undermined

(The season was already 7 weeks in, there had been a lot of positive moments in this amount of time, I'd worked hard putting on countless sessions with the team and with individual players. I also brought in a student to assist me in coding games and recording training sessions, hoping this would slightly lighten my load. On the pitch the team had been playing okay, results varied and we sat just below mid-table. If we were

to finish in that position at the end of the season the whole club would have been ecstatic.)

I'm genuinely ready for a few weeks off and plenty of time spent with the family. The most recent game was a frustrating one, a defeat where the team performed well under our usual standards.

John was keen for me to set up a team session for the Tuesday. As the Tuesday night approached I was armed with my notes, stats and laptop ready for the session. To keep the players entertained in the session I had decided to make the session athlete centred.

The session starts dead on 6:30, and for the main part is going well, the groups are all interacting well, the players are heavily involved in the analysis process which is great. Everyone seems to be getting on with the session and the points brought up by each group shows an understanding for why we are doing this. I split each part of the game into 10 minute blocks where at the end of each block the group talk through their thoughts and bring up points they have worked on together, here I can interject, re-show the clip, and add perspective.

After the second of these interjections John enters the room. The next 10 minutes is relatively uneventful. The players are still all buying into the session. Suddenly, John marches to the front after hearing one comment from a player he didn't like. With no compromise or offering any perspective John takes over. I'm seething, that much to the point that I don't listen to what he is saying. I notice Harry's face in the foreground, he

stares at me hoping to catch my attention. I sit back and raise my eyebrows. Harry nods too. I can tell he shares my disgust. My role now has become literally clicking play and pause when asked to do so. I look out on the room trying to track the players' faces. Most of them are lost, bewildered and becoming bored. The good atmosphere I had created had been drained out the room. I've been undermined, my status in the room has been negated. I'm also struggling to hide my disgust. I've become silent and visibly withdrawn. The next hour is spent with the players just listening to John talk about what happened, more of a commentary than analysis. The players look increasingly bored, not one of them has said anything for the last 30 minutes, I also get the feeling that they don't want to say anything in case it's wrong. This isn't how it's meant to be.

(In the weekend game that followed this session came our worst defeat of the season so far, conceding 4 and not even looking like scoring. Players commented after the game that they hadn't liked the weeks preparation, John defended the preparation and commented that the players were just making excuses for performing poorly.)

Vignette 5: Learning to play the game

(Results had been inconsistent once again. 3 games on since the 4-0 away defeat had seen us pick up 1 win and 2 losses. Despite this I had some really good individual player sessions and I could see definite improvements in the players I had worked with. The feeling at the club was still positive, still riding on the high of the previous season's

promotion. We were still sitting just below mid-table and we were in a good position compared to the teams we considered to be our main rivals in our aim of staying up.)

It's 10:30-ish, time for me to head to the ground. As I arrive, I see John parking up his car, I pull into the spot next to his. As I jump out my car I hear a grand shout of "morning", its John's voice radiating from his wound down car window. I can sense similar excitement in John. Similarly, Jen arrives soon after myself, emblazoned in club attire. We talk in the car park for what feels like forever. The whole conversation revolves around the team and the set up for the game. There are moments in the conversation where I'm only there to back up some of John's points, especially regarding the formation. I stay diplomatic, referring to training and how we'd familiarised the team with this formation over the last 2 weeks. Here, I'm backing John's point, but trying to show understanding for Jen's approach of not wanting to get beat. In this interaction I feel somewhat of the middle-man, reasoning with both in a conversation that won't change a thing. As the conversation ends, nothing has changed, the formation is still the same.

We all head inside and John heads to the changing room to get his team selection written out. Jen holds me back for a few minutes.

"Lee, Do you really think the 4-3-3- is best?" I'm surprised Jen has raised this issue. I try to think quickly, but I'm also trying to process what to say. I can't drop John in it. Could this be Jen's way of testing my loyalty to John. Or is she just confiding in me and wanting my honest opinion. My first thought is to be professional, show trust in John as

someone I work closely with.

“Yeah, I think John has prepared the team really well in training, and the vibe is good, the girls know they can play attractive football with the formation. I sent him an opposition report earlier in the week which I think helped him come to this decision. So yeah, of course I trust the decision.”

I don’t think I’ve sold anyone under the bus here. Diplomatic again, yet preserving my professionalism.

Jen replies with some nonsense about not losing our first game, but it appears negative, and totally against the philosophy of playing attacking, attractive football.

“I understand that Jen,” I reply with, “I don’t know if changing our whole philosophy is beneficial when the club is riding on a high of being promoted.”

I think this works and Jen seems to be more understanding.

(A 1-0 defeat followed, but the performance was positive against a team that we weren't expected to get anything from. For now, I could enjoy a few days off with the Christmas break coming up. A time to get away from football for just a little while.)

Vignette 6: Hard Work and Presentation

(In the period between the Christmas break and the first international break of the new calendar year we played 5 games in the space of 4 weeks, I had been stretched over this period due to the congested fixture and training schedule, the weather at these games wasn't great either, lots of blustery cold winds and torrential rains. I could also sense

that John and Jen weren't seeing eye to eye on a few things, but I kept my nose out of their business and concentrated on my job.)

Coming back off the international break saw us lose our first game to a team who we weren't expected to get anything from. The performance was good though - we pressured the superior team for long stretches of the game. The next game though was another away trip, just an hour up the road to one of our closest rivals who also sit directly above us by one point in the league standings.

Thursday's training was solely focussed on the gameplan for the match. My role was to gain as much knowledge about the opposition as possible. Our pre-training staff brief saw me largely leading the session, bringing up my points, reinforcing them, and offering a scenario to the coaches. As I stood there in the analysis room with the coaches looking upon me I was feeling confident, the work I had put in made me proud. The tactical graphics I put up on the big screen, all with moving parts really supported the points I was making. I could see that the coaches were enthused by my presentation, taking notes and asking me some questions about the slides. As the presentation finished and the coaches got ready to head outside I handed John a paper copy of the slides with explanations of the tactics and why they could be effective. As I do this, John thanks me, giving me a compliment that the work was "Top drawer stuff" and "First Class". This gave me an enormous sense of pride and confirmed that the work I'd put in was relevant and might be utilised by those it was intended for.

Vignette 7: Continuing Development

I had a good feeling today was going to be where the season could really ignite. The team had prepped well, our analysis being at the forefront of the tactical planning.
As I entered the changing rooms at the ground I could see John, James, and Ryan - the goalkeeper coach - chatting about the pre-match warm up.
John starts to write his team out on the white board. The names fit into what looks like a 4-3-3 formation. Specific emphasis is placed on the deeper midfielder and the full backs. This was all part of the plan that I came up with, to control possession and the transition through the pivots. My face beamed with a smile that showed my appreciation that my tactics were being used. I had a feeling that this showed a lot of trust in me from John. James stepped up and asked John about the formation and the words used. I guess he just wanted to learn about this approach rather than question the efficacy of the strategy. John answered sharply. “Ask Lee, he came up with the plan.” Again my face beamed, and I explained why utilising the pivots was needed short term and long term. James commented back “Lee, that’s brilliant, let’s just hope it happens.” With these words I’m on top of the world. I appear to have the trust of all the coaches now.
(A well earned victory followed at the weekend. I never received any praise for the result post-match from John, Jen or the players, but that didn't matter right now. I was just happy we got the result. I knew that I contributed to the result deep down and held onto the notion I had done my job excellently.)

Vignette 8: Putting on a Session

(The season was quickly nearing its end, we were sitting 2 places above the relegation zone and on a barren run where we hadn't won a game in 5 attempts. In this time I hadn't been asked to take as much control as I had previously. I worried that I'd lost John's trust. Especially considering our best performances were when I had gone above and beyond my duties. I tried to reassure myself that John was trying to hold onto as much control as he could.)

The weather was horrible, a mix of thunderstorms, heavy rain and strong winds. Understandably the grounds person advised us not to train on the pitch which left the training session in some doubt. John was adamant he wanted the squad in though. I hung back in hope of an extra day off. The message I received from John put an end to those thoughts. 'Training is still on, plan- Arrive 6.30pm- S&C with James 7pm-7.50pm, Analysis session with Lee 8pm until finish.'. I had nothing planned. My oppositional and tactical analysis had been done the previous night. I was feeling the pressure now, I couldn't say no to the session. I just wish I'd been asked. I sent a quick message to the other analysis lads 'change of plan, still meet at four, we need to plan something'. The responses I got were timely and appreciated.

I met with the analysis boys, letting them know my idea – we'd split the girls into teams and have a quiz - mixing analysis with competition and allowing me free reign over the content too. We had an almighty task but it could be light hearted and educational if it is pulled off. We all work non-stop until 6pm. My role is structuring the presentation/quiz

and adding questions that are football related but not related to our club. Just so it doesn't become to monotonous.

Players start arriving for James' strength and conditioning session and here we are still putting together the final parts of our quiz.

One thing I have noticed amongst our hard work is a lack of John's interference, but I was wrong to assume he was watching over the S&C session. He had not turned up. I spoke to James to find out what had happened to him, "Lee, I got a message at half six saying he was taking a night off, happy for us to control everything." I responded in the only way I could given the news "what so it's okay for us to come in and do work but not him, I'm sure you are the same but the lads and me have had to work so hard for tonight, coming up with something last minute, all because John can't be bothered."

Vignette 9: Having a word

'Lee, Can I have a word' John asked in a relaxed manner. 'yeah sure' I respond. Following him to his office, down a light grey corridor with white painted walls, the corridor seemingly narrowing as I get closer to the office. No other words are spoken. My heart beats really fast, 'why have I been summoned to his office' I think as my steps

become heavier with each forward movement, ‘can’t be about last night… surely not’. As I enter the office I notice two chairs facing each other with a plain white table splitting them. The room is bare, with only a tactics board and what appears to be an annual plan breaking up the emulsion white walls. John closes the opened window and closes the blinds. I guess this creates privacy but results in me feeling even more nervous, ‘have I done something wrong? this is all a bit strange?’ My feet won’t stay still, my leg visibly shaking.

“Lee I need to apologise for last night, I understand I dropped you and James in it a bit. Thanks for doing the session, reports from the players have said it was really good…” John continued to butter me up for a good few minutes. I was listening but I was also trying to work out how to play this. I was now in control of the situation but do I bring up my disappointment that he didn’t turn up, or do I just leave it and recognise that this shows the amount of trust he has in me. I decide to not shake things up, instead trying to be understanding of the situation, holding in my inner desire to challenge and show my feelings of disappointment I had the night before. I was able to recommend more team bonding stuff which John appreciated. I used Anna’s comments as a reference point to which John appreciated, noting down the point before we entered into a debate about how we could do this. My main point was that we needed to create a good feeling again, John agreed. Again I didn’t tell him that he appeared to be part of that problem.

I left the room and headed back to the analysis room, still questioning whether I had done the right thing not being honest about my feelings or how the atmosphere appears

to me. Instead, I held back, retaining my own standing with John, appearing fully committed to his way of doing things.

(With two games left of the season, confidence appeared shot amongst the players. The staff didn't appear to be in positive frames of minds. Some simply trying to stay out of John's way. John's regaining of control had worn him down, and Jen was rarely around for training like she had been earlier in the season. The club was in a bit of a funk. The one consistency throughout the club setup was the hard work I was putting in to continue producing work that I hoped could at least reinvigorate the players somewhat. Needing 1 point from two final games we gained this in the first of these, making the last game less pressured and more relaxing for me personally.)

5.0- Discussion

5.1- Introduction

In this section I will draw on a number of theoretical frameworks to interpret my experiences. An additional aim will be to make sense of them in light of the growing

body of literature which has sought to portray the everyday realities of being a performance analyst. Analysis took place after the vignettes had been compiled, reviewed and then discussed with Dr. John Toner and Dr. Luke Jones. At this stage the theoretical concepts that were most prevalent to the vignettes were framed for analytical discussion.

5.2.1- Analysis of Vignette 1 and 2 - Trying to Impress: The Impression Management of A Performance Analyst

The first vignette of the results section, 'Trying to Impress', sees me attempting to manage the impression I made in front of the coaching staff and players at the club. This takes place during the initial stages of the season - a time where I was still trying to find my feet at the club and to establish relationships with the staff and players. The experiences from the first two vignettes were made sense of using Goffman's dramaturgical perspective (1959, 1967, 1969, 1971, 1972). The first vignette portrays a series of experiences where I question the way I act and appear to those around me. In the following paragraphs, I seek to interpret these experiences.

The opening part of this vignette concerns the first day of pre-season. Here, I sought to explain how the initial impression I made could have long-lasting effects in terms of how I was viewed by the players and coaching staff. I also show the efforts and strategies I used to appear as a calm, confident and professional member of the backroom staff. Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical perspective (comprising the notions of

performance, impression management, team and region) might prove useful in explaining my actions here. According to Goffman (1959), performance is defined by "all the activity of an individual which occurs during a period marked by his [sic] continuous presence before a particular set of observers and which has some influence on the observers" (p. 32). One of my first attempts to "perform" occurs when I'm in the process of setting up my analysis room for a meeting between the players and the coaching staff. This represented a deliberate and conscious effort on my behalf to show how meticulous I am in my approach. The desire to appear professional was at the forefront of my mind. I received complements from John and the players' appeared extremely engaged during the analysis process. As such, I knew I'd done a professional job. The aim of this performance was to give a certain impression (that of an extremely dedicated and skillful analyst) to John which, in turn, might influence his perception of me and shape our future interactions.

The next part of the vignette titled "Fitting In" revolves around my first real and meaningful interactions with the athletes, where I introduce myself to them in our opening presentation/meeting. Here, I experience feelings of nervousness at a time when I was determined to appear relaxed and confident. To deal with this uncertainty, I engaged in impression management which relates to how we attempt to influence another person's perceptions (about us or an event) by regulating and controlling information in social interaction. It is also important to note the conceptual similarity between Hochschild's (1983) notion of surface acting (as a fundamental part of one's identity) and the impression management process that I engaged in. Hochschild (1983) proposed that surface acting (e.g., body language such as a sneer or a shrug) comprises

of acts we use to deceive others about how we are really feeling without deceiving ourselves. Despite feeling nervous, I had to try appear as calm and confident or, in Goffman's (1959) words, to put on a 'front' (the expressive equipment one uses, consciously or subconsciously, as part of one's performance). I hoped that this would help me gain me an increased level of acceptance from the athletes (Jones, 2006) and allow me to meet the normative expectations of my senior colleagues (Goffman, 1963). I felt this behaviour was crucial in order to control the impressions the athletes formed of me – to ensure that they had no doubt that I was anything other than an extremely confident and capable analyst.

In the vignette "Cometh the hour, Cometh the analyst" attention is turned to an experience where I had to showcase my skills as a footballer by making up the numbers in a practice session arranged by John. To make sense of the interactions and experience that occurred here I draw on Goffman's (1961) concepts of role embracement which refers to the level of commitment and dedication to a given role and to the execution of role-related duties (1961). Role embracement involved demonstrating my capacities as a footballer and spontaneously engaging in the session. I felt that I disappeared "completely into the virtual self available during the situation" (Goffman, 1961, p. 64). This experience was key in how the initial period of the season would unfold. By embracing the role, I felt like I demonstrated to the players that I was a highly skilled footballer and that this helped me to gain a level of trust and respect that I may not have gained from my role as performance analyst alone (Huggan, Nelson & Potrac, 2015). Indeed, I was fully aware that playing experience is often seen as an essential criterion for coaching in performance sport. As such, I used this opportunity as a means of

enhancing my status with the athletes (Mills, 2015) and fitting in with social expectations. Despite the experience not showing off my skills as a performance analyst it was still hugely important for me to impress the athletes, knowing full well that if I appeared to struggle in the game that some of the athletes may view me as lacking football understanding. As Jones et al. (2011) argue, coaching behaviours like these are motivated by a fear that an audience might question one's right to perform. Any loss of face at this point of the season might have resulted in the players not taking my analysis seriously over the season (Magill et al., 2017), or questioning my understanding in the analysis sessions I would later put on (Fairbairn, 2016).

5.2.2- Analysis of Vignette 3, 4 and 5 - Suppressing Feelings And Emotional Management

The vignette titled 'first pre-season game' centres around my attempts to suppress and hide my true emotions from other key stakeholders and manage my interactions to ensure that I wasn't negatively affected by the situations I found myself in. This vignette details my first experience on a match day where an interaction with John led to the first critical incident I'd faced at the club. 'First Pre-Season Game' explains how I had my words twisted, taken out of context, and used by the head coach to support his own agenda within a team talk at half time of a pre-season game. At that moment, I had feelings of rage, mainly because my words – which were intended to be positive - had ended up being used as fuel to fire up the players where I was name

checked and positioned as the “bad guy”. Hochschild’s (1983) work on emotional management may be used to make sense of my actions.

Hochschild’s (1983) concept of emotion management refers to the ‘management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display’ (p. 7). This theoretical framework seeks, in part, to elucidate the deliberate and conscious efforts that the individual makes to control or suppress feelings in themselves (Hochschild, 1979). The vignette details how I try to hide my true feelings from the players by acting in a nonchalant manner, pretending I didn’t hear John’s comments, and also trying to look like I was busy with an un-related but professional appearing task. Here I was suppressing my anger and disappointment by pretending to be adjusting tactics on the white board and shutting myself off from the words spoken by looking down and not looking at any of the players or John. I sought to manage my personal front by seeking to appear nonchalant, while concealing the very considerable effort I was making to create this very impression work (Scott, 2017). I was also acting under the guidance of what Hochschild (1983) referred to as “feeling rules” – my knowledge of the emotions I should demonstrate in situations like this but also my understanding of the degree to which that expression was in keeping with my role. According to Hochschild (1979) such deep acting allowed me to manipulate my emotions and to produce an authentic response. Crucially, the emotions I displayed were in keeping with the norms and expectations demanded by my social setting.

The preceding findings are consistent with some of the actions outlined in the work of Huggan, Nelson and Potrac (2015) where Ben (pseudonym) managed his emotions by concentrating on appearing to be a competent analyst to the players, staff

and stakeholders he worked for or alongside – irrespective of the challenging circumstances he found himself in. My experience chimes with that of Ben's (Huggan, Nelson & Potrac, 2015) and shows there is a constant effort on the behalf of the analyst to appear as a compliant member of staff who understands the notion of hierarchy within the club environment they work in (Potrac, Jones, Gilbourne & Nelson, 2013). This form of emotional and identity suppression is prevalent due to the stereotypical hierarchy that is known to exist within football (Groom, Cushion & Nelson, 2011) and most team based sports (Fairbairn, 2016). Indeed, it is understood by staff and players alike that the head coach is the 'boss' or the 'authoritarian figurehead' (Groom, Cushion & Nelson, 2012). As such, they can utilise the words, actions, practices and opinions of their coaching staff to achieve their own ends (Groom, Cushion & Nelson, 2012), knowing quite well that subordinates are unlikely to offer any challenge to their 'legitimised' authority (Cushion & Jones, 2006).

In my case I was aiming to protect myself whilst also, despite being angry with John, not trying to appear as if I was working against him. I also protected myself by leaving the dressing room as soon as possible to resume my place ready to film, not uttering a word to anyone. This form of 'surface acting' (acts used to deceive others without deceiving ourselves; Hochschild, 1983) was done to avoid any conflict between myself and John. I didn't wish to cause any discord by telling him how I was really feeling considering that he used my words out of context. Fairbairn (2016) utilised a similar technique whilst working as lead performance analyst within a professional rugby league club. Fairbairn (2016) explained how, at times, his colleagues undermined him, especially when results were not going well. To avoid conflict, Fairbairn (2016)

understood that it would be in his best interests to step away from the drama at the moment it happened so that he could rationalise his thoughts on the matter and so avoid compromising his own professional identity or the working relationships he had with his colleagues. In my case, I suppressed certain feelings in order to protect my own professional 'self' (Goffman, 1959), knowing full well that I would spend a lot of time at the club around the same members of staff. I have become increasingly aware that the outcome of such practices can be a sense of alienation and an inauthenticity of self (see Jones et al. 2011). Attempts to sustain a controlled feeling for a protracted period of time are likely to prove exhausting.

The vignette titled 'Player Analysis Session'- details how I was undermined during one of the analysis sessions. Here, I engaged in what Hochschild (1979, 1983) has referred to as emotional labour (whereby one induces or suppresses feelings in order 'to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others'; Hochschild, 1983, p. 7) in order to hide my disappointment that the session had been disrupted by the head coach. I suppressed my true feelings in order to appear as though I understood my place in the coaching hierarchy at the club, therefore conforming to John's vision and goals for the team.

The vignette also reveals how I am starting to become more aware of the toll my time at the club is having on me. This sheds light on the emotional burden that I am being placed under and how I attempt to manage these feelings by continuing to appear positive and enthusiastic despite being on the verge of exhaustion. There were numerous occasions when I engaged in "surface acting" by hiding my true feelings and continuing to create the impression that I was fully committed to my role. However,

suppressing my emotions in this way was starting to have an effect on my life away from the football club. This is echoed in a number of recent studies (e.g., see Fairbairn, 2016; Jones 2006; Potrac & Marshall, 2011; Thompson, Potrac & Jones, 2015) where each author's professional identity and hidden emotions took over parts of their lives when away from the club or work environment. In particular, the work of Thompson, Potrac and Jones (2013) showed how this can be a negative part of working within professional sport. The constant scrutiny that one is under, and the awareness that one's professional identity is constantly under a microscope, leads to a life where the subject questions their place in the professional structure (Thompson, Potrac & Jones, 2015). This is consistent with much recent research in the coaching literature which has revealed that work in sporting organisations is characterised by uncertainty owing to the competing ideologies and goals held by various stakeholders (Potrac & Jones, 2009a; Thompson, Potrac & Jones, 2015; Fairbairn, 2016). In this extremely competitive labour market, awash with a surplus of talent, it is perhaps unsurprising that actors must learn their way to navigate social networks in order to maintain or improve their standing.

5.2.3- Analysis of Vignettes 6, 7, 8 and 9 - Understanding my Place: Utilising Micro-Political Strategies

The vignette titled "Understanding my place" details events that saw me having to act micro-politically throughout my time at the football club. In particular, the vignette reveals how I become progressively more aware of my standing within the

football club and how I developed an understanding of how things operate in these environments (i.e., showcasing my micro-political literacy).

To make sense of these experiences, I drew heavily on Kelchtermans and Ballett's (2002a, 2002b) work on micro-political literacy – a concept initially used to explore how beginning teachers come to navigate their way through the political aspects of their work. These authors suggested that individuals learn to 'read' situations they encounter through a micro-political lens. They also learn how to create desired working conditions and protect these conditions if they view them to be under threat. Specifically, many of my actions are constitutive of an attempt to develop what Kelchterman's (2009) referred to as professional self-understanding. Professional self-understanding refers to the understanding one has of one's "self" at a specific moment in time but also the process of making sense of one's experiences and how this influences the construction of the self. Kelchterman (2009) identified five sub-components that define professional self-understanding: self-image, self-esteem, task perception, job motivation, and future perspectives.

Self-image, in a pedagogical context, refers to the way an individual typifies themselves as a pedagogist (i.e., their self-perception), and on what others mirror back to them (e.g., comments from colleagues) (Kelchtermans, 2009). In the concluding vignettes, I show an understanding of how I appear to those around me and what is expected in the role of performance analyst. My first thoughts were always to 'act' professionally. To illustrate, in my interaction with Jen (when she starts to question John's tactics) I ensure that I don't openly disagree with her on the one hand, but that I don't undermine John on the other. I referred back to the work that had been put into

preparing the team for the game, how John had worked hard to get the team ready, the effort the players had put into their roles, and the detail I had put into my oppositional analysis report. Doing so helped me create working conditions where the quality of my professional interactions would allow me to fulfil my duties in an effective manner (Thompson et al. 2015).

Self-esteem is defined as an individual's appreciation for the job they actually do (Vanassche & Kelchtermans, 2014). Like self-image, a lot of this understanding comes from the external view of one's actions including the feedback we receive from those whose opinion we value (Kelchtermans, 2009). In contrast to self-image, self-esteem is based on the way an individual feels about themselves (Vanassche & Kelchtermans, 2014). A number of experiences shaped my self-esteem including the occasion when John drew on my advice when devising a game plan. This felt like a positive public judgement and helped me feel that I was trusted by John and that I was now an integral part of his coaching team. I acknowledge, however, that self-esteem is an element of professional development that is constantly changing (Vanassche & Kelchtermans, 2014), and under constant evaluation from external viewers (Kelchtermans, 2005, 2009). Indeed, I reveal how my self-esteem was threatened by John's non-appearance in the vignette 'Putting on a session'. I'd made a concerted effort to impress the athletes and him, and so his failure to arrive left me angry that I couldn't showcase my ingenuity in creating an engaging analysis session at such short notice. I perceived this as a negative public judgment – which Kelchtermans (2009) has suggested can have a devastating impact on pedagogists.

Another component of professional self-understanding is task perception which relates to how the individual performs the duties that are expected of someone in their role and, indeed, the quality of that performance (Vanassche & Kelchtermans, 2014). This is a process of constant re-evaluation by the individual (Kelchtermans, 2005). In the final vignettes my experiences with this element of professional understanding are shown in the way I was asked to come up with a session at short notice (see the vignette 'Putting on a session'). Here, my experiences start with me questioning the relevance or need for this session despite having done all my analysis presentations the night before. The short notice and the conditions I had been placed under weren't ideal but that I realised I had to embrace this opportunity and present to the team as it was a key part of my role as a performance analyst. This sub-story showed that I wanted to embrace my role and the duties that I saw as key to appearing as a competent, professional performance analyst.

Yet another component of professional self-understanding is job motivation. This relates to the motives or drives that inspire the individual to work in a role in the first place (Vanassche & Kelchtermans, 2014). This originates from the individual's passion for the chosen subject or context, and is re-interpreted through the evaluation of their role by their peers, colleagues and/or athletes (Kelchtermans, 2009). In the vignette 'Hard work and presentation', I was motivated to put on a presentation that was of a professional quality and of a standard beyond anything the staff had seen before. As such, my motivation was to present as much relevant information and data in as engaging a manner as possible. I was also acutely conscious that behaving in such a manner would improve my standing in the eyes of the coach.

Indeed, this relates to another component of professional self-understanding that Kelchterman's referred to as future perspectives. This concerns a person's expectations about their future career trajectory. Kelchtermans (2009) argues that future perspectives is not a fixed process, but is shaped by the continued evaluation, construction, and sense-making undertaken by the individual. In the vignette 'Hard work and presentation' it is evident that my future perspective is clear in my mind. My choice to utilise new techniques in my presentation solidified my standing as a forward thinking performance analyst to the other members of staff. This also aided my own progression as a performance analyst, knowing full well that I could adapt to new technologies and add them to my skill set. In doing so, I showed the other staff that I saw beyond the current norms that dominate practice in this field and also demonstrated that I was willing to progress myself for the good of the club, therefore enhancing my status within the backroom team.

Developing an understanding of my professional self might be said to have increased my awareness of the challenges of the environment that I was working in. This coheres with the findings from previous research (Huggan et al., 2015; Fairbairn, 2016; Magill et al., 2017; Potrac et al., 2013a; Thompson, Potrac and Jones; 2013) which has revealed that being aware of the hierarchical nature of the environment (ones placing amongst stakeholders such as coaches, athletes, analysts, owners and executives) leads to a better understanding of the self and how an individual practices and how they might promote their standing and their professional interests within these environments. For me, this was important in order to reduce the effects of 'structural vulnerability' and the detrimental effect this might have had on my professional identity

(see Kelchtermans, 2009, for an explanation of how micro-politics involves a variety of different types of vulnerability).

My experiences here support the sports coaching and performance analysis literature that has suggested that individuals will implement a form of micro-political action in order to avoid feeling vulnerable in the working environment (Magill et al., 2017; Fairbairn, 2016; Groom, Cushion & Nelson, 2011). However, whilst my experience was a largely positive one, previous findings have suggested that this isn't necessarily the norm for performance analysts. Fairbairn (2016) noted that he struggled with the lack of time he was afforded by his superiors, which led to him producing work that was below his usual standard. This led Craig (Author and Lead Character) to shy away from similar opportunities so that he could protect his own self-worth and maintain his professional identity (Fairbairn, 2016). Similarly, Thompson, Potrac and Jones (2013) suggested that individuals require adequate time to rehearse, prepare and structure their work in order to maintain their self-image, which reduces vulnerability. By contrast, my story shows how I was fortunate enough to be afforded the time and space to create top quality work which was appreciated by the coaching staff and helped me feel trusted.

Despite the fact that my experiences were largely positive, one issue that arose from the vignettes 'Having A Word' and 'Putting on a session' show the differences between my personal interpretive framework (i.e., the set of cognitions and beliefs that operate as a lens through which coaches might perceive job situations, give meaning to, and act in them; Kelchterman & Ballett, 2009) and the organisational interests of those I worked with (in particular the head coach, John). In this instance, I felt let down by

John as he decided to take a night off whilst everybody else at the club had to work quickly to prepare content due to the adverse weather conditions. Here, I didn't agree with John's lack of professionalism, as it didn't meet my expectations of how a head coach should behave. That said, instead of actively challenging John I chose to remain professional - suppressing my true emotions – as I realised that challenging John would compromise my position and potentially damage my future prospects.

5.3- Conclusion

In this section I have sought to interpret my experiences by drawing on a number of theoretical frameworks and empirical evidence from recent research. The findings point to the emotional and political nature of practice in this field and shed further light on the strategies used by performance analysts to maintain and strengthen their position in an extremely competitive labour market.

6.0- Conclusion

6.1- Introduction

In this section my aim is to synthesise the key findings from this study and to present my final thoughts as a means of explaining what I have learnt about my practice, and the environment I hope to work in in the future. I start this process by providing two new vignettes titled ‘Freedom’ and ‘Moving On Up’. These are intended to provide a finale to the season thereby concluding the story for the reader. Secondly, I will briefly re-state some of the key findings and theoretical analysis. Thirdly, I will address any limitations to the current study. Finally, I will discuss some potential avenues of future research that researchers may wish to explore.

6.2- Vignette 10- Freedom

I’m stood in the middle of the home pitch, much like I did on the first game of the season. The air is once again warm after what seemed to be the longest winter. Our final game had ended. We got beat but even the result can’t hide my satisfaction in knowing it was all done for a little while. Here I was just staring into the landscape, thinking about the last nine months. Thoughts about the twists, the turns, the bonds, the heartache, I’m ultimately questioning how did I get to this point. The sun started to lower behind the trees, a picture of pure perfection and magnificence. Each ray of the lowering sun beams upon my tired but smiling face. Despite my loneliness stood in the

centre circle, I'm happy. I had come through the season, given my all to the club, and in turn the club got their desired goal, consolidation. Another thought comes into my head, 'what about next year?', that can wait for another day though. Right now I want live in the moment. This was where the shackles of my football life ended for now and my other life could be let free. Much like when the sun and moon rise and set in unison, now was the time for my other life.

One final walk through the grey and magnolia white corridor, this time the scene is different, the hustle and bustle of gamedays has disappeared. For the first time all season I notice the sound of the rubber coated floor, the sound of each door as they open and close. I knock on John's door hoping to catch him before I go. "Come in" is bellowed from what must be the back of the room. "I'm heading off John." I half enter the room, with my bottom half stable outside but my top half leaning between the doorway gap. "Okay mate, you have a good summer." these words fill me with thoughts of being free. "Thanks John, you too, need anything just send me a message." I leave with my shoulders and head high, chest puffed out and wide smile taking over my face.

6.3- Vignette 11- Moving On Up

As the new season approaches I am fortunate to have moved on from the ladies club and into a role at a category two professional football academy, primarily working with the Under 18's as performance analyst. This opportunity was one I couldn't turn down, full time work with full time money in a higher echelon of the football world. My Journey

now starts all over again, re-initiating myself into a new coaching setup, new athletes, a new working environment, with new technologies, and new coaching philosophies to work to. In getting this role I beat 108 other potential candidates who applied for this same role, a feat that I am utterly proud of myself for. The nature of football is competitive, a world that is hard to A) get into, and B) be prepared for. With this in mind I understand the previous season was all just a chapter in this life that I've chosen to participate in. The next chapters are still unknown. But I know they will be eventful.

6.4- Concluding The Thesis

One of the central aims of the thesis was to explore the socio-political realities that are said to characterise elite coaching environments and performance analysis practice in particular. An autoethnographic methodology was chosen as the means of data collection and representation. This included the use of vignettes to detail and represent my experiences working and practicing as a performance analyst at a high-level women's' football club. Analysis of these stories and events uncovered three dominant themes which I will now discuss in turn.

First, the use of Impression Management was prevalent throughout my time at the club. Indeed, my behaviours seem to have been influenced by the idea that appearing as professional as possible was important, and that by appearing so I would gain respect from the other coaches and the athletes I worked with. Goffman's work (1959, 1967, 1969,1971, 1972) was used to explain how I had to embrace my own professional self in order to create a desired image and to be seen in a particular light by

key stakeholders. Within the vignettes, it can be seen how I embraced my role as a performance analyst but also used other techniques to gain buy in from the athletes.

The second part of the discussion focuses on how I engaged in emotional management. This included how I suppressed my own feelings and thoughts as I considered this to be necessary due to my placing in the hierarchy of the club. The suppression of my feelings became increasingly exhaustive during this period of the season but acting in a way that protected my professional standing was more important to me than saying, or showing, how I was really feeling. The work of Hochschild (1979, 1983) was of particular relevance within these vignettes. Here, I show the importance of understanding how coaches or practitioners feel about the environment they work in. Using methodologies and modes of representation that portray the subjective and embodied experience of working in these environments has the potential to shed light on the mental toll that can be placed upon the professional self in neoliberal workplaces. Indeed, exploring why practitioners might feel the need to suppress feelings, and the social conditions that prompt such actions, are crucial to understanding some of the constraints that impede a practitioners' ability to meet their own health and wellbeing needs as well as those of the athletes under their charge. Such a line of enquiry will also help researchers to understand some of the structural factors that influence working conditions and the nature of interactions between practitioners in these environments.

In the latter section of the discussion, I explain how I drew upon micro-political strategies and actions to solidify and further my own place within the coaching structure of the club. Within the discussion, Kelchtermans work (Kelchterans & Ballett, 2002a; Kelchtermans, 2005, 2007; Vannasche & Kelchtermans, 2014) was used to interpret and

explain how I learnt to read certain situations and act in a way that enhanced my reputation and standing in the eyes of the head coach. These findings indicate that my actions were deliberate and intentional – designed to strengthen my position and ensure that I was viewed favourably by athletes and stakeholders alike.

Finally, I would like to conclude on the use of reflective practice and its effectiveness addressing issues that exist working as a performance analyst. As indicated in the vignettes, reflecting upon my practice was important to understand my place within the structure of the club, the job that I had to do and the way I thought I had to appear whilst at the club. Reflecting on these experiences allowed me to shed light on the feelings and actions that characterize work as a performance analyst within elite football. It would, however, be a mistake to assume that narratives present final interpretations of the self or others (Toner, Potrac, Nelson, Gilbourne & Marshall, 2012). One potential consequence of doing so is that little emphasis is placed upon the element of change (Knowles & Gilbourne, 2010), the potentially shifting concepts that are reflective and reflexive (Toner et al., 2012), and Intra- or Inter-personal dialogues that accompany the writing process (Knowles & Gilbourne, 2010). Within the writing process I have tried to capture the changes that occurred over the season and that reflected my standing within the club structure.

In addressing these issues, the thesis has added greater understanding to the realities of working as a performance analyst within an elite sporting context. In doing so, the emotional and embodied challenges of such work have become clearer with the assumption that this thesis sheds provides a unique window into the trials and tribulations of working with and for other coaches whilst still trying to concentrate on

one's own role and the protection of one's identity. The thesis therefore paints a picture of the performance analyst as a small cog in a bigger machine, where the individual has to try maintain a professional identity and read situations through a micro-political lens. Here, every action and/or interaction is carefully thought out, reflected upon, and then enacted in such a way as to avoid conflict or suspicions of unprofessionalism.

6.5- Limitations

Despite the thesis showing aspects of the reality of working as a performance analyst in an elite context, a day-by-day compendium of stories would be the only way of comprehensively capturing the social interactions of this context. This, of course, would be very difficult from a logistical perspective. The current exploration used vignettes as a way of portraying the most significant issues (in my view) that occurred within the coaching environment. A weakness of this approach is that it may fail to capture the mundanity of everyday practice. That is, much of what happens in these environments is routine and unremarkable and this may be something that future researchers could explore. For example, how does mundane practice make analysts feel? What is their embodied experience of this phenomenon? What toll does this take and how does it influence their professional identity and sense of self?

6.6- Recommendations For Future Research

Future research should continue to focus upon the socio-political realities that characterise work in elite sports settings, and in particular, the field of performance

analysis provision, including those who practice it. Researchers may wish to use phenomenological approaches which might shed light on the embodied nature of practice in this field. Indeed, more research is required to explore how PA practice is lived and felt – that is, the affective implications of work in this setting. Research of this nature will provide us with a better understanding of the reality of working in a sports coaching environment and how practitioners feel about the tactics or approaches they use in order to maintain and enhance their position. In this thesis, focus was devoted towards the support I was given by colleagues and significant others, the context I was working in, and how I managed my situation for my own betterment. Future research could go beyond this by exploring how emotional labour and management affects the analyst's personal life (including relationships with friends and family). Also, having set my narratives in the world of women's elite football, a piece of future autoethnographic research could focus solely on, and hone in on, the interactions between a male performance analyst and female athlete. I believe this would allow for a greater understanding of the social environment and the relationships that are created, managed and negotiated with those that you try to progress athletically.

Researchers may also wish to further explore the role vulnerability plays in the coaching process. Within my Vignette 'Hard work and presentation' I explain how I was afforded time to create work that was to the required standard. The performance analysts depicted in Fairbairn (2016) and Thompson, Potrac and Jones' (2013) work were afforded no such luxury. It would be interesting to explore this in future performance analysis research, especially in the professional environment where

efficiency is often viewed as being more important than the quality of the work itself (Fairbairn, 2016).

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8.0- Appendices

8.1- Ethical Approval Letter

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PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL
Lee Wright
Faculty of Health Sciences
University of Hull
Via email

11th March 2019

Dear Lee

REF FHS127 - An Auto-ethnhographic Exploration of a Performance Analyst's Working Practices in Football

Thank you for submitting your ethics application to the Faculty of Health Sciences Research Ethics Committee.

Given the information you have provided I confirm approval by Chair's action.

Please refer to the Research Ethics Committee web page for reporting requirements in the event of any amendments to your study.

I wish you every success with your study.

Yours sincerely

Dr Tim Alexander
Deputy Chair, FHS Research Ethics Committee

UNIVERSITY OF HULL

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RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

FORM A – New Application

(Involving human participants, subjects or material)

It is essential that you are familiar with the University Code of Good Research Practice, Research Ethics Policy and the Procedures for Granting Ethical Approval before you complete this form that can be found here. Please confirm that you have read and understood these documents:

☑ **Yes**

Please read each question carefully, taking note of instructions and completing all parts. If a question is not applicable please indicate so. Where a question asks for information which you have previously provided in answer to another question, please refer to your earlier answer rather than repeating information.

Ethics reference number (for office use):	
WorkTribe project URL	

PART A: SUMMARY

A.1 Title of the research An Auto-ethnhographic Exploration of a Performance Analyst's Working Practices in Football	
A.2 Principal investigator's contact details	
Name *(Title, first name, surname)*	Mr Lee Wright
Position	Student
Faculty/School	Sports Health & Exercise Science
Telephone number	07870958655
University of Hull email address	lee.wright@2015.hull.ac.uk
A.3 To be completed by students only	
Qualification working towards (e.g. Masters, PhD, ClinPsyD)	Masters
Student number	201508026
Supervisor's name (Title, first name, surname)	Dr John Toner
Faculty/ School	Sports Health & Exercise Science
Supervisor's telephone number	
Supervisor's email address	John.toner@hull.ac.uk
A.4 Other relevant members of the research team (e.g. co-investigators, co-supervisors)	
Name *(Title, first name, surname)*	Dr Luke Jones
Position	Lecturer in Sports Coaching and Performance
Faculty/ School	SHES
Telephone number	
Institution	University of Hull
Email address	l.k.jones@hull.ac.uk

A.5 Select from the list below to describe your research: (Select all that apply)

- [ ] Research on or with human participants
- [ ] Research working with data of human participants
- [x] New data collected by qualitative methods
- [ ] New data collected by quantitative methods
- [ ] New data collected from observing individuals or populations
- [ ] Routinely collected data or secondary data
- [ ] Research working with aggregated or population data
- [ ] Research using already published data or data in the public domain
- [ ] Research taking direct measurements from individuals e.g. physiology
- [ ] Research working with human tissue samples
- [ ] Research involving any invasive techniques including administering substances, food (other than refreshments), vitamins or supplements.
- [ ] Research involving discussion of sensitive topics or topics that could be considered sensitive
- [ ] Research involving discussion of culturally sensitive issues
- [ ] Prolonged or frequent participant involvement
- [ ] Research involving members of the public in a research capacity (participant research)
- [ ] Research conducted outside the UK
- [ ] Research involving accessing social media sites
- [ ] Research involving accessing or encountering security sensitive material
- [ ] Research involving accessing websites or material associated with extreme or terrorist communities
- [ ] Research involving storing or transmitting any material that could be interpreted as sympathetic, endorsing or promoting terrorist acts
- [ ] Research involving financial inducements for participants (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time)

PART B: THE RESEARCH

8.2 *Ethics*

UNIVERSITY OF HULL | FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES

FHS RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

SUBMISSION CHECKLIST

Applications by members of Staff:
I have completed the Research Integrity module on the e learning portal **Yes/No**

Indicate with 'X' the documents that have been included with this application.

Fully completed application form	x
Completed risk assessment (see section A11 form available on FHS Sharepoint)	
Recruitment materials – with date and version number) (e.g. poster or email used to invite people to participate)	
Information sheet(s) – with date and version number (different version for each group of participants)	
Consent form(s) – with date and version number (different version for each group of participants)	
Letter or email seeking permission from gatekeeper/host	
Questionnaire(s) – with date and version number	
If conducting a student survey, confirm that it fits with University policy https://share.hull.ac.uk/Services/Governance/PolicyDocuments/Policy on Student Surveys.docx	
Interview questions / topic guide – with date and version number	
Data management plan (see section E6)	

Supporting documents should be saved with a meaningful file name and version control (e.g. 'Participant Information Sheet v1.0').

Research Ethics Form A1 V1.2 23.7.2018

E.1 Will the research involve the use of any of the following? (Select as appropriate)

- ☐ Foetal material
- ☐ The recently deceased
- ☐ Cadavers
- ☐ Human bodily fluid
- ☐ Human tissue
- ☐ Human organs
- ☐ Human gametes

Go to Section F if the research does not involve any of the above material.

E.2 Will the material to be accessed be collected as part of this study or 3rd party accessed (E.g. material collected as part of another study or purchased)?

If yes to 3rd party access, please provide details on appropriate consent for this use.

E.3 What type of tissue or material will be collected?

E.4 How will the tissue or material be collected and who will do this?

E.5 How many samples will be collected?

E.6 How long will samples be stored?

E.7 Do you require a regulatory licence to use or store this material?

☐ Yes ☐ No

All material is expected to be stored in line with the Human Tissue Authority storage expectations.

E.8 Do you have the appropriate Health and Safety procedures in place for the researchers to handle the samples?

☐ Yes ☐ No

PART F: RESEARCH DATA

D.6 Describe whether participants will be able to withdraw from the study, and up to what point (e.g. if data is to be anonymised). If withdrawal is <u>not</u> possible, explain why not.
Any limits to withdrawal, e.g. once the results have been written up or published, should be made clear to participants in advance, preferably by specifying a date after which withdrawal would not be possible. Make sure that the information provided to participants (e.g. information sheets, consent forms) is consistent with the answer to D6.

Not applicable.

D.7 How long will the participant have to decide whether to take part in the research?
It may be appropriate to recruit participants on the spot for low risk research; however consideration is usually necessary for riskier projects.

Not applicable.

D.8 What arrangements have been made for participants who might have difficulties understanding verbal explanations or written information, or who have particular communication needs that should be taken into account to facilitate their involvement in the research? *Different populations will have different information needs, different communication abilities and different levels of understanding of the research topic. Reasonable efforts should be made to include potential participants who could otherwise be prevented from participating due to disabilities or language barriers.*

Not applicable.

D.9 Will individual or group interviews/ questionnaires discuss any topics or issues that might be sensitive, embarrassing or upsetting, or is it possible that criminal or other disclosures requiring action could take place during the study (e.g. during interviews or group discussions)? *The information sheet should explain under what circumstances action may be taken.*

☒ No

If yes, give details of procedures in place to deal with these issues.

D.10 Will individual research participants receive any payments, fees, reimbursement of expenses or any other incentives or benefits for taking part in this research?

☒ No

If Yes, please describe the amount, number and size of incentives and on what basis this was decided.

PART E: RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN TISSUES OR MATERIAL

D.2 Will you be excluding any groups of people, and if so what is the rationale for that?
Excluding certain groups of people, intentionally or unintentionally may be unethical in some circumstances. It may be wholly appropriate to exclude groups of people in other cases

Not applicable.

D.3 How many participants will be recruited and how was the number decided upon?
It is important to ensure that enough participants are recruited to be able to answer the aims of the research. The number of participants should be sufficient to achieve worthwhile results but should not be so high as to involve unnecessary recruitment and burdens for participants. This is especially pertinent in research which involves an element of risk. Describe here how many participants will be recruited, and whether this will be enough to answer the research question.

Not applicable.

If you have a formal power calculation, please replicate it here.

D.4 Will the research involve any element of deception?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please describe why this is necessary and whether participants will be informed at the end of the study.

D.5 Will informed consent be obtained from the research participants?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, give details of how it will be done. Give details of any particular steps to provide information (in addition to a written information sheet) e.g. videos, interactive material. If you are not going to be obtaining informed consent you will need to justify this.

If participants are to be recruited from any of potentially vulnerable groups, give details of extra steps taken to assure their protection. Describe any arrangements to be made for obtaining consent from a legal representative.

Copies of any written consent form, written information and all other explanatory material should accompany this application*. The information sheet should make explicit that participants can withdraw from the research at any time, if the research design permits. Remember to use meaningful file names and version control to make it easier to keep track of your documents.*

C.2 What are the potential benefits and/ or risks for research participants in both the short and medium-term?
Risks may include health and safety, physical harm and emotional well-being

This is not applicable.

What will be done to avoid or minimise the risks?

C.3 Is there a potential for criminal or other disclosures to the researcher requiring action to take place during the research? (e.g. during interviews/group discussions, or use of screen tests for drugs?)

☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, please describe and say how these will be addressed:

C.4 What will participants be asked to do in the study? *(e.g. number of visits, time involved, travel required, interviews)*

The study is based on a reflective account of my experiences working as a performance analyst. I will be in constant communication with my supervisor to talk through my experiences and air any issues I may encounter during the study.

I will keep logs of the notable experiences that occur during my working time at the football club and use these create a narrative of my time at the club.

PART D: RECRUITMENT & CONSENT PROCESSES

How participants are recruited is important to ensure that they are not induced or coerced into participation. The way participants are identified may have a bearing on whether the results can be generalised. Explain each point and give details for subgroups separately if appropriate. Also say who will identify, approach and recruit participants. Remember to include all advertising material (posters, emails etc) as part of your application.

D.1 Describe how potential participants in the study be identified, approached and recruited and who will do this:

(i) identified:

Not applicable.

(ii) approached:

Not applicable.

(iii) recruited:

Not applicable.

B.1 Give a short summary of the research (max 300 words)

The research will present an auto-ethnographic account of my experiences working as a performance analyst in an elite football setting. The study will seek to explore how various social factors and conditions inform and shape my practice in this setting. For example, I will explore how my relationships with significant others (e.g., coaches, stakeholders and athletes involved at the club) influence my practice and professional self-understanding. Managing these relationships can aid the analysts self-worth (Kelchtermans, 2005), self-interest (Magill et al., 2017) and the progression of the professional self (Goffman, 1959) or philosophical beliefs (Thompson et al., 2013). Through the collection of Auto-ethnographical data we hope to understand how the analyst dealt with these situations through the use of impression management (Goffman, 1959), and the effect it had on the working practices, taking into account the interactions and social bonds that existed between the analyst and the coaches, the athletes or the stakeholders (Huggan et al., 2014).
The study will be an Auto-ethnography based around my own observations. I will reflectively write about my thoughts and feelings in the form of narrative, justifying my actions in the performance analysis coaching setting. The aim of this process will be be to show progression in the conscious knowing of what actually happens working as an analyst in an elite football context. The findings will shed light on the role played by an analyst plays in high-performance settings.

B.2 Proposed study dates and duration

Research start date (DD/MM/YY): __01/03/19_____ Research end date (DD/MM/YY): 03/03/19_____

Fieldwork start date (DD/MM/YY): __07/11/19_____ Fieldwork end date (DD/MM/YY): 01/03/19_____

B.3 Where will the research be undertaken? (i.e. in the street, on University of Hull premises, in schools, on-line etc.)
The auto-ethnographic account will be based on my reflections upon within the working football club environment. This includes thoughts and feelings about my practice, and my interactions with coaches/players etc, on the training ground, the performance analysis suite, and on matchdays at the home ground and at opposition stadia.

Do you have permission to conduct the research on the premises?

☒ Yes

If no, please describe how this will be addressed.

_____
_

B.4 Does the research involve any risks to the researchers themselves, or people not directly involved in the research? *E.g. lone working*

☒ No

If yes, please describe and say how these will be addressed (include reference to relevant lone working policies): _____

If yes, please include a copy of your complete risk assessment form with your application.

NB: If you are unsure whether a risk assessment is required visit the Health and Safety SharePoint site. Risk assessments are required for all fieldwork taking place off campus.

B.5 What are the main ethical issues with the research and how will these be addressed?
Indicate any issues on which you would welcome advice from the ethics committee

There are no such issues.

B.6 Does the research involve an international collaborator or research conducted overseas:

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, describe any ethical review procedures that you will need to comply with in that country:

Describe the measures you have taken to comply with these:

Include copies of any ethical approval letters/ certificates with your application.

PART C: HUMAN PARTCIPANTS AND SUBJECTS

C.1 Are the participants expected to be from any of the following groups? (Tick as appropriate)

☐ Children under 16 years old. ***Specify age group:*** _____

☐ Adults with learning disabilities

☐ Adults with other forms of mental incapacity or mental illness

☐ Adults in emergency situations

☐ Prisoners or young offenders

☐ Those who could be considered to have a particularly dependent relationship with the investigator, e.g. members of staff, students

☐ Other vulnerable groups

☑ No participants from any of the above groups

Include in Section D5 details of extra steps taken to assure their protection.

Does your research require you to have a DBS check? yes

It is the researcher's responsibility to check whether a DBS check (or equivalent) is required and to obtain one if it is needed. See also http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/agencies-public-bodies/dbs

F.1 Explain what measures will be put in place to protect personal data. E.g. anonymisation procedures and coding of data. Any potential for re-identification should be made clear to participants in advance.

All characters in the results, stories and reflective logs will be anonymised (i.e., assigned pseudonyms in the thesis and in the transcribed interviews).

All Data will be stored on an encrypted USB stick that is password protected, only myself and my supervisor will know the password to this. The usb will remain in a locked unit when it is not in use.

F2. What security measures are place to ensure secure storage of data at any stage of the research?

Provide details on where personal data will be stored, any of the following: (Select all that apply)

- ☐ University approved cloud computing services
- ☐ Other cloud computing services
- ☐ Manual files
- ☐ Private company computers
- ☑ Portable devices
- ☐ Home or other personal computers (not recommended; data should be stored on a University of Hull server such as your G,T, X or Z: drive where it is secure and backed up regularly)

Please attach the data management plan in the appendices; for further information visit http:// libguides.hull.ac.uk/researchdata

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F.3 Who will have access to participant's personal data during the study?
Myself and my supervisor

F.4 Where will the data generated by the research be analysed and by whom?

The data will be analysed by myself, but I will use conversations with my supervisor to make sense of my findings.

F.5 Who will have access and act as long term custodian for the research data generated by the study?

Myself as the primary investigator

F.6 Have all researchers that have access to the personal data that will be collected as part of the research study, completed the University (or equivalent) data protection training?

☐ Yes ☐ No

It is mandatory that all researchers accessing personal data have completed data protection training prior to commencing the research.

PART I: DECLARATIONS

Declaration by Principal Investigator

1 The information in this form is accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.

2. I take full responsibility for the information I have supplied in this document.

3. I undertake to abide by the University's ethical and health and safety guidelines, and the ethical principles underlying good practice guidelines appropriate to my discipline.

4. I will seek the relevant School Risk assessment/COSHH approval if required.

5. If the research is approved, I undertake to adhere to the project protocol, the terms of this application and any conditions set out by the Faculty Research Ethics Committee.

6. Before implementing substantial amendments to the protocol, I will submit an amendment request to the Faculty Research Ethics Committee seeking approval.

7. If requested, I will submit progress reports.

8. I am aware of my responsibility to be up to date and comply with the requirements of the law and relevant guidelines relating to security and confidentiality of participants or other personal data, including the need to register when necessary with the appropriate Data Protection Officer.

9. I understand that research records/data may be subject to inspection for audit purposes if required in future.

10. I take full responsibility for the actions of the research team and individuals supporting this study, thus all those involved will be given training relevant to their role in the study.

11. By signing the validation I agree that the Faculty Research Ethics Committee, on behalf of the University of Hull, will hold personal data in this application and this will be managed according to the principles established in the Data protection Act (1998).

Sharing information for training purposes: Optional – please tick as appropriate:

☐ I would be content for members of other Research Ethics Committees to have access to the information in the application in confidence for training purposes. All personal identifiers and references to researchers, funders and research units would be removed.

Principal Investigator

Signature of Principal Investigator:
(This needs to be an actual signature rather than just typed. Electronic signatures are acceptable)

Print name: .....LEE WRIGHT.....Date:(dd/mm/yyyy): ..22/10/18.....

Supervisor of student research: I have read, edited and agree with the form above.

Supervisor's signature:....  .....
(This needs to be an actual signature rather than just typed. Electronic signatures are acceptable)

Print name: .....John Toner..... Date: (dd/mm/yyyy): .04-02-19.....

Remember to include any supporting material such as your participant information sheet, consent form, interview questions and recruitment material with your application. Version control should be adopted to include the version number and date on relevant documents in the appendices.

These should be pasted as Appendices to this form.
Multiple documents will not be accepted.