The High Performance Swimming Coach as a Leader:

Developing Contextual Fit

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Statement of Authenticity

I declare that this thesis is my own work, and has not been submitted by me in the same form for the award of a higher degree elsewhere. All material, which is not my own work, has been identified and appropriately referenced.

Personal audio recorded material was collected and secured by me and any other electronic source which is not my own has been appropriately identified and referenced accordingly. Photographs included in the thesis are by kind permission of the owners and are annotated with their name. The Concept Maps in Appendix 6 are my own work and were produced following conversations with James Gibson MBE.

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Paul Anthony Robbins

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Abstract

This thesis addresses the question of how a High Performance Swimming Coach (HPSC) in the UK, acting as a leader, develops a contextual fit for their role of facilitating elite athlete performance. The main goal of the research was to explore the nature of elite swimming coaching in order to reveal the factors that give an HPSC, from an ontological standpoint, feelings of being at *home* in their chosen career.

The main theoretical perspectives used in the analysis of research data were leadership, including the concepts of management, and sociology. The sociological perspectives on leadership encompass the concepts of social interactionism and Pierre Bourdieu's habitus, capital and field. It became evident, in the early stages of the research, that an eclectic mix of theories would enable a more comprehensive and rounded analysis of the research data.

The primary research method selected was a qualitative, single case study, although elements of phenomenology, heuristic inquiry and ethnography were also employed in the gathering of the research data. The aim was to gain first-hand accounts from elite swimming coaches in the UK, from an existential viewpoint, of their journey towards becoming an effective HPSC.

Primary data for the research was collected from three sources: a purposive sample of 32 HPSCs from a range of swimming organisations across the UK; informal interviews and observations at major swimming competitions in the UK; and responses from high profile UK and international HPSCs involved in coaching forums at British Swimming Coaches Association (BSCA) annual conferences.

Findings from the analysis revealed that HPSCs execute their role within five distinct social fields, which are all sources of mediating influences and determinants of contextual fit. These five generic fields are: the core HPSC-athlete field; the competition arena; the swimming organisation; UK Sport and British society. It is, however, the first three fields that exert the most social pressure on the HPSC and are the main focus for the research.

The findings also revealed that the determinants of contextual fit are contextualised identity and contextualised leadership. Contextualised identity is realised when the HPSC becomes the embodiment of their swimming organisation within the five contextual fields. Relationships formed and the social influence that the HPSC has within the milieu define their contextualised leadership.

All the 32 HPSCs interviewed showed high levels of personal drive and competitiveness and were ruthless regarding the standards they set themselves and expected from their athletes. As a counterbalance, however, to a tough no-nonsense approach, they exhibited high levels of emotional intelligence, emotional labour, and care for their athletes. Other factors revealed

included highly developed contextual awareness, an insatiable hunger for swimming-related technical knowledge and a high learning agility.

In their operational role, they displayed an ability to see what other coaches were unable to see, through a highly developed 'Coaching-Eye'. They could also build effective coach-athlete relationships and project manage a team of technical support agents to meet the needs of their athletes competing on the world stage.

Recommendations for further research and HPSC continued professional development include the Coaching-Eye, relationships, contracting with a range of stakeholders, project management and suggestions for future choices of theoretical perspectives for investigations into leadership phenomena.

Chapter 1: Introduction

> Man's search for meaning is the primary motivation in his life and not a "secondary rationalization" of instinctual drives. This meaning is unique and specific in that it must and can be fulfilled by him alone; only then does it achieve a significance which will satisfy his own will to meaning (Frankl, 2006, p. 99).

> As to ourselves, we should know well the joy of seeing things; the curiosity aroused by novel objects; the straining of our senses to make out what it is that we see and the vast superiority of some people in quickness of eye and penetrating powers of observation (Polanyi, 1962, p.103).

Introduction

I have chosen to begin my thesis with two quotes, one from Victor Frankl on the search for meaning and one from Michael Polanyi on the tacit dimension of knowing. Although I was not always conscious of it, I have felt that my role as a leader has brought meaning into my life during two parallel careers. I have also had the distinct impression that my influence as a leader has fluctuated over time, and that it has been dynamic and highly contextually dependent – at times I have felt at *home* and at other times alienated.

In Polanyi's words, at a deeper level, I possibly did have an intimation of the coherence of hitherto not comprehended particulars seeing 'something that is hidden and yet not inaccessible' (Polanyi, 1962, p.131). Although unaware of it during my lived experience, I can now trace the source of my deeply held research question back, over four decades, to the two cognitive stimulants of meaning and knowing. Little did I realise, at the beginning of my apprenticeship as a doctoral researcher, how complex this would become.

The question that intrigued me was: 'How does a High Performance Swimming Coach (HPSC), as an effective leader, develop a contextual fit?' My research, therefore, focused on leadership in context, where context entails followers and a range of other stakeholders. How contextual factors affect leadership seems to be an obvious question to ask. It appears, however, that there is a paucity of publications on the subject and therefore worthy of exploring. In order to answer the research question it was necessary to gain further understanding of the nature of the role taken by coaches to elite swimming athletes.

Throughout the thesis, the term High Performance Swimming Coach (HPSC) refers to swimming coaches who are currently working directly with elite athletes. Head Coaches (HCs) and National Performance Directors (NPDs) who do not coach elite athletes on a day-to-day basis do not form part of the study. The terms 'athlete' and 'swimmer' are interchangeable, often appearing in recorded HPSC interviews. For the purpose of the thesis the terms 'high performance' and 'elite' refer to international level competition at senior or

junior level. Swimmers at club or national level competition below the age of sixteen will be referred to as 'age-group swimmers'.

As a traveller on a journey through leadership and sports coaching, it seems that I have unknowingly been treading two converging pathways. On each pathway, I have experienced both the praxis and theories of leadership and coaching within a unique social setting. First, I have been very fortunate in performing leadership roles from supervisory through to senior positions in a commercial organisation. Second, I have had the opportunity to experience being a swimming Head Coach in a medium-sized age-group organisation. Each of these pathways has involved me in both the practice of leadership and the development of others in this discipline.

Contribution

My thesis is intended to offer a contribution to leadership and sports coaching literature, regarding the specific notion of a leader's contextual fit. This work provides insights into the nature of an HPSC's role and, in processual terms, their journey towards becoming an effective leader to elite athletes. To conduct the analysis, I used the theoretical perspectives of leadership, sociology and the sociological framework of Bourdieu – namely his concepts of *habitus, capital* and *field* (Bourdieu, 1977). This, I would posit, provides an essential link between sociological perspectives and leadership theory. This unique study recognises the importance of context in shaping and defining leadership effectiveness while also giving scope for the leadership role to be understood through HPSCs' lived experiences.

In using this approach, the study recognises the constitutive nature of leadership (Grint, 1997) and the importance of considering context in the leader–follower dynamic. It seems that a considerable amount of literature on leadership privileges the leader, renders the follower as a silent subordinate without agency (Brown and Thornborrow, 1996) and tends to ignore the context. This thesis, therefore, explores in some detail the contextual factors that affect an HPSC's identity and ability, as a leader of elite athletes, to build effective influence relationships (Knights and Wilmot, 1992). The phenomenon of a leader's contextual fit is under investigated and it is in this that I make a contribution to the current literature.

Personal Background

I begin with a short reflection on my career to reveal the sources of my own underlying cultural, social and symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1977) and the considerations taken for my research epoché (Allen-Collinson, 2011; Ashworth, 1999). My interest in leadership has deepened throughout every step I have taken in both my career and my academic development. My work as a swimming coach and in numerous leadership positions in the commercial world has afforded me a variety of lived experiences. I believe that in reflecting

and interpreting those experiences in light of the research I have conducted, I have also enhanced my own abilities as a leader.

I worked for British Telecom (BT) in the 1970s prior to becoming an age-group swimming coach. It was there that my interest in leadership first developed and intensified on my first promotion to a supervisory management role. I was invited to join the Eastern Region Headquarters Service Division as a technical support engineer. It was in that role that I project-managed the introduction of a new revolutionary telephone switching technology, known as System X. This provided my first insights into systemic thinking and how the external world is described in internal software data structures – a form of machine habitus.

During this period, through my own personal development initiatives, I became a competitive age-group swimming coach and was appointed as Chief Coach to Colchester Swimming Club in 1982. Two years later I became a qualified Swim England (formerly the Amateur Swimming Association) Senior Coach Tutor. The coaching of age-group swimmers exposed to me what I considered as the true nature of transformational leadership reflected in the effects that it can have on athlete and club identity.

One burning question, which preoccupied my interest as a competitive swimming coach, related to the role of the High Performance Swimming Coaches (HPSC). I was intrigued by how these elite swimming coaches developed a contextual fit or rightness in their role of coaching elite competitive athletes; they had an air of confidence and their swimmers always seemed so successful.

Whilst advancing my role in coaching, I continued my technical support role in BT engineering until my promotion to Executive Engineer in 1987. On my promotion to second-line management, I and a small team of management trainers helped establish a local training unit in East Anglia that was commissioned to implement cultural change in the organisation. Despite stepping away from swimming coaching briefly, my intense interest for leadership continued. I was fortunate to become the lead trainer for a programme labelled 'Leadership into the 1990s'. In this initiative, I realised that popular leadership theories are often problematic in terms of theoretical gaps; a predicament which persists today and which helps inform my thesis.

The next chapter of my career allowed me to implement in practice the fundamental theories of leadership. Through another cultural change programme, I was given responsibilities to establish project-management practices in the newly-formed Northern Home Counties (NHC) zone. I led a team of zone-wide project managers and ensured the delivery of telephone exchange modernisation in NHC and later became a senior planning manager. My experience in that project led to my promotion as an adviser to BT Regions across the UK. That position

issued a new challenge - to provide leadership without direct authority. This gave me a new perspective regarding theory and practice.

After establishing myself as a private consultant, in 1998 I enhanced my professional status by upgrading my membership within the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, and the Institute of Engineering Technology. As a consultant, I was able to advise companies' senior management teams on leadership and human resource management. I also became a part-time lecturer at Chelmsford City College of Further Education, where I became a Curriculum Team Leader for the Diploma in Management Studies, the Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector and for Access to Higher Education.

Inspirations

My interest in the role that contextual factors play in the leadership phenomenon has been heavily stimulated by the fortunes of two individuals - one political leader and one enigmatic sports coach and manager – namely Winston Churchill and Brian Clough. These individuals offer two prime examples of how contextual factors have an impact on a leader's influence, which can either result in them achieving charisma (Potts, 2009) or falling into impotence. In these respects, my original ontical stance, derived from my engineering background, was severely challenged. My original tendency to adopt a functionalist leader-centric perspective could not fully explain why or how these leaders had such dramatic shifts in their fortunes and effectiveness.

Leading up to the Second World War, Winston Churchill was relatively impotent in terms of his political influence. In what are commonly referred to as his 'Wilderness Years', Bliven comments:

> If Churchill had died in the mid-thirties – perhaps from one of his bouts of pneumonia
> which he experienced from time to time – he would have been recorded in history as
> a brilliant, erratic, unstable man whose great talents had never come to fruition
> (Bliven, 1965, p. 38).

In the period of the Second World War 1939-1945, he had his finest hours and was hailed as Britain's greatest leader. However, in the years that followed, in the peace-time context, he lost the support of the British people and returned to relative obscurity.

Brian Clough was an extremely successful football coach for teams in two separate contexts: Derby County and Nottingham Forest. However, he failed in a further coaching position, at Leeds United, where he lasted a mere 44 days, an event that became the inspiration for the book *The Damned United* written by Peace (2006). He alienated the players at the club and was sacked. 'I've said before that they disliked me at Elland Road, the majority of the players that is, but I reckon they actually hated my guts' (Clough, 2005, p.174).

Clough is still deemed by many to have been a charismatic manager. He was outspoken, provocative and witty. His famous quotes are still articulated by those who love the game of football. He serves as an example of how charisma is a socially constructed phenomenon (Berger and Luckman, 1979).

Research Background

This research study was initiated in order to help me understand, from an elite swimming coaching perspective, the process of becoming a leader of elite athletes. The thesis is intended to provide insights into what gives HPSCs those feelings of being at *home* and 'in their element' (Robinson, 2009) or, to be more precise, into what they perceive as a strong contextual fit.

When observing HPSCs in their training environment, or at competition, the image they project is one of an individual who has found their calling in life (Dreyfus and Kelly, 2011). They appear confident and at ease with the athletes they coach and within other associated contextual fields of operation (Gunneriusson, 2017). It seems that their chosen profession is one that brings fulfilment and meaning to their lives and which defines them. They seem at one with their socially constructed identity and their sense of self (Haslam, 2001).

Whilst the research is primarily centred on HPSCs, it does not adopt a leader-centric perspective. Rather, the postmodernist stance that is adopted recognises the complexity of the phenomenon and the constitutive nature of leadership (Grint, 1997). The research data is viewed through my own cultural experiences and interpretation is informed by respected theories pertaining to leadership, and sociology.

The HPSC operates within a set of unique social contexts and fields of activity and performs a number of unique roles. These roles include the management of contextual conditions conducive to producing elite athlete performance and providing leadership and coaching to the athletes and a range of other stakeholders. It seems that it is within this milieu that HPSCs experience feelings of being at *home* or, conversely, of alienation. The research study of these combined factors is intended to reveal the nature of the phenomenon.

The HPSC chooses to act as a leader to elite athletes. They appear to value what they do and they find purpose and meaning in the associated activities. Polanyi and Prosch, reflecting on the philosophical stance of Sartre, state:

> What we choose, we value simply because we have chosen it (and apparently we remain scot-free at any moment to non-value it by simply un-choosing it). In other words, we do not choose (in his view) because we see the value of something. We see the value of something because we have chosen it (Polanyi and Prosch, 1975, p.4).

This thesis, then, looks at the role of the HPSC through the experiential eyes of a large body of active HPSCs within the UK. Investigations are conducted through the use of face-to-face formal and informal interviews, conference question and answer inserts, and reflexive personal observations. Elite-sport coaching was selected as the subject of this study in order to limit the number of factors that might conceal the phenomenon (Heidegger, 1962) of leadership of interest. In that context there are a number of factors which combine to reveal the phenomenon particularly clearly.

First, HPSCs' goals are very clear and elite athletes, by nature, are highly motivated individuals, regardless of their leader's influence. Second, in this context a follower's performance can, in certain instances, be attributed more accurately to their leader's influence. Third, with the exception of some administrative elements, the organisational structures in which HPSCs operate are relatively simple and have clear lines of authority. Finally, the roles and relationships found in swimming organisations are less ambiguous and more easily identified.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

My primary purpose in conducting the literature review was to place this thesis in the wider context of extant knowledge, both from a leadership perspective and from the perspective of coaching within sport. There are very good reasons for conducting a systematic literature review. As Gill and Johnson state: '[I]t demonstrates some awareness of the current state of knowledge on the subject, its limitations and how the proposed research aims to add to what is known' (Gill and Johnson. 2006, p.25).

I wished to provide a framework for my analysis of the subject that would inform the creation of my research questions. I also wanted the literature review to provide additional insights into the subject and identify any 'problematized' (Foucault, 1982) aspects that were in need of further investigation (Bryman, 2016; Wyse, 2006; Gill and Johnson, 2006).

Before starting the thesis I intended, from an epistemological perspective, to investigate what was already known about leadership, especially related to context. At the time of writing the thesis, a Google search on Amazon for books on leadership registered 100,000 entries. 'Leadership is the topic of a vast literature, and is a central concern of all the social sciences and most of the humanities' (Marturano and Gosling, 2008, p.xxiii).

I wanted to identify concepts and theories that resonated with my own experiences as a leader, which also held relevance for my research question. Bryman suggests, when investigating a body of literature, there are three useful questions to ask: **'**Are there any significant controversies...inconsistencies...or unanswered research questions in this area?' (Bryman, 2016, p.94). I used these questions to guide my review of the literature to aid in critically

evaluating any postulated theories and, relating back to my own study, in informing my own hypotheses.

My examination of the literature concentrated on two theoretical perspectives, namely: leadership in a general sense and social theories that emphasise and explicate the significance of contextual factors. To use a more discursive approach, I also considered management concepts. I wanted to read widely, following the premise that 'when you read a selection of texts you usually find there are some points that keep cropping up' (Wyse, 2006, p.89). I was keen to note any recurring messages from respected sources such that they could be used to add weight to my analysis.

To ensure that my review included the most recent research, I selected texts from 2016 and worked backwards. I gained access to publications and a range of online journals using Lancaster University library facilities, including 'OneSearch.' I also accessed information using the internet and recognised academic database facilities, such as EBSCO, JSTOR, Shibboleth and Open Athens. Included in the sites visited were the relevant institutions and national governing bodies for sport. The British Swimming Coaches Association (BSCA) and British Swimming were of particular importance to the research.

The review comprises two main areas, which respectively concern perspectives on leadership and sociology. The discussion of management perspectives, which is considered as part of leadership, follows the evolution of theory from the early 1900s through to contemporary views, and concludes with a short examination of management as distinguished by some authors from leadership. For the discussion on leadership I viewed the subject through multiple theoretical lenses – namely leadership as: person, skill, identity, function, contingency, behaviour, relational and transformational. Leadership, however, can only take place in a social setting.

The final part of the literature review draws the readers' attention to the strong link sociological perspectives have with leadership and the interactions that take place at a micro level between leaders and followers. Whilst leadership is the primary theoretical perspective for the research, the secondary lens of sociology is used as a supporting framework. To conclude the section, Bourdieu's concepts of *habitus*, *capital* and *field* are considered to provide a context and time dimension to HPSCs' development towards a contextual fit.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This thesis is the culmination of over 40 years of experience and 6 years of deep, reflective and reflexive practice (Brookfield, 1995) and personal research. My interest over this period has shifted from a focus on different epistemologies to a primary position of ontology. I have fully immersed myself in the lives of HPSCs in the UK. The contribution from my research is

directed towards helping the community of UK HPSCs to understand the nature of their role and, through personal development, work in a more directly and 'roundly' way (McGilchrist, 2018).

The method I selected for this thesis was based on my ontological and epistemological orientation, those of constructionism and interpretivism, respectively. The social research philosophies of constructionism and interpretivism, as derived from a humanistic perspective, were the main deciding factors in my choice, for the reason that they recognise the complexity of human interaction in multiple contexts.

My choice of method was that of a single case study, focused on the community of elite swimming coaches in the United Kingdom. HPSCs in the UK meet at major competitions, form friendships and alliances, and at the same time have an intense desire to outperform each other in the competition arena. Each HPSC becomes part of other HPSCs' social capital, and shared knowledge forms part of their economic capital (Bourdieu, 1977).

A fellow traveller and critical friend throughout the study period was James Gibson MBE, who was newly appointed to the role of HPSC in 2012 as a GB Sprint Coach. The statements of understanding and conceptual maps (Appendix 5 and 6 respectively) emerged from our regular conversations. Although not one of my interviewees, the memory maps and statements produced by me for James helped structure my thinking and are included to support relevant concepts referred to within the thesis.

The sources for my primary research were obtained from three main areas. Firstly, purposive samples of UK HPSCs from competitive swimming organisations across the UK were formally interviewed. My second source of research data was obtained using observation and informal interviews held with HPSCs at major swimming competitions in the UK. The third source of data for the study was gathered from coaches attending British Swimming Coaches Association (BSCA) Conferences, between 2012 and 2016.

To provide a contextual background to the research I also collected secondary research from a range of sources. This secondary data forms the contents of Chapter 4 and provides insights into the wider contexts that influence HPSCs, albeit to a large extent, unconsciously. This wider consideration of context considers all sources of mediating influences acting on the HPSC in their leadership role.

Chapter 4: Research Context

Chapter 4 provides an introduction to the contexts in which HPSCs conduct their day-to-day operational activities. These contexts are viewed in terms of Bourdieu's concept of field. They are related to each other, metaphorically, like a set of Russian dolls (Appendix 6 - Concept Map 8). Each field has a defined set of actors, and contains explicit and implied rules of the

game within which they are concerned. Moreover, each field involves competition for scarce resources, and each has its own unique culture. As described in the research analysis chapters, each field is shown to affect an HPSC's contextual fit starting from the broader macro level perspective. This approach was adopted in order to position their primary role within a micro level view where the HPSC and athletes interact to fulfill their roles.

Each cultural field is given a unique identifier in the form Field #n, where n defines the contextual layer. The first two fields reviewed in the chapter are combined and labelled as Sport and the British. These two fields are Field #4 – UK Sport and Field #5 – British Society. A review of these two fields includes the historical origins of sport in the UK, moral perspectives in sport, British sporting culture, the commercialisation and politics of sport, and professionalism and amateurism in sport. It is these two fields, collectively, that constitute the often taken for granted 'cultural wallpaper.' As Schein, discussing levels of culture, comments:

> These [cultural] levels range from the very tangible overt manifestations that one can see and feel to the deeply embedded, unconscious basic assumptions that I am defining as the essence of culture (Schein, 2004, p.16).

Observations during the research on coaching behaviours bear witness to the unconscious influences that, from a Bourdieusian perspective, affect an HPSC's habitus. The second part of the chapter reviews the Swimming Competition Arena – Field #3.

Part two of the chapter details the regulatory bodies' specific to competitive swimming, from the international to the national level, and provides an overview of the types of competitions that HPSCs attend with their athletes. It is in the competition arena that the HPSC establishes a virtual swimming organisation, and interacts with their peer coaches at off-site locations. Finally, the third section of the chapter presents a generic view of the internal structure of swimming organisations. Structure to my analysis was gained by the production of a series of conceptual diagrams (Figures 4-1 to 4-5).

The HPSC's swimming organisation, which I labelled as Field #2, has what I refer to as five internal agencies each with its own purpose and unique group of actors. It is the Core-Coaching Agency Field #1, embedded within Field #2, however, that provides organisational performance and where the HPSC and their athletes interact in the coaching process. The research findings and analysis are detailed in Chapters 5 to 7.

Chapter 5: Research Findings 1: Exploring Identity

The first chapter of research findings provide an analysis of how HPSCs develop their sense of personal, relational and community identity (Schwartz, Luyckx and Vignoles,

2012; Jenkins, 2008). In responding to interview questions, HPSCs describe in processual terms their journeys in becoming coaches to elite athletes.

The first section highlights an HPSC's rationale for choosing the role and how they formulate their coaching habitus through their accumulation of being (Bourdieu, 1977). In the second section of the chapter, HPSCs share their experiences of how, in creating a context, they embark on a learning journey that seeks to develop requisite variety (Ashby, 1957). This analysis, of self and social identity, is integrated in Chapter 7 together with the findings from Chapter 6.

Chapter 6: Research Findings 2: Relationships and Influence

This second findings chapter provide an analysis of the relationships and influence that an HPSC experiences within the five contextual fields in which they are embedded. Within each field, the HPSC forms a unique relationship with actors specific to that particular field. Within each field, the HPSC also experiences a particular set of attracting and alienating mediating influences.

In the first section of the chapter the research investigates the HPSC leader–follower relationships in each of the five contextual fields. In the second section of the chapter, influence becomes the focus. The analysis considers each component of influence that collectively contributes, with relationships, to an HPSC's effectiveness in their role. This analysis of these influence relationships is integrated, together with Chapter 5, in Chapter 7.

Chapter 7: Integrated Findings: Contextual Fit

Chapter 7 completes the analysis of research data by integrating the research findings from Chapters 5 and 6. The integration begins with contextualised identity using Bourdieu's concept of the accumulation of being – namely purpose, efficiency and recognition. The second section of the chapter analyses contextualised leadership by discussing relationships and influence. Finally the third section of the chapter discusses the integration of contextualised identity and contextualised leadership into the final theme of contextual fit.

Chapter 8: Discussion and Conclusion

The concluding chapter of the thesis comprises of a discussion, recommendations, a reflection on the research findings, a reflection on research methods and my final concluding thoughts. The discussion includes my interpretation of the findings and how they relate to the theoretical perspectives detailed in Chapter 2 Literature Review. The discussion section is followed by my recommendations for future research and UK swimming coaches' continued professional development initiatives. The recommendations section is followed by my reflections on the research findings. I also reflect on the methods used for data collection and analysis including

their strengths and limitations. Finally I reflect on my key learning during this doctoral apprenticeship, a major source of which were the challenges faced and the time taken to complete the thesis.

Conclusion

This chapter began by outlining the rationale for conducting the thesis. This was my deeply held research question of how an HPSC develops a contextual fit. From this I presented my intended contribution which was to reveal the nature of the HPSC role and those factors that contribute to their feelings of being at *home* – in their element. I followed this with information concerning my personal background to reveal any potential sources of bias that helped in the formation of my epoché. The stories of Winston Churchill and Brian Clough were presented as my inspiration for the study. Finally I have provided an overview of the main chapters within the thesis. It is from such inspirations that culminated in the presentation of the thesis beginning with Chapter 2 the Literature Review.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

> Your literature review is where you demonstrate that you are able to engage in scholarly review based on your reading and understanding of the work of others. Beyond this, using the existing literature on a topic is a means of developing an argument about the significance of your research and where it leads (Bryman, 2016, p.93).

Introduction

I begin this literature review with a quote from Alan Bryman, who highlights the importance of reading widely in order to 'see what's out there' from an epistemological perspective of what is already known. The research question guiding this review was: 'How does a High Performance Swimming Coach (HPSC) as an effective leader, develop a contextual fit?' The research, accordingly, is focused on understanding the broader subject of leadership in context. Although this subject, of what contextual factors affect leadership, seems to hold a somewhat obvious level of significance, a surprisingly small amount of work has addressed it explicitly.

The majority of publications that are directly concerned with leadership focus either on leadership styles or on advising leaders how they should behave towards followers in order to be most effective. There is little empirical evidence, however, to support such prescriptive narratives. It also appears that the macro perspectives offered in sociology, as well as perspectives on management, are excluded or not consulted in such literature. Negative connotations seem to be associated with 'management', as evidenced by numerous articles that draw contrasts between leaders and managers.

Since I began my research there has been a growing interest in the contextual factors affecting leadership. There remains, however, a tendency for authors to offer leader-centric views of leadership, portraying the follower as passive and silent while ignoring the wider contextual influences. As Conger observes:

> Until very recently, interest in the role of context and situational factors has been limited. This is due largely to the backgrounds of those researching leadership. "Micro-theorists"... have dominated the field to date. Few researchers with a more "macro" or sociological perspective have been active in studying leadership (Conger, 2011, p.95).

In an effort to address this shortcoming, this chapter describes two major perspectives, of leadership and sociology, as they have been studied and published in respected literature and peer reviewed articles. There are firm grounds to take such an approach. Whilst the primary focus in the thesis concerns leadership directly, leadership itself can only take place in a social setting - leadership is contextually dependent. A further dimension to leadership is also considered within the thesis. Although a number of authors have tried to, I would suggest that

it is impossible to separate completely the concept of leadership from that of management. For these reasons, I have used a discursive approach in reviewing relevant theories on both management and sociology to inform the research conducted here.

Historically, theorists have tended to adopt reductionist approaches to expose the causes of identified phenomena. Poststructuralist views, however, are now helping to recognise the complexity associated with human activity and are revealing more critical perspectives. 'Whether one likes it or not, Poststructuralism has important implications for the way in which we understand the world, and therefore it has to be taken seriously' (Cilliers, 2011, p.142).

In order to gain an understanding of the ontological skills needed to create and maintain context, the first section of this chapter considers the contribution of management theory from the late 19th century to the present day. Grey observes the relevance of such early concepts in informing our understanding:

> Bureaucratic theory, scientific management and human relations theory – form the bedrock of the knowledge taught on just about every university course on organisational management (Grey, 2009, p.17).

After a description of management theory, the chapter reviews popular leadership theories that are relevant to the thesis. These theories are critically analysed in order to identify their epistemological contributions and their limitations. Landmark theories, from "great man theory" (Carlyle, 2005) through to transformational theory, are reviewed. The initial assumptions of great man and trait theory are that 'leaders are born and not made.' These perspectives are contrasted with modern views to reveal variations found amongst theorists.

Finally, some outlying social theories are reviewed in recognition of their importance to management and leadership theory. Although my primary perspective concerns leadership directly, the concepts and theories of some sociologists, and in particular Bourdieu, have been reviewed as a prelude to analysing research findings. It is Bourdieu, in his concept of *field* that recognises the process of formulating identity through the accumulation of being, and the contextual influences affecting actors. The accumulation of being through the transformation of passivity to activity (habitus) is, it seems, a key factor regarding contextual fit. Under each of the main headings of management, leadership and sociology the sub-headings are shown in italics.

Management Perspectives

One of the earliest definitions of what we label as management was articulated by Parker-Follett who recognised, perhaps ahead of her time, the subtle complexities of managing with and through other people (Parker-Follett, 1998). Watson (1986) also recognised the

complexity of management, suggesting that it can be viewed either as an art or a science. Moreover, as Koonz et al. (1990, p.77) suggests, management may also be viewed as an activity, as they characterises it: 'management is what management does'. Contemporary views of management have suggested that there are five functions of management, namely: planning, organising, controlling, leading and developing (Edersheim, 2007; Daft and Marcic, 2003; Drucker, 1955; Fayol, 1949).

Administrative and Scientific Management

In the early part of the 20th century, described as the classical period, there was a focus on organisational purpose and formalised structure, where the work-related activities performed included those associated with organisational control and planning. Despite Parker-Follett's earlier recommendations, little attention was paid to employees' social needs, the assumption being that their motivations were purely economic. These factors are reflected in some of the first publications on the subject of management.

The pioneers during this era gave rise to what became known as the administrative, bureaucratic and scientific periods in the evolution of management theory. These theories advised corporate leaders on ways to achieve organisational effectiveness and efficiency for maximum productivity. One of the earliest definitions of management in this respect was attributed to Fayol (1949). Fayol, cited by Mullins, postulated that managerial activity comprised of five key functions, namely: 'to forecast and plan, to organise, to command, to co-ordinate and to control' (Mullins, 2011, p.426).

Fayol advanced a notion of division of labour, along with 14 management recommendations. Another early theorist, Max Weber (1947), postulated 10 principles, which included a defined hierarchy of offices and spheres of competence. Taken together, these early management theories are as relevant to current organisations as they were in the early classical period, as can be seen in modern-day organisational charts. Such charts, however, provide only a conceptual framework that concerns lines of authority and job descriptions; they fail to capture the human relations aspect of management that come about through social interaction. The focus of management theory during the classical period was fixed firmly on coordination and control for the purpose of maximising profit through productivity.

Coordination and control of activities within organisations became key factors in productivity. It was Taylor who believed in a systematic analysis of tasks to find the 'one best way' to perform work in order to maximise output. Taylor treated management as 'a true science, resting upon clearly defined laws, rules and principles' (Taylor, 2007, p.7). He recognised that through conducting detailed analysis of work and training there was a potential for significant increases in productivity.

He provided a managerial antidote to 'the great loss which the whole country [the USA] was suffering through inefficiency'. He argued 'that the remedy for this inefficiency lies in systematic management, rather than in searching for some unusual or extraordinary man' (ibid). This statement, which advocates his principles of method study, challenged the great man theory of leadership prevalent at the time. However, Taylor had a certain drawback in his approach. Despite believing in fair remuneration for any work conducted, he failed to understand the full scope of workers' human needs.

Management and Human Relationships

Taylor appeared to have missed the importance of the individual's social needs, teamwork, and the wider perspectives that involve integrating individual performances within a structured environment. His focus seems to have been occupied mainly by a concern for productivity through efficiency.

The importance of human factors to organisational success would emerge later from the 'Hawthorne Experiment' (Mayo, 1949). Regarding the focus on efficiency and not the worker's social needs, Peters and Waterman state:

> Taylor, of course, is the source of the time and motion approach to efficiency: if only you can divide work up into enough discrete, wholly programmed pieces and then put the pieces back together in a truly optimum way, why then you'll have a top-performing unit (Peters and Waterman, 1982, p.5).

This approach might be 'referred to as "the aggregation of marginal gains" which was the philosophy of searching for a tiny improvement in everything you do' (Clear, 2018, p.2). A paradigm shift in the theoretical perspectives of management emerged from investigations at Western Electric's Hawthorne Plant in Illinois, USA, in the period between 1924 and 1932.

The change in management style, from autocratic and directing to the involvement of employees in the decision making processes, had its origins in the 'Hawthorne Studies'. This change influenced management styles, taking them from a focus on command and control to the participation of the worker, giving rise to the human relations period in the history of management theory.

Mayo's behavioural studies involved making changes to lighting in 'the illumination experiment', and productivity standards in 'the bank wiring experiment.' These changes, involving worker participation, triggered increased outputs but they were not, on reflection, the root cause of such improvements. The unintended consequences of increased worker motivation and productivity were the result of involving the workers in the process.

The improvement in production…is not directly related to the rest-pauses and other innovations. It reflects a more freer and pleasant working environment, a supervisor who is not regarded as [the] "boss", [and] a higher "morale". In this situation the production of the group insensibly lifts, even though the girls are not aware they are working faster (Mayo, 1949, p.75).

The irony is, as Mayo points out, 'they [were] getting closer supervision than ever before, the change [was] in the quality of the supervision' (ibid). The supervisors, or first-line managers, were now unconsciously meeting employees' deeper social needs.

Management and Motivation

Many of the principles recommended by Fayol are evident in well-managed organisations even today; these include the benefits of providing employees with stability of tenure, fair remuneration, equity and justice, and allowing them to use their initiative. A final principle of creating an esprit de corps recognises that unity is strength. This principle resonates with modern theories that advocate teamwork and motivation. Assumptions made in Taylor's and Mayo's approaches to management correspond respectively with Douglas McGregor's (1960) X and Y theories of motivation.

The manager operating under the 'X' assumption believes that workers are lazy and need to be coerced, while the manager operating under the 'Y' assumption believes that workers enjoy responsibility and consider work as natural as play. The implications of these different assumptions are that 'X' managers will have a tendency to be autocratic and directing while 'Y' managers will be more participative and people-centred. However, '[i]n reality, [managers] are neither and both at the same time' (Peters and Waterman, 1982, p.96). This tendency to individuate and locate managers on a simple two-dimensional grid pervades both perspectives of management and leadership.

In his two-factor content theory of motivation, Herzberg (1959) shifts the focus and considers worker needs as opposed to management style. Herzberg recognises some basic human needs in his 'hygiene factors'. However, he pays little attention to the more fundamental lower-level psychological needs of safety and security, affiliation and belonging and of the opportunity to socialise with others. Maslow in his 'hierarchy of needs' describes a more general theory of motivation, suggesting five levels of need that concern: physiology, safety, socialisation, esteem, and self-actualisation (Maslow, 1987).

Maslow suggests that the lower-level needs require satisfying before the individual is motivated to pursue the higher level needs. He refers to the first four levels as 'deficiency needs' (D-Needs) and the highest level of need, of self-actualisation, as 'being needs' (B-Needs). The former he sees as innate internal triggers for action, to avoid deprivation,

whilst the latter set of needs, he suggests, are pursued from an individual's own personal interests (ibid). Pink (2009) provides a useful summary of motivation in referring to purpose, mastery and autonomy as the three main underlying human needs. The human relations period of management revealed the importance of meeting employees' needs. The emergence of the systems approach, however, witnessed a return to some aspects of Taylorism with its focus on the analysis of organisational activities.

A Systems Approach to Management

The systems approach, inspired by the work of biologist Bertalanffy (1951) and Miller and Rice (1967), gained popularity in the 1960s. Whilst approaches used in the classical period gave management information on how to structure and administer an organisation, they did not explain how an organisation functioned.

The concept of the General Systems Theory, attributed to Bertalanffy, gave insights into how inputs can be transformed into outputs through well-defined processes. Boulding identifies organisations as social systems, likened to biological systems, which have:

> [P]owers of communication, consciousness, and ability to produce artefacts…[These] include not only material artefacts, from the first eoliths, flint knives, and arrowheads to the space shuttle, but also include human organization (Boulding, 1985, p.71).

The study of cybernetics that emerged in this period also highlighted the importance of the regulatory function. The maintenance of viable systems was facilitated by: control of activities through the measurement of outputs against defined standards; positive and negative feedback; adjustments of processes to meet requirements; single and double loop feedback for decision making and consideration for Ashby's (1957) 'law of requisite variety.'

Ashby's contribution in this context was extremely important. He identified that any regulatory function needs the same level of complexity, or requisite variety, as the system or process it is regulating. This, he argued, is to ensure that any deviations from the system's standards are identified and acted upon to maintain those standards. From this notion, the importance of information flow within the process of feedback became evident.

In summary, Weiner provides a classic definition of cybernetics as 'the science of communication and control in the animal and the machine' (Wiener, 1961, p.27). Whilst the systems approach helped to define the formal relationships that are relating to linked activity, it failed to consider the informal human relationships that contribute to outcomes. It was Barnard (1968) who stressed the importance of managing the informal organisation and gaining employee commitment. It is only through a committed workforce, gained through the implementation of quality management, which will improve organisational performance.

Quality Management

The work of Deming in the field of quality was popularised in the late 1980s and 1990s. According to Deming (1986, p.17), quality is a function of human commitment: 'the factory worker knows that it is quality that will protect his job'. Although of unknown origin, the term 'total quality management' is attributed to Deming. In the early 1950s, he had acted as a consultant to Japanese industry, advising them on how to improve the quality of their products and services. Whilst recognising the importance of a motivated workforce, and combining the learning from each of the previous periods, Deming recommended the use of a systemic approach coupled with measurement and control.

In 1957, Selznick crystallised this view and differentiated administration from leadership, which possibly initiated the management versus leadership debate. Selznick postulates that the 'term organization suggests a certain bareness, a lean, no nonsense system of consciously coordinated activities…a rational instrument engineered to do a job' (Selznick, 2011, p.5). He contrasts this cold, mechanistic, objective view of an organisation with one that meets the needs of its people: 'an "institution" on the other hand, is more nearly a natural product of social needs and pressures – a responsive, adaptive organism' (ibid). Ultimately, Selznick recognises that an ideal organisation is a complex mixture of both what it means to be an institution and the standard meaning of 'organisation'. This type of dialectic debate led to the 'contingency period' and which pervades modern views of management and leadership.

Contingency Approaches to Management

The contingency approach to management can be viewed as a further development of the systems approach. As Mullins characterises it:

> There are a large number of variables, or situational factors, which influence
> organisational design and performance. The contingency approach emphasises the need
> for flexibility (Mullins, 2011, p.603).

In recognising the complexity of contextual factors, the need to analyse the environment to make strategic choices becomes an important differentiator.

In this respect, contemporary theories of management that address contextual factors are informed by the work of pioneers in each of the previous periods of evolution. Daft and Weick (1984) argue that in order to make strategic choices the external environment needs to be scanned and that:

> Information about the external world must be obtained, filtered, and processed into a
> central nervous system of sorts, in which choices are made. The organization must find

ways to know the environment. Interpretation is a critical element that distinguishes human organizations from lower level systems (Daft and Weick, 1984, p.285).

This ability to identify what needs to be done, together with the steps that must be taken to achieve such goals, appears to be a critical success factor regarding organisational performance. This ability could be described as a form of corporate contextual intelligence - it is a key enabler of leadership.

Porter provides three useful frameworks for analysing how a commercial organisation interacts with its external environment to gain a competitive advantage. These frameworks – namely, the 'diamond', 'five forces' and the 'value chain' - are contributors to a conception of strategic decision making that incorporates a structured analysis of internal and external environments. According to Johnson and Scholes:

> Strategic analysis is concerned with understanding the relationship between the different forces affecting the organisation and its choice of strategies. It may be that the environment exercises severe constraints or yields potential opportunities and this needs to be understood (Johnson and Scholes, 1999, p.95).

Using the 'diamond', consideration is given to demand conditions, the factor conditions (resources to meet the demand) that need to be in place in order to meet demand, support industries, and finally, to select strategies and organisation structures to maximise performance. According to Porter, the ability to analyse contextual factors that impact on the firm is what enables the management to gain a competitive edge.

Management v Leadership

Bennis, in his view, provides a detailed summary of the difference between management and leadership by categorising their day-to-day operations into two distinct types:

> Managers have their focus on systems; structure; control; short-range views; and the bottom line. They imitate, accept the status quo; are the classic good soldier; they ask how and when to do things efficiently or right. Conversely, leaders focus their attention on people and inspiring their trust; long-range perspectives and with their eye on the horizon. A leader challenges; is his or her own person; originates ideas and unlike the manager does the right thing (Bennis, 2003, p.40).

These two categories are commonly stated in leadership literature as: 'managers do things right; leaders do the right thing' (ibid). This perspective has, however, resulted in some negative connotations regarding the labels 'manager' and 'management'. These two terms tend to be seen now as less romantic than the terms 'leader' and 'leadership.'

As described above, Selznick (2011) differentiated administration from leadership, contrasting hard organisational elements as 'bare' and suggestive of a hard coldness, as opposed to the soft and warmer aspects relating to people. Such a view still persists in many narratives on leadership. Yet there is still much contention over whether leadership and management are separate and distinct entities. Mintzberg reveals one of the problems of using the dualist approach when he states: 'It has become fashionable to distinguish leaders from managers' (Mintzberg, 2011, p.8).

Ironically, given the debate on these categories, Drucker (1977) saw leadership as an important part of a manager's role. However, Drucker suggested that leaders could not be trained, referring to them as 'naturals', he argued that managers with leadership ability were simply more effective in their roles. This view is useful as it recognises the futility in separating these two roles, which are associated with any position of authority.

Mintzberg supposes that, as there is only one person performing the role, the argument for the separation of leadership from management is redundant:

> Frankly I don't understand what this distinction means in the everyday life of
> organisations. Sure, we can separate leading and managing conceptually. But can
> we separate them in practice? Or more to the point should we even try?
> (Mintzberg, 2011, p.8).

As these theorists recognise, there may be little point in debating the differences between a manager managing and a leader leading: actors in such positions of authority are performing the self-same role.

Whether an actor is labelled (Becker, 1963) a leader or a manager may remain as a subject of contention. Nevertheless, regardless of the distinction, Mintzberg suggests that there are three main functional domains related to the leadership role: the interpersonal, the informational, and the decisional. In the interpersonal role, the leader stands as the figurehead for the team, or acting as their focal point and as an interface with the organisation's senior management. In the informational role, the leader monitors and disseminates essential information needed by the team, whilst also acting as their spokesperson.

Finally, in the decisional role, the leader is entrepreneurial, a disturbance handler, and a negotiator and allocator of scarce resources (Mintzberg, 2011, p.45). Mintzberg's functional view demonstrates how management and leadership are inextricably linked. There are, however, other perspectives under the heading of leadership that need to be considered.

Leadership Perspectives

Perhaps people have always found the subject of leadership both fascinating and intriguing. Classical writers on leadership such as Plato, Sun Tzu, Machiavelli and Pareto expose some of the intricacies found in leader–follower relationships within a range of contexts. From these early classical perspectives, contemporary writers have evolved a plethora of theories to explain the phenomena.

In discussing who is best suited to lead in terms of the skills needed for the role, Plato uses the analogy of a ship's captain (Plato, 1987). With a crew who question the captain's worthiness at the helm, each believes that they would be more competent to steer the ship. Sun Tzu (McCreadie, 2008) speaks from the past to inform military leaders and captains of industry on how to behave and lead their warriors or followers in the context of war. Moreover, Pareto (1991) and Machiavelli (Bondanella, 2008) both provide insights into variants of follower agencies and the use of power within the governing classes, which in Machiavelli's case was the ruling prince.

Leadership as Person

The 'great man' theory was popularised by the Scottish philosopher Thomas Carlyle. Based on Victorian values, his belief was that leaders were born with a certain set of unique heroic traits and abilities of power and control that set them apart from their followers.

> In organizations, social movements, religions, governments and the military, leadership was conceptualized as a single 'Great Man' who put everything together and influenced others to follow along based on the strength of inherited traits, qualities and abilities (Daft, 2008, p.20).

Leading on from such a view, during the 1930s and early 1940s, researchers tried to systematically identify the particular set of traits and characteristics that differentiated leaders from their followers. This approach became known as trait theory, and focussed mainly on the military leaders of the two world wars. From extensive studies, Bass concluded that:

> The average person who occupies a position of leadership exceeds the average member of his or her group in the following respects: intelligence, scholarship, dependability in exercising responsibilities, activity and social participation and socioeconomic status (Bass and Stogdill, 1990, p.75).

However, due to variance observed in the research data, Bass also concluded that becoming a leader was not due to a particular combination of traits. He suggested that leadership is more the 'pattern of personal characteristics [that] bear some relevant relationship to the

characteristics, activities, and goals of the followers' (ibid, p.76). He at least recognised the complexity of the phenomenon.

Further research in the period 1948 to 1970 led Bass to conclude that 'personality is a factor in differentiating leadership [and that] the trait approach tended to treat personality in an atomistic fashion suggesting that each trait acts singly to determine the effects of leadership' (ibid, p.87). A number of common factors emerge to support this view from studies on leadership conducted by Stogdill (1948, 1974), Mann (1959), Lord, de Vader and Alliger (1986), and Kirkpatrick and Locke (1991). Northouse (2013) identifies five common factors associated with effective leaders, those of: intelligence, self-confidence, determination, integrity and sociability.

Kouzes and Posner (2011, p.12) also conducted extensive research into the characteristics that followers 'most looked for and admired in a leader whose direction they would willingly follow'. According to two surveys conducted in 1987 and 1993 in the USA, the top ten characteristics of admired leaders were listed as: 'honest, forward-looking, inspiring, competent, fair-minded, supportive, broad-minded, intelligent, straightforward and courageous' (ibid, p.14).

These additional characteristics further emphasise one of the weaknesses associated with trait theory: the 'failure of the trait approach to delimit a definitive list of leadership traits' (Northouse, 2013, p.25). Other criticisms levelled at the theory are that it tends to ignore situational factors and is of little value regarding the education and training of leaders (Marturano and Gosling, 2008).

With a lack of progress in identifying a definitive set of traits that could differentiate effective from non-effective leaders, attention turned towards functional and behavioural factors that might define a leader.

> Research focused on what leaders actually do on the job, such as various management activities, roles and responsibilities. These studies were soon expanded to try to determine how effective leaders differ in their behaviour from ineffective ones (Daft, 2008, p.20).

From studying what leaders do that makes them effective in their role; attention was naturally drawn to the skills being employed.

Leadership as Skill

Katz (2009) postulated that effective leadership is dependent upon personal skills in three areas. Katz suggests that to give effective leadership, a leader needs human skills, conceptual skills and technical skills. He describes 'human skills' as the knowledge and

ability required to work with people and to build effective relationships with followers. Katz defines conceptual skills as the ability to work with ideas. Finally, he defines technical skills as 'knowledge about and proficiency in a specific type of work or activity. [This] includes competencies in a specialized area, analytical ability, and the ability to use appropriate tools and techniques' (Katz, 2009, p.34). The degree to which each of these three skill sets are used, he suggests, depends upon the leader's position within the organisation.

A study conducted by Mumford et al. (2000) provides a different skill-based model of leadership that comprises three main elements, namely: individual attributes, competencies, and leadership outcomes or results. Individual attributes include general and crystallised cognitive ability, together with motivation and personality. The competencies element relates to applied abilities, which are problem-solving skills, social judgement skills and knowledge. Finally, the outcomes element has its focus on the measurement of effective problem solving and performance. The premise behind this model of leadership being that these measures can be used to assess leadership effectiveness.

This model draws attention to the fact that each of the three elements can be influenced by context. As Northouse (2013, p.52) relates: 'Environmental influences represent factors that lie outside the leader's competencies, characteristics, and experiences'. The model stresses the significance of contextual appraisal, the ability to manage mediating influences from both internal and external contexts. The model also reveals how experience can have a positive impact on the leader's characteristics, motivation and intellectual capability.

The above skill-based theories have common features. They both agree on the importance of a leader having a high level of emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1996). The abilities to understand people and to build effective working relationships are prominent and complementary to transformational and leader–member exchange theories (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1991). These skill-based theories both identify the importance of technical knowledge and cognitive ability as essential skills in analysis.

One of the main weaknesses of both of these theories is that they refer to skill sets that are defined in broad terms but lack specificity and, consequently, these theories are vague in their descriptions of how such skill sets affect performance. Associated with this lack of specificity is that skill sets tend to overlap with general areas of management rather than defining leadership per se. A second weakness shared by these theories is that they often go beyond what is defined by the term 'skill'. For example, although the Mumford model purports to attribute leadership to skills, personality traits are sometimes referred to instead. Whilst there are important traits, such as determination and persistence, they could not properly be

classified as skills. Personal characteristics and skills do, however, play an important role in identity.

Leadership as Identity

In perspectives on leadership there appears to be a growing interest in self and social identity. An actor's perception of who they think they are influences how they behave in the contextual setting(s) in which they belong. The crafting of this self-concept (Kondo, 1990) is often referred to as an actor's identity project. According to Berger and Luckman (1979), the self-concept is socially constructed: 'Societies regulate the identities that may be taken up and individual leaders conform to and struggle against social and organisational scripts of who they should be as leaders' (Sinclair, 2011, p.509). Along similar lines, Grint (2010) postulates that since 'there can be no leader without followers', the leader's self-concept in the social setting is what differentiates them from their followers.

Collinson suggests, however, that contextual pressures mediate the leader's construction of self, providing pressures for managing their identities (Collinson, 2003). He also argues that 'there is an irreducible ambiguity' at the centre of the construction of identity. The way in which we understand ourselves seems to be mediated by our cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1977) and the experiences that we have in a particular context and at particular times.

We interpret ourselves it appears, through our search for meaning in a context of our choice and through interacting with others in a social setting. Tajfel and Turner (1986, p.292) defines the term 'social identity' as: 'the individual's knowledge that he belongs to certain social groups together with some emotional and value significance to him of this group membership.' Hogg gives a rationale as to how a group's social identity is formed:

> Because groups only exist in relation to other groups, they derive their descriptive and evaluative properties, and thus their social meaning; in relation to these other groups... social comparisons between groups are focused on establishing evaluatively positive distinctiveness for one's own group (Hogg, 2001, p.186).

Identity, however, is not a possession or *thing* that an individual or group has, it is a process that emerges in social groups. Jenkins defines identity as:

> [T]he human capacity - rooted in language - to know 'who's who' (and hence 'what's what'). This involves knowing who we are, knowing who others are, them knowing who we are, us knowing who they think we are, and so on: a multi-dimensional classification or mapping of the human world... (Jenkins, 2008, p.5).

Identity can relate to the individual, as self identity, or to the collective, as social identity, or it can be relational. Relational identity is associated with a person's role, as it is defined by the functions they serve.

Leadership as Function

According to Adair (1988), a leader's main functions centre on meeting the needs of their team's task, the needs of the individual, and the needs of the team. Adair's conceptual model, as captured in a three-circled Venn diagram, is arguably the most popular theory found in the commercial world today - see Fig. 2-1.

> On the one hand Adair's Action Centred Leadership, and the now trademark three circles, appear disarmingly simple. On the other hand, beneath this simple model lies a pragmatic utility that has served many existing leaders well, and over a considerable period of time (Gosling, Case and Witzel, 2007, p.xi).

There are several aspects which relate to the task domain within the Action Centred Leadership (ACL) model; these include: defining a purpose or mission, formulating long, medium and short-term plans, providing structure, establishing systems, setting standards, agreeing goals and objectives, setting key performance measures, establishing control and managing activities. These aspects might be categorised under the three hard tangible

Fig. 2-1 Adair's Leadership Model

Achieving the Task

Building and Maintaining the Team

Developing the Individual

Source: Effective Leadership (Adair, 1988)
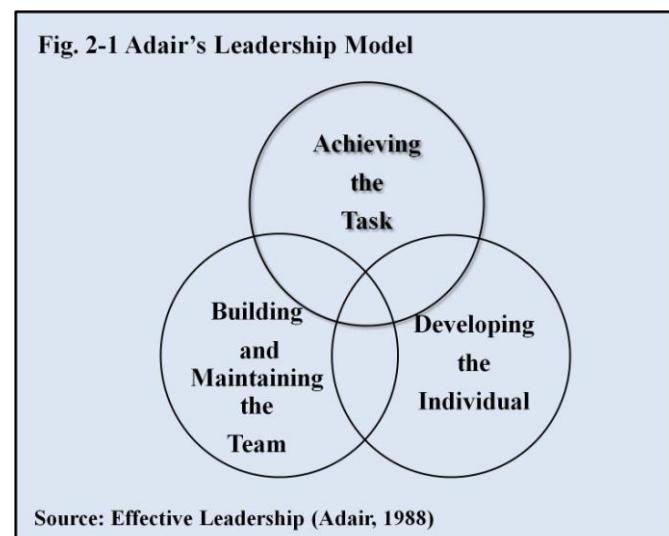
elements located in the McKinsey 7S model, a product of McKinsey Consulting, New York, USA. These three hard elements are strategy, structure and systems. The four additional soft elements of staff, skills, shared values and style, relate to people and their behaviours (Peters and Waterman, 1982, p.9).

The individual and team elements described above in the ACL model usefully reference theories of motivation and team development. Content theories of motivation classify needs broadly on the Maslow hierarchy of needs concerning physiology, safety, social factors, influence and achievement (Maslow, 1987; Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman, 2004; Alderfer, 1972). Process theories, however, view motivation in terms of inputs and outputs, which include goals, values, beliefs and performance (Vroom, 1995; Porter and Lawler,

1968). Furthermore, human motivation theories focus on the psychological drivers of the individual, while team development theories consider social developments over time.

Team development in a social setting can be broken down into the following stages: forming, storming, norming and performing or underdeveloped, experimenting, consolidating and mature (Tuckman, 1965; Woodcock, 1989). Each phase of team development is intended to exhibit levels of conflict, communication, trust, and performance. Whilst the order of the four stage labels implies a logical sequence over time, the authors recognise that teams can enter or exit a given stage at any time depending upon changes in team membership or context.

The main strength of the model is its simplicity in identifying the most important functions of a leader, albeit at strategic level. The model also serves well to present, clarify and structure the numerous concepts and theories relevant to the role of a leader. A criticism of the ACL model, however, is that it conflates leadership, management and context. The model only offers a leader-centric perspective to the role and in doing so ignores the wider organisational needs that emerge from context. The model also assumes that all actors are passive followers, ignores followers' agency and potential for resistance and ignores the possibility and presence of distributed leadership. Contingency theory, however, does take into account whether a leader's predisposition is towards follower relationships or task.

Leadership as Contingency

Fiedler (1967) suggests that it is possible to differentiate between task-oriented and relationship-oriented leaders. His method for determining this lies in a questionnaire to be completed by leaders. This questionnaire involves the least preferred co-worker (LPC) psychometric test instrument, which attempts to measure the leader's appraisal of the person they would least like to work with. It is this test which Fiedler uses as the basis for deciding the contingency or best leader suited to a specific context.

The premise on which this theory is based relates to contextual factors - namely, task structure, the strength of relationships between followers, employees and the leader, together with the amount of authority the leader has. These factors are determinants of whether a task-oriented or relationship-oriented leader would be the most effective. Fiedler suggests that where all contextual variables are highly favourable or highly unfavourable, the task-oriented leader would offer the best fit. In all other contextual variants the contingency would dictate that the relationship-oriented would be best suited.

One of the main strengths of this theory is that 'it brings into consideration the organisational variables that effect leadership and suggests that in given situations a task-oriented, or structured style of leadership, is most appropriate' (Mullins, 2011, p.375). The theory recommends the identification of leader types, through the use of a psychometric test, to

determine whether they are task or relationship oriented. This does at least offer some objective measure, albeit one that is challenged by some experts, to the selection of a leader suited to a specific context. A second strength of this theory is that empirical data based on studies of over 800 groups shows that there is a positive correlation between a leader's orientation and the favourableness of the situation. This data has been verified by a number of independent studies, although criticisms have been raised.

One criticism, for instance, is that it is unlikely that leaders would fall directly into one of two leadership types with semi-fixed traits. As Hersey and Blanchard note:

> Although Fiedler's model is useful to a leader, he seems to be reverting to a single continuum of leader behaviour, suggesting that there are only two basic leader behaviour styles, task-oriented and relationship-oriented (Hersey and Blanchard, 1988, p.109).

There is a degree of intuitive appeal to the concept. It is possible that under some circumstances a leader with a low emotional intelligence quotient might be best suited. Other criticisms, however, have challenged the research data.

Correlation data collected from a number of studies suggest that only the extremes of task and relationship orientation show any reliability. Between these extremes, scores must be treated with some caution. Test-retest correlations taken by Rice (1978) show some variance in the stability coefficient and suggest factors other than time are influencing the result. Fishbein et al. (1967) also show that triple interactions of the three contextual variables did not approach significance in any of their analyses. The contextual factors of task structure, follower relations and power are very complex and are unlikely to remain fixed for any length of time rendering any initial choice of leader obsolete. This continual change in contextual elements reflects the complexity of trying to select one particular type of leader orientation.

Barbour identifies the main weakness of Fiedler's contingency theory: 'Circumstances do not stay fixed for long...which would necessitate a constant renegotiating of leadership behaviour and styles; the interactions of all factors are very complex and unpredictable' (Barbour, 2008, p.29). Where functional based theories have a focus on what leaders do and contingency theory on a leader's character, style based theories are centred on a leader's behaviour.

Leadership as Behaviour

With the developments in the humanistic approaches to management theory during the 1950s, leader behaviour also became a focus of attention. This gave rise to style-based leadership theories. According to the theories offered, a leader's style determines their effectiveness, whether that style varies in relation to situational factors or it is fixed by preference in, say, an autocratic, participative, democratic, or laissez faire mode (Lewin and Lippit, 1938;

Tannenbaum and Schmidt, 1973; White and Lippitt, 1960; Likert, 1961; Blake and Mouton, 1964; Hersey and Blanchard, 1988).

One of the early models that invoked this notion of style was developed by Blake and Mouton (1964) as shown in Fig. 2-2. They used a simple two dimensional nine-by-nine grid, with concern for production on the horizontal x-axis and concern for people on the vertical y-axis. A leader's style could then be classified in terms of the x and y coordinates, namely: Impoverished Management (1, 1); Middle of the Road Management (5, 5); Authority Compliant
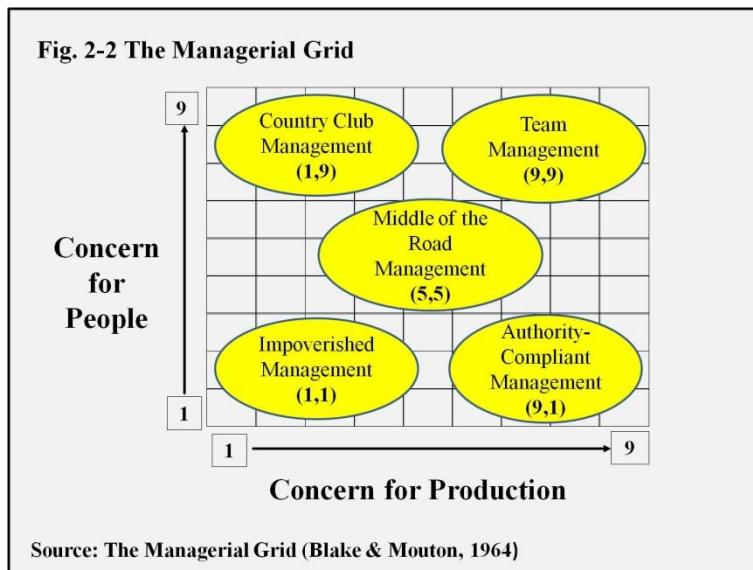
Fig. 2-2 The Managerial Grid

Source: The Managerial Grid (Blake & Mouton, 1964)

Management (9, 1); Country Club Management (1, 9) and Team Management (9, 9).

Blake and Mouton derived their model from leadership studies conducted by the University of Michigan and Ohio State University in the 1950s and 1960s. These studies focussed on how leaders acted and how they could combine their relationships to task and people. The main strength of the Managerial Grid is that it moved the leadership debate away from trait theory towards behavioural and situational concepts. The main weaknesses of the model, however, are that it is leader centric and, like other style based theories, fails to evidence how a leader's style affects performance. It also implies that leaders have a fixed style that transcends time and ignores follower perspectives.

However, Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1973) Fig. 2-3, recognise that followers are an important factor in determining a leader's style. Their continuum-based theory of leadership posits that a leader's
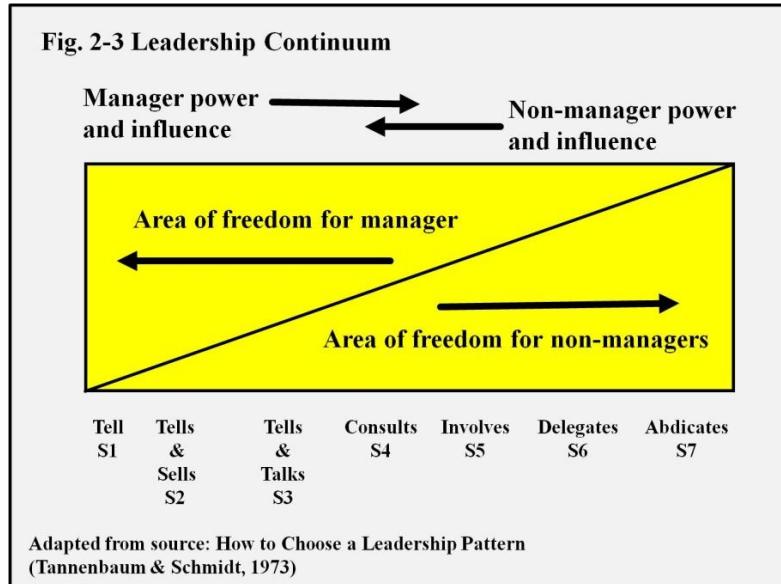
Fig. 2-3 Leadership Continuum

Adapted from source: How to Choose a Leadership Pattern (Tannenbaum & Schmidt, 1973)

style needs to change according to a particular set of contextual factors. These factors, which they define as a collection of forces at work in the leader, the followers and the situation at hand, are considerations that should be taken into account when a leader identifies the degree of freedom that should be given to followers regarding their operational activities.

The model presents seven distinct styles of leadership (S), which are labelled: Tell - S1, Tells and Sells - S2, Tells and Talks - S3, Consults - S4, Involves - S5, Delegates - S6 and Abdicates - S7. All such styles are available to the leader depending upon the situational factors relating to the leader, followers and organisational variables. The leader's behaviour will be influenced by their personality, knowledge and experience. Followers, on the other hand, will be influenced by their readiness to assume responsibility and their competence. This is, however, within the organisational variables of structure and type of activity performed (Mullins, 2011).

The strength of the continuum theory is that it takes more account of the contextual factors influencing a leader's style. It considers the followers *and* situational factors in the organisation and recognises the need for a leader to respond to a wider range of needs. The weakness of the model is that it fails to fully explain the interpersonal relationships between the leader and followers. The followers' willingness and level of confidence in the task, however, is considered in Situational Leadership Theory postulated by Hersey, Blanchard and Johnson (2001).

Situational Leadership Theory (SLT) has similar recommendations to Tannenbaum and Schmidt's Continuum Model. The SLT theory suggests that a leader needs to adjust their leadership style according to follower readiness. On a continuum of follower readiness and maturity, positioned on a two-dimensional grid, they describe four states of follower readiness. These states they define

Fig. 2-4 Follower Readiness

Readiness

High	Moderate		Low
R4	R3	R2	R1
Able and Willing or Confident	Able But Unwilling or Insecure	Unable But Willing or Confident	Unable and Unwilling or Insecure

Adapted from source: Management of Organisational Behavior (Hersey, Blanchard & Johnson, 2001)

as a combination of ability, willingness and level of confidence ranging from low to high (R1 to R4) as shown in Fig. 2-4.

These degrees of readiness, or stages of follower development, which reflect the followers' competence, emotional contract (Etzioni, 1964) and self belief are determinants of a

leader's choice regarding their style. A leader needs to decide on a follower's need for support and the degree of direction required to ensure achievement of organisational goals.

Fig. 2-5 depicts a two dimensional grid showing four specific areas of leadership style – namely S1 to S4 and labelled, Telling, Selling, Participating and Delegating.

On the horizontal axis, leadership style is depicted as relating to the degree of task directing behaviour that the leader needs to adopt for the context presented. This style component ranges from an autocratic

Fig. 2-5 Situational Leadership

LEADER BEHAVIOR

	PARTICIPATING High Relationship and Low Task **S3**	SELLING High Task and High Relationship **S2**
RELATIONSHIP BEHAVIOR (Supporting Behavior) (HIGH)	DELEGATING Low Relationship and Low Task **S4**	TELLING High Task and Low Relationship **S1**

(LOW) ← TASK BEHAVIOR → (HIGH)
(Directive Behavior)

Adapted from source: Management of Organisational Behavior
(Hersey, Blanchard & Johnson, 2001)

or directing mode, at one extreme, to delegation on the other extreme. On the vertical axis, the style component relates to the degree of supporting behaviour to be provided by the leader. This range extends from basic, task-related communication to full facilitation where the leader operates more in a listening or counselling role.

As Mullins (2011, p.381) elucidates: 'one of the model's strengths is that the approach rejects the idea of one generalised model of leadership and draws attention to the importance of prevailing variables'. The theory takes account of the level of maturity of followers and the need for leaders to adapt their style depending upon follower readiness. The theory also takes into account some aspects of the follower's emotional contract which Hersey, Blanchard and Johnson (2001) describe as depending on the follower's willingness to perform tasks. Finally, the follower's level of motivation is included, albeit limited to being characterised by their level of self-confidence. The theory does not, however, include the degree to which followers value what they are doing, which is another key factor in motivation.

Another shortcoming of the situational-leadership model is that the characterisations of readiness and follower-maturity present an oversimplification of the possible combinations within the three variables of ability, willingness, and confidence. Variations in each of these combinations would require unique blends of leadership style. As Mullins points out: 'Most workers like to know exactly where they stand with their boss and become confused and

unsettled with constant changes in leadership style' (ibid, p.381). A number of other critics also call into question the pathway of styles that migrate through the model against the two variables of directive and supportive behaviour. Bryman (1992) argues that, considering follower readiness R1 to R4 align to leadership styles S1 to S4, there is no particular reason why S2 and S3 should be associated with R2 and R3, respectively.

Vroom and Yetton also recognised the importance of contextual factors. They suggested that leadership effectiveness is a 'joint function of situational variables expressed as problem attributes and leader behaviour expressed as decision making processes' (Vroom and Yetton, 1973, p.204).

The main strength of these emergent style-based theories is that they:

> [B]roadened the scope of leadership research to include the behaviours of leaders and what they do in various contexts. No longer was the focus of leadership on the personal characteristics of the leader (Northouse, 2013, p.79).

These theories also validate the extensive research conducted by Ohio State University, Michigan University in the USA and a number of pioneers such as Mayo and Maslow. These researchers highlighted the importance of involving followers in the decision-making processes. Style-based theories, however, also have weaknesses linked to results.

Employee perception surveys investigating leadership style have revealed benefits to employees' levels of morale and motivation from leaders implementing certain elements of the aforementioned theories. However, there is no empirical evidence in favour of a given leadership style as positively affecting organisational performance. According to Andersen, there is little evidence to suggest that a leader's behaviour has an impact on their organisational effectiveness.

> After 35 years of research – indeed intensive research...we cannot claim that this research has given convincing, or consistent answers to what behavioural patterns or managerial types are effective in particular situations (Andersen, 2008, p.159).

Two important insights emerged from style based theories, namely the importance of considering contextual factors and the relationships that leaders have with their followers. Leadership as relational, however, does consider leader-follower connectedness through the concept of dyadic links.

Leadership as Relational

The original concept of leader-member exchange (LMX) theory involved a series of vertical dyadic links between the leader and each of their employees in a commercial context. Consideration was given to each of the individual emotional contracts. Two general types of relationship between leaders and employees were identified, corresponding on the one hand, to those employees who would accept extended roles and responsibilities and, on the other hand, to those who would only conform to their job contracts. Employees who accepted additional responsibility were referred to as members of the in-group and the others as members of the out-group. Members of the in-group, who supported the leader and were prepared to support the group, would gain additional benefits from the leader (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995).

Where initial studies centred on the differences between the two types of relationship, later emphasis focussed on organisational performance indicators. Findings through the use of psychometric testing prompted further interest into the making of leaders through the effective development of leader–follower relationships. According to Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995), this development evolves over time, passing through three distinct phases, namely, of stranger, acquaintance, and mature partnership. The relationships between in-group members are marked by mutual trust, respect, liking and reciprocal influence. Accordingly, the relationships could be scored three for high and zero for low, to reflect their quality (ibid).

From these findings Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995) recommended that, rather than limit their attention to a few followers, leaders should develop a network of partnerships throughout the organisation. More recent studies have extended the work of Graen and Uhl-Bien by investigating social interaction and communication between leaders and followers (Bakar and Sheer, 2013), and the impact of leader and follower behaviours on their relationship. These latest studies have broadened the scope of original leader-member exchange concepts and provided new ways of strengthening our understanding of leadership.

The main strengths of the theory are that it provides a description of leader and follower relationships that makes sense intuitively. The dyadic link concept provides a central focus, at a micro level, for the leadership process and directs attention towards communication that takes place between the leader and their followers. A major strength of the theory is that it warns leaders of the potential danger of unfairness by highlighting the concept of in-groups and out-groups. Finally it attempts to directly connect leader-follower relations to organisational performance. In addition to strengths, however, there are weaknesses.

An early criticism of the theory was that it appeared to justify the existence of in-groups and out-groups. Members of the in-group, the theory argued, may try to form a special relationship

with the leader and seek more responsibility. Because of this they are awarded additional privileges. The out-group who merely comply with a leader's requirements, are denied these additional privileges. Such inequalities could be seen as unjust and hence as a potential source of conflict. A further criticism is that the theory remains underdeveloped and fails to explain how high quality leadership relationships are created (Anand et al., 2011).

Uhl-Bien, Maslyn, and Ospina (2012) support this view concluding that previous studies have failed to provide a clear and more detailed set of definitions to support the concepts and propositions. Psychometric testing and the processes of measuring leader-member relations has also brought into question the validity and reliability of any results. Where LMX theory attempts to measure the strength of relationships between a leader and their followers, transformational leadership describes the nature of the leader's influence acting on followers. It places greater emphasis on the relationship and interactions between leaders and followers and in doing so builds on LMX theory.

Leadership as Transformational

Transformational leadership provides a natural link between leader-member exchange theory, charismatic leadership, and the concepts associated with emotional intelligence and emotional labour. According to Bass and Avolio (1994) if people are asked to describe their ideal leader the possibility that their views would align closely to the concepts of transformational and charismatic leadership would be very high. Burns (1978) postulated that the transforming leader has a significant influence on followers' needs, wants, identities, standards, values, goals and levels of motivation resulting in higher than expected performance outcomes.

As with LMX theory transformational leadership theory recognises the importance of followers in the leader-follower-context dynamic and to the definition of leadership proposed by Rost (1993) - namely as an influence relationship that takes place between leaders and followers. As an antithesis to the transformational leader Burns posits that a transactional leader relies on positional power to achieve follower subordination. In contrast to transformational leadership, transactional leadership theory is described in cost benefit terms - that is based on the leader having scarce resources that followers deem they need.

The follower accepts the leader's legal authority and conforms to their requirements but only in order to gain benefits. The leader-follower interaction, therefore, is an exchange of valued items. Whilst some authors, such as Burns (1978), argue that transformational and transactional leadership are mutually independent continua, Bass (1985) posits that they are part of a single continuum between transformational leadership and laissez-fair. He suggests, therefore that leadership should be considered a range of influence between charismatic and a

total absence. Avolio (1999) provides additional clarification of the factors separating transformational, transactional and laissez-fare on the leadership continuum.

For transformational leadership Avolio lists Factor 1 as idealised influence or charisma; Factor 2 as inspirational motivation; Factor 3 as intellectual stimulation; and Factor 4 as individualised consideration. For transactional leadership he defines Factor 5 as contingent reward or constructive transactions; and Factor 6 as management-by-exception or active and passive corrective transactions. For laissez-fare leadership Factor 7 is denoted as non-transactional. It is evident that the four factors associated with transformational or charismatic leadership are reliant on the leader having a close relationship with followers implying high levels of emotional intelligence.

Goleman (1996) defines emotional intelligence by comparing its curriculum for teaching with Self Science as taught in some schools. He states:

> The topics taught include self awareness, in the sense of recognising feelings and building a vocabulary for them, and seeing the links between thoughts and feelings, and reactions; knowing if thoughts or feelings are ruling a decision; seeing the consequences and alternative choices; and applying those insights to decisions...(Goleman, 1996, p.268).

With reference to Avolio's Factor 4 - individualised consideration it seems equally important for a leader to be able to recognise the emotional state of followers and be able to make appropriate interventions where necessary to meet their needs. It would appear from this that, in the influence relationship that forms between leaders and followers, a charismatic transformational leader will not only be able to recognise their own emotions but will be able to identify followers' emotions and employ emotional labour. As Humphrey points out:

> Leaders may also need to use emotional labor tactics to help them express the right emotions to their followers: when times are tough, followers need to have confidence in their leaders, and followers cannot feel confident if their leaders are expressing fear, anxiety, and other confidence-sapping emotions. Even during good times, leaders may need to express enthusiasm to motivate their followers to achieve their full potential (Humphrey, 2012, p.740).

The presence of high emotional intelligence and labour appear to align closely with earlier concepts of charismatic leadership. The use of the term charisma, however, when associated with leadership is contentious. This historic view, derived from religious texts, has unfortunately encased the term in some mystery. The German sociologist, Max Weber (1947), rejected the idea that it should only apply to religion and suggested that the phenomenon can also be viewed from a secular standpoint.

Traditionally, the notion of charisma comes from 'gift', which was semantically linked to another Greek word 'Karis' to mean 'gift of grace': a donation by the Holy Spirit to all believers (Maturano and Gosling, 2008, p. 21).

A second lens through which to view charisma is given by Drath and Palus:

Dominance is only one feature of charisma. Extraordinary talents for communicating, forming relationships, and getting inside the hearts and minds of others are added to make the charismatic leader (Drath and Palus, 1994, p.16).

What the follower community have in their minds and hearts, it could be argued, is a complex bundle of needs and the leader satisfies those of the follower, and has a dominant, but not dominating, position in the social relationships.

Expanding on social relationships Bryman (1992), highlights the aspect of the follower awarding charismatic status to the leader in a specific purposeful context and posits that:

Charisma is a social relationship in three ways; the importance of followers in the affirmation of charisma, the leader and follower finding a greater purpose in charisma than is typically the case and charismatic relationship is antithetical to the notion that charisma is purely attribution (Bryman, 1992, p.69).

This supports the premise that charisma, which might be viewed as intense transformational influence, is: conferred onto the leader by their followers; the result of a social relationship involving the leader and their followers in a particular purposeful context; and is not the result of a specific set of innate qualities or traits possessed by an individual. It does seem, however, that charisma is an inherent feature of transformational leadership.

Arguments still persist as to whether the two concepts of transformational and transactional leadership are separate or form part of a continuum. The former suggests two types of leader either a transactional leader or transformational leader. The latter suggests degrees of preference (O'Shea, Foti, Hauenstein and Bycio, 2009; Yukl and Fleet, 1992; Bass, 1985). The discussions appear to have similar connotations to the manager versus leader disputes detailed earlier in the chapter. It could be argued that the transformational component aligns more with a *de facto* influential leader and the transactional with a rational/legal *de jure* manager.

Transformational leadership recognises the importance of the follower in co-producing higher than expected performances. Transactional leadership on the other hand is more aligned with those functions that are generally accepted as management. These cost-benefit transactions between leader and followers, it might be argued, are also essential in maintaining a viable and productive context. Transformational leadership, however, has a number of weaknesses.

Research conducted by Tracey and Hinkin (1998) concluded that there are significant overlaps in the four Is – namely, idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. The theory also covers a significant range of organisational activities such as setting vision, team building, and change management. This makes the boundaries associated with each of the seven factors listed by Avolio (1999) ambiguous and ill defined. There is also considerable overlap into what could be considered as social theory and therefore a compelling case can be made for including sociological perspectives on leadership to support the concept.

Leaders and followers interact in a social setting and therefore to gain a deeper understanding of leadership new eclectic approaches in research are needed. Giddens and Sutton point out the benefit of including social theory stating: 'Sociology is the study of human social life, groups and societies. It is a dazzling and compelling enterprise, as its subject matter is our own behaviour as social beings' (Giddens and Sutton, 2013, p.4).

Sociological Perspectives on Leadership

This thesis then draws on the continued importance of sociological perspectives that are complimentary to leadership theory. It would be difficult to find a respected publication on leadership or management without encountering the concepts of sociologist Max Weber. Weber was discussing the concept of leadership and authority over a century ago and was the first to identify three sources of authority or power - namely the legal rational or *de jure* power, traditional power and charismatic or *de facto* power. In differentiating these sources of power Weber also recognised the dichotomy between transformational and transactional aspects. As Eisenstadt points out:

> In much of the sociological literature it has been assumed that a deep chasm exists between the charismatic aspects and the more ordinary, routine aspects of social organization, and the organized, continuous life of social institutions... Weber's work, and especially his significance for modern sociology, lies in the attempt to combine the two and to analyze how they are continuously interrelated in the fabric of social life (Eisenstadt, 1968, p. ix).

Weber recognised that at the micro level, where leaders interact with their followers, such is their level of influence that they can achieve hero status. He defined the term charisma, as it applies to an individual, stating:

> The term "charisma" will be applied to a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, super-human, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities (Weber, 1968_b, p.48).

Weber did, however, recognise the temporary nature of charisma and its relational nature to followers – the time domain. He suggests, regarding a charismatic leader, that 'if his leadership fails to benefit his followers, it is likely that his charismatic authority will disappear' (ibid, p.50). In contrast to charismatic authority Weber defines the rational legal authority as organisational power distributed through hierarchy stating:

> In the case of legal authority, obedience is owed to the legally established impersonal order. It extends to the person exercising the authority of office under it only by virtue of the formal legality of their commands and only within the scope of authority of the office (Weber, 1968$_a$, p.46).

Weber's views on the routine nature of the legal/rational authority distributed through organisational structure and the special nature of charisma has strong links to the transactional aspects referred to in transformational leadership. Burns (1978) recognised the sociological connection and that the transactional element of transformational leadership 'coincides with the classic "exchange theory" of sociology' (Burns, 1978, p.258). Transformational leadership, however, involves direct social interaction between the leader and their individual followers.

Social Interactionist Perspectives

Social interactionist theories are also concerned with how actors interact directly and dynamically within society in the execution of their intended meaningful activities. Two helpful perspectives regarding this are provided by Goffman and Mead. They offer micro level views of society and how interactions between individual actors take place in a continually changing context. Mead (1934) argued that social life could not proceed without a shared understanding of symbols and that through a process of semiosis, meaning is communicated between actors through their dynamic interactions.

According to Mead, at the micro-foundational level of an actor, there are two components of self, the 'I' and the 'me'. 'Individuals develop self-consciousness by coming to see themselves as others see them, which allows for an "internal conversation" between the individual's "I" and the social "me"' (Giddens and Sutton, 2013, p.337). Actors, however, do not always expose their authentic self - they present self to the community adopting specific roles – they *act* the part. Goffman (1959) builds on this interactionist theme.

Goffman offers a dramaturgical approach to human interaction which resonates with Shakespeare's: 'All the world's a stage and the men and women merely players' (Shakespeare, 1997, 2.7.139-140). Goffman (1959, p.223) argues that:

> While in the presence of others, the individual typically infuses his activity with signs which dramatically highlight and portray confirmatory facts that might otherwise

remain unapparent or obscure. For if the activity is to become significant to others, he must mobilise his activity so that it will express *during the interaction* what he wishes to convey (ibid, p.40).

Interactions that take place between a leader and their followers, however, do so in a range of unique contexts and over time. Within each context the HPSC enacts a role creating an impression on their followers in order to maximise their influence (Gardener and Avolio, 1998). A particularly powerful framework for the study of leadership is that of Bourdieu (1984). While Bourdieu did not explicitly focus on leadership dynamics, his work has significant implications for understanding leadership from a sociological perspective, and is of central importance for this thesis.

Bourdieusian Perspectives

The case for including Bourdieu is particularly strong for the two following reasons. First he addresses contextual aspects of leadership - namely recognising that there are a number of social contexts in which actors interact in a milieu of mediating influences. He refers to these contexts as *fields* which he likens to fields of electric flux. Secondly he recognises the importance of time in the process of *becoming*.

Bourdieu's structural constructivist stance allows researchers to take a pragmatic position regarding the public and private spheres of agency. The merging of the principles of structuralism and phenomenology, as espoused by Strauss (1964) and Merleau-Ponty (1962), is evident in his concepts. Bourdieu's three concepts, of *habitus*, *capital* and *field*, provide new ways of understanding leadership and the development of a leader's contextual fit. Bourdieu explained practice as a function of habitus and capital taking place in social spaces or fields (Bourdieu, 1984).

Bourdieu uses the metaphor of football to explain his concept of field. This recognises that each field has a defined boundary and codified rules of play. The social position and status of the actors in the field, according to Bourdieu, is determined by the actors 'set of actual usable resources and powers - economic capital, cultural capital and social capital' (Bourdieu, 1977, p.114). He adopts Lewin's (1951) concept of a force field to elaborate on the mediating influences, both positive and negative, affecting actors in their social interaction.

This approach, it seems, served two functions - firstly, as a means of separating the general context into a number of discrete fields the actors enter into and secondly as a means of assessing the affects of structure on the actor by quantifying their assets. This quantification is in relation to their accumulation of species of capital. As Bourdieu comments:

Once one takes account of the structure of total assets - and not only, as has always been done implicitly, of the dominant kind in a given structure, 'birth', 'fortune', or 'talents', as the nineteenth century put it - one has the means of making more precise divisions and also observing the specific effects of the structure of distribution between the different kinds of capital (Bourdieu, 1977, p.115).

Bourdieu also points out that, regardless of capital, each defined social space is a: 'field of possibles' (Bourdieu, 1984, p.110). This recognises that actors with the same level of assets in a particular field can accumulate additional capital from that field and hence gain social advantages. This, however, can create conflicts within the field and highlights that competition is part of human nature and one feature of social interaction.

Bourdieu also tends to use the metaphors of electricity and magnetism to describe social interaction. He likens the influences that affect actors in a field as a dynamic flux. In using the term he also refers to field using the French interpretation of 'battlefield' - a social space of potential conflict. The way actors behave within a field is determined by their habitus - a mechanism for translating passivity into activity.

Bourdieu's habitus can best be described as a set of learned, durable, transposable dispositions acquired through life experiences and education, or through the practices and competencies that give the individual their sense of position in a particular social space (Bourdieu, 1990, p.53).

According to Bourdieu the habitus, informed by species of capital, changes the field and is changed by the field. He posits that 'it adjusts itself to a probable future which it anticipates and helps bring about because it reads it directly in the present of the assumed world, the only one it could ever know' (Bourdieu, 1990, p.64).

Bourdieu, however, recognises that knowing can be conscious or in the unconscious tacit domain, stating:

If [actors] are possessed by their habitus more than they possess it, this is because it acts within them as the organizing principle of their actions, and because this modus operandi informing all thought and action (including thought of action) reveals itself only in the opus operatum (Bourdieu, 1977, p.18).

This dynamic reflexive and structured habitus responds specifically to the social space, and is informed by what Bourdieu refers to as 'species of capital' - which are namely, economic, cultural, social and symbolic (Bourdieu, 1984). These species of capital are seen by Bourdieu as partners to habitus, interacting in a dynamic way within his third concept of field and which bring meaning, or Illusio, to the actor - a feeling of being at *home* in context. Bourdieu describes Illusio, a term taken from Aristotle, as:

> [B]eing in the game, of being invested in the game, of taking the game seriously. Illusio is the fact of being caught up in and by the game... games which matter to you are important and interesting because they have been imposed and introduced in your mind, in your body, in a form called the feel for the game (Bourdieu, 1998, p.76).

According to Bourdieu being at home in a context is a function of a human desire for distinction through the gaining of efficiency or mastery within a specific field. By investing in the game the actor finds meaning, accumulates capital and gains mastery in order to gain distinction. The field, however, is always in a state of flux.

A final important concept highlighted by Bourdieu is that of hysteresis or creative adaptation of the habitus, were the habitus becomes out of step with the field. Bourdieu (1977) describes this as a form of dissonance or a counter adaptive 'lag' that retards adaptation to a social context that has changed. It is the adaptation to continually changing context that forms a crucial element of contextual fit: a key theme for this thesis elaborated in detail later.

Conclusion

Management perspectives during the classical period focused on organisational purpose, formalised structure and the activities performed in transforming raw materials into products and services. Little attention was given during this classical period of management to addressing the social needs of employees. However, in the early 1930s the work of Elton Mayo exposed this issue in the 'Hawthorne Studies' at the Western Electric Plant in the USA. This realisation led to a plethora of motivational theories that pervaded the 1950s and persist today.

The introduction of systems theory and quality in the 1960s and 1970s led to a greater understanding of how organisations function and to a broader contingency approach in managing them. The importance of managing people in organisations, as earlier revealed by Mayo, appears to have been forgotten and to have given way to a focus on leadership. Leadership theory and the separation of management and leadership is commonplace in current publications. However, such views have been contested by authors such as Drucker and Mintzberg.

Leadership theory focuses on: who the leader is in terms of personal characteristics such as traits and personality; the skills they have; their self and social identity; contingency related to whether they fit into a specific context; their behaviours in terms of leadership style; the relationships they construct with followers; and whether they are transformational in the effects they have on their organisation. Given that leadership predates management and both are inextricably linked this thesis considers both perspectives as one.

Leadership concepts also have a strong affiliation with sociological perspectives. The works of Mead, Goffman, and Bourdieu give greater insights into human behaviour, especially at a micro-level, taking into account the dynamic nature of context, agency and structure. Leadership theory, used in conjunction with sociological perspectives including Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, capital and field, offer new and exciting ways to study human relationships. My studies have been informed by this theoretical background and in particular the work of Bourdieu. His concepts are of central importance to this thesis and his ideas will be applied to examine the empirical data on the leadership practices of HPSCs later in the thesis.

Chapter 3: Methodology

> There is considerable diversity in methodological approach within the field of leadership and that diversity is increasingly driven, in part, by the greater acceptance of qualitative methods. The appreciation of qualitative and other under-used methods has stimulated leadership researchers to think about leadership in new ways and suggested new research questions (Bryman et al., 2011, p. xiii).

Introduction

I begin with a quotation from Alan Bryman, who recognises the need for new, more discursive approaches to conducting research into leadership. The intention of the study was to discover the personal characteristics, forms of expertise and credibility that HPSCs develop, over time, to match the demands of the contexts, or fields (Bourdieu, 1977) in which they operate. While there is an increasing corpus of literature that concerns leadership in general, there is a limited amount of literature on the notion of contextual fit for leadership (Arnold, Fletcher, and Anderson 2015; Arthur and Lynn 2016; Arthur, Wagstaff, and Hardy 2016; Purdy and Potrac, 2016).

To date, little research has been conducted to further the epistemology of HPSC leadership effectiveness, and their degree of contextual fit (Barker-Ruchti, Barker, Rynne, and Lee 2016; Ferrari, Bloom, Gilbert, and Caron 2017). Although meta-level studies have been conducted into the coaching role by the International Council for Coaching Excellence (ICCE), Association of Summer Olympic International Federations (ASOIF) and Leeds Metropolitan University, little is understood about the wider nature of elite level coaching or how, as a leader they achieve a contextual fit.

The International Sport Coaching Framework Version 1.2, published in 2013, provides a comprehensive view of coaching roles, but mainly from a functionalist perspective. Whilst the macro level functionalist views provide a platform for coach education the micro level interactionist and leadership perspectives remain to a large extent unexplored. Discussing the need to research the interpersonal activities and power relationships in coaching Lyle states:

> Research into this aspect of the coaching process is complicated by a complex matrix of personal characteristics, individualisation/uniqueness, specificity of context, coaching philosophies, and a dearth of solid evidence on the relationships between these factors and performance (Lyle, 2002, p.297).

Initial research into the role of a modern coach dates back to 2001 when Sport Coach UK (scUK) established a task force to review coaching standards. They recognised the progress that British Swimming had made internally following the introduction of National Vocational Qualifications into their coach education programme, commenting:

> A sport that has been identified by scUK as 'trail blazing' in its workforce development plan is swimming. Its development framework for teaching and coaching in England 2009-2013 is an example of good practice... (Trimble et al., 2010, p.159).

Whilst the role of the coach had been studied no serious consideration was given to the complex environments in which they operated.

The context in which HPSCs perform their duties requires that they influence a diverse range of actors, each embedded within their own social field or structural domain, and each with their own idiosyncratic needs. Such complexities notwithstanding, in all cases the HPSC provides leadership to their direct-follower elite swimmers and assistant coaches. The HPSC can also work with a number of support agencies – e.g. English Institute of Sport (EIS), UK Sport, and university sport science departments. Expert technical support seems to be a critical factor for success.

As a prelude to the analysis of the primary research data, discussed in the findings chapters (Chapters 5 to 7), Chapter 4 details the contextual layers in the social milieu in which the HPSC operates. The inclusion of Chapter 4, as an introductory chapter, was considered necessary for two reasons. First, an essential component of the thesis relates to the multiple contexts or fields in which HPSCs fulfil their role, and which influence HPSCs. Second, a finding that emerged from the interviews was that a delineation of these contexts was instrumental in my gaining an appreciation for the ways in which HPSCs are both embedded in social structures and unconsciously affected by them.

I was fortunate to be accompanied throughout the research by a fellow-traveller HPSC – James Gibson MBE acting as a critical friend. Following the London 2012 Olympic Games, I was appointed as a coaching assessor to James, who was a candidate for the United Kingdom Coaching Certificate (UKCC) Senior Coach Certificate. Later, in 2014, James asked if I would be prepared to act as a mentor for him on his enrolment to the UK Sport Elite Coach Apprenticeship Programme (ECAP). Although not one of my interviewees, James was able to offer useful critique regarding my perceptions of the elite coaching role.

This chapter outlines the selected method for the study. In the first section, the focus for the research is described together with the underlying assumptions that were used in data collection and analysis. The second section consists of a discussion of the research design and rationale. This includes a critical review of relevant ontological and epistemological perspectives directing the study approach. This is followed by a review of the research questions used to guide the study. The third section discusses my role as a doctoral apprentice researcher in conducting the qualitative single case study.

A discussion of the research methods follows, including a description of participant selection, instrumentation, and data collection procedures. A discussion of the data analysis makes up the fourth section, which is followed by a description of the ethical considerations taken to complete the study.

Research Focus and Approach

My intention as the researcher was to employ concepts and principles of contemporary sociology and anthropology to conduct a qualitative investigation into the role of the HPSC. This was in the hope of revealing helpful features and attributes of individuals successful in that role. Hence, the research focused on the notion of 'contextual fit' as pertaining to HPSCs acting in a leadership role. As it is understood in this research, the phenomenon of contextual fit invokes particular perspectives associated with leadership and the conceptual ideas created by Bourdieu (1977). Consequently, an assumption that underlies this work is that a leader's influence and sense of being at home is affected by the degree of fit they have within their operational contexts. Certain ontological and epistemological stances are implied by this perspective, namely those of constructionism and interpretivism, respectively. It will be helpful, first, to describe what these views entail, before proceeding to discuss the research design implemented here.

Ontology is defined as the study of the nature of being. An ontological perspective gives rise to questions such as: what is the leader being that makes their followers legitimise their leadership? Epistemology, however, is concerned with socially constructed knowledge. According to Stake: 'most contemporary qualitative researchers nourish the belief that knowledge is constructed rather than discovered' (Stake, 1995, p.99).

From a philosophical perspective, epistemology is concerned with 'what does and does not constitute warranted or valid knowledge' (Gill and Johnson 2006, p.226). Simply stated, epistemology focuses on what we know to be true – or how we know what we know. It might be argued that an HPSC's contextual fit could be explained objectively. Reductionist theories tend to make such explanations appear simple, giving single rational accounts from a functionalist stance. However, those accounts generally offer little in the way of empirical evidence.

A sentiment that is captured in the writings of Wood (2008), on leadership and management, is that human relationships are extremely complex. Analysing the phenomenon as a process, in the context of a continuously changing environment, he suggests:

> It has become fashionable in the field of leadership and management studies to emphasize the relational nature of leading. Rather than focusing on "leaders" and

"managers" as clear and firmly fixed economic entities, leadership is understood as a process rather than a property or thing (Wood, 2008, p.132).

The Greek philosopher Parmenides viewed the nature of leadership as static and unchanging. His view can be contrasted with Heraclitus's, who adopted the principle that 'everything flows', a principle that places an emphasis on becoming, as opposed to being. In essence, becoming an HPSC with contextual fit can be viewed as an emergent phenomenon. From this I concluded that a case study centred on the lived experiences of HPSCs from their entry into the role, to becoming effective, would be the most appropriate choice.

Research Paradigm, Design and Rationale

To accomplish the purpose of this study, I chose a qualitative single case study method using formal semi-structured interviews. According to Creswell, the case study method:

> [E]xplores a real-life, contemporary bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in depth data collection involving multiple sources of information… and reports a case description and case themes (Creswell, 2014, p. 97).

The research method I selected was initially influenced by proponents of phenomenological and heuristic inquiry. I wanted to hear HPSCs' stories and understand the feelings they had that were associated with their lived experience. Ethnography was also considered as an alternative research method, but was not chosen as the primary process. I concluded that it would only provide an external perception of the HPSC acting in the role. I decided, therefore, only to use the basic principles associated with ethnography for my poolside observations.

By listening carefully with an open mind, and using inductive methods, we can learn so much more. Bruner argues that narrative was more than simply telling a story. It was a way of knowing as powerful as scientific knowing but different from it (Bruner, 1985). By exploring the lived experiences of actors and the stories they tell, phenomenology has the potential to reveal the true nature of a given phenomenon.

I wanted to use elements of heuristic research and phenomenology to reveal the inner life of HPSCs – how they experienced their world. Moustakas describes this sentiment:

> Essentially in the heuristic process, I am creating a story that portrays the qualities, meanings, and essences of universally and unique experiences. Through an unwavering and steady inward gaze and inner freedom to explore what is, I am reaching into deeper and deeper regions of a human problem or experience and coming to know and understand its underlying dynamics and constituents more and more fully (Moustakas, 1990, p.13).

I wanted to 'extend my understanding through the eyes and voices of others' (ibid, p.17). I wanted the phenomenon of contextual fit to speak to my own experiences to discover how an HPSC crafted the self to become effective as a leader over an extended period of time.

My intention was to use, in broad terms, the heuristic process and to follow my intuition as a coach. I wanted to connect with my tacit knowledge to explicate and develop my understanding of the HPSCs' world, through self talk, indwelling with the research question, and incubating key concepts emerging from the research data. I determined to listen carefully to HPSCs' lived experiences and suspend my assumptions. As Moustakas explains:

> Epoché requires the elimination of supposition and the raising of knowledge above every possible doubt. For Husserl, as for Kant and Descartes, knowledge based on intuition and essence precedes empirical knowledge (Moustakas, 1994, p.26).

Husserl (2012), in his general principles of phenomenology, uses the term 'bracketing out' to describe how judgment may be suspended while an investigator seeks, with an open mind, to understand a phenomenon. According to Moustakas 'Husserl's transcendental phenomenology, is intimately bound up in the concept of intentionality' (Moustakas, 1994, p.28). Although I selected a single case study, I still decided to incorporate the principles of phenomenology whilst heeding the advice of Bryman when he talks of preconceptions in the process describing phenomenology as:

> [A] philosophy that is concerned with the question of how individuals make sense of the world around them and how in particular the philosopher should bracket out preconceptions concerning his or her grasp of the world (Bryman, 2016, p.26).

I was aware of the dangers of listening to HPSCs through the myriad of assumptions that I had gathered over many years. For example, one of my original assumptions that proved false was that an effective leader will be effective in any context. I realised that this assumption could affect my questioning or bring bias into my interpretation of the research data. Paradoxically, whilst my own experience proved to be a particular strength in understanding the nature of high performance coaching, it was also a potential weakness. The level of knowledge I have of coaching at all levels could have resulted in my reaching conclusions without listening and without keeping an open mind.

Using a qualitative approach of this type, however, did appear to have significant advantages over quantitative methods. The main strength of using a qualitative approach is that it gives the researcher entry into the affective domain of emotions associated with experiences in life. I wanted to understand the feelings HPSCs experienced at critical moments in their coaching role. I also wanted to learn how they were able to manage these emotions. I was aware that

qualitative information is subjective in nature and, unlike quantitative research, cannot easily be displayed.

Quantitative research relies on the collection and analysis of data that can be represented numerically. In contrast, qualitative research relies on the collection and analysis of non-numerical data – for example, sounds, images, and narratives associated with social interaction. However, as Bryman comments: 'there would seem to be little to the quantitative/qualitative distinction other than the fact that quantitative researchers employ measurement and qualitative researchers do not' (Bryman, 2016, p. 31).

Quantitative research attempts to show the relationship between numerical research data, that is more easily verified, and the associated theory. The ontological and epistemological orientations it uses are, therefore, objectivism and positivism, respectively. That type of research attempts to test hypothesised concepts against social reality. Its emphasis is on the gathering and analysis of objective data and measurement. 'If a concept is to be employed in quantitative research, it will have to be measured' (ibid, p.144). Measurements of concepts in the form of independent and dependent variables, seek to find causal relationships or correlations.

Such measurements are collected to support or disprove a concept. Trait theorists, for example, have tried for many years to correlate personality with leader effectiveness without seeming to have much success. As Bass and Stogdill (1990, p.87) explain: 'There is no overall comprehensive theory of the personality of leaders'. These considerations highlight the difficulties that may arise in trying to explain reality by hypothesising. A second issue related to the collection of reliable and valid data. 'Reliability refers to the consistency of a measure or concept' (Bryman, 2016, p.157).

It should be possible to re-test at a later point and produce the same result. Measures used should be stable and consistent, and observable by other researchers. 'Validity refers to whether an indicator (or set of indicators) that is devised to gauge a concept really measures that concept' (ibid, p.151). Validity relates to the integrity of the data in terms of measurement and relationships between variables.

A third issue with quantitative research lies in problems associated with data collection and analysis. The most common method of collecting data is via survey research involving the use of sampling to gain representative data. Research instruments such as self-administered questionnaires, structured interviewing schedules, and structured observation are the most popular. These methods can, of course, also be used when carrying out qualitative research.

One of the main criticisms of quantitative research is that it fails to distinguish between people in reality and people as theoretical entities, as postulated in the natural sciences. 'The error

fundamentally is the failure to realise that there is an ontological discontinuity between human beings and it-beings' (Laing, 1967, p.53). Other criticisms of quantitative research include measurement, reliability, validity and respondent competence. Assumptions are often made by social scientists about whether there is a strong connection between the measures, and the concepts they are measuring.

This is particularly true of self-administered questionnaires. The wording on these questionnaires can easily be misinterpreted, leading to error. 'In the view of many writers, respondents simply do not interpret such terms similarly' (Bryman, 2016, p.166). This problem raises questions regarding the reliability and validity of data collected under such studies.

Another criticism of quantitative research is that it gives a static view of social interaction. Attempts to analyse data and study the relationship between variables ignore the passage of time. 'This means we do not know how an apparent relationship between two or more variables has been produced by the people on whom the research was conducted' (ibid, 160).

In contrast, qualitative research offers a more inductive approach to research, which 'usually emphasizes words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data' (ibid, p.366). Qualitative research, then, relies on an ontological orientation of constructionism and an epistemological orientation of interpretivism. This method allows the researcher to place an emphasis on explanations for phenomena that emerge from data collection and analysis to gain a greater understanding of social reality.

The unique single case study, using semi-structured interviews, therefore served the relevant overarching purposes of this research. The single case study allows a researcher to observe the phenomena present in a group after one or more exposures. Thereafter, the researcher may then measure accordingly, using propositional generalisations made that include interpretations based on observations of case subjects in their natural setting where causal inferences are sought (Creswell, 2014).

I recognised the advantages of using multiple case studies. As Yin (2009) observes, such a study affords the researcher with the opportunity to examine data derived from a range of contexts. In terms of the present study, such a method would have allowed me to analyse the contextual data both within each swimming organisation and across other organisations. However, I wanted the body of HPSCs to be the focus of the case and not their swimming organisations. I also recognise that influential publications can be produced from reflections on similarities and differences between studies, or on augmentations of previous research (Yin, 2009; Eisenhardt, 1989). However, to my knowledge, there are no studies of this type regarding HPSCs.

Multiple case studies may allow for a wider exploration of research questions and for the evolution of what might have become a more convincing theory (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007). However, such a study could also produce excessive levels of research data that may detract from the consideration of HPSCs' personal experiences. Hence, as Yin (2009) notes, a single case study is more appropriate when there is a focus on a single person or a single group of people. As the targeted research area considered here meets this criterion, I concluded that a single case study would be most appropriate for this thesis. Specifically, this type of case study would facilitate in making generalisations regarding how HPSCs accomplish effective leadership.

Maxwell (2013, p. 246) identifies several features that lend credibility to generalisations made in case studies, including corroboration from other studies as well as '…the presumed depth of universality of the phenomenon studied.' I determined that the single case study approach would lend itself to in-depth and thorough detailing of HPSCs' influence and contextual fit using qualitative techniques. I wanted to limit the volume of data collected and so I avoided the use of other studies on coaching effectiveness. Little is written on contextual factors and therefore the value of using data from other studies is questionable.

Research Questions

My intention in the research was to capture the lived experiences of HPSCs and how their feelings had attracted them to, or alienated them from, the role. Regarding this, I sought to discover how HPSCs entered into their roles and what journeys they had experienced before they found feelings of being at home in context. To elicit as much information as possible I used a mixture of open and closed questions to probe deeply into their experiences; I wanted to hear HPSCs' own stories of how they perceived their reality.

I was also concerned with only using language that would limit misunderstanding and avoid the use of leading questions. It was important to capture the full meaning of what was being said when listening to HPSCs' interview responses. As Kvale and Brinkmann point out:

> The interview takes place in an interpersonal context, and the meanings of interview statements relate to their context. Interviews are sensitive to the qualitative differences and nuances of meaning, which may not be quantifiable and commensurate across contexts and modalities (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009, p.55).

In a reflexive stance during interviews, I was aware of my own responsibilities as an interviewer, and that I carried with me my own potential for bias. I wanted to consider how HPSCs might perceive me as a former coaching tutor and assessor for Swim England. At the beginning of the interviews, I explained the purpose of the research and promised total

anonymity and security of information. I wanted their full and frank perceptions of their outer worlds and their inner feelings and thoughts as they conducted their lives as HPSCs.

The interview checklist and questions that I formulated to guide this single case study can be found in Appendix 3 and Appendix 4 respectively. I discussed the questions directly with the selected HPSCs just prior to the interviews. I did this in order to clarify any terms that HPSCs may not have understood in the information sent to them before we met.

In conducting these interviews, I also used the same generally accepted coaching language that interviewees use in poolside conversations on a daily basis. This was to avoid using academic terms that might be misinterpreted. I was fully aware when asking questions that some responses may have been intended to impress. As an experienced interviewer, I looked for any inconsistencies and avoided conflicts wherever possible.

Role of the Researcher

The role of the qualitative researcher can take a number of forms depending on the selected research method. The main research methods selected for my thesis, as already stated, was a single case study incorporating the principles of phenomenology, heuristic inquiry and elements of ethnography. Research data was therefore collected from informal interviews; semi-structured, intensive, qualitative interviews; and observations (Angrosino, 2007; Ricceur, 1996; Stake, 1995; Moustakas, 1990).

For the ethnographic component I wanted, as a relative expert in the field, to adopt an overt participant-observer role. According to Bryman:

> Ethnography and participant observation entail the extended involvement of the
> researcher in the social life of those he or she studies. The ethnographer is typically a
> participant observer who also uses non-observational methods and sources such as
> interviewing and documents. The ethnographer may adopt an overt or covert role, but
> the latter carries ethical difficulties (Bryman, 2016, p.462).

For the face-to-face interviews I conducted qualitative, in-depth interviews. As Bryman states: 'the term 'qualitative interview', this one sometimes refers to an unstructured interview but more often refers to both semi-structured and unstructured interviewing' (ibid, p.201). I also recognised that I was an instrument of the research.

As Stake points states:

> The case researcher plays different roles and has options as to how they will be played.
> The roles may include teacher, participant observer, interviewer, reader, storyteller,
> advocate, artist, counsellor, consultant and others (Stake, 1995, p.91).

I was aware at all times, however, that I was one of the instruments in the process of collecting and analysing the research data.

Marshall and Rossman (2014) suggest that the role of the researcher is as an added instrument with which the researcher can conduct the qualitative research. In this respect, the experience and expertise I have brought to bear in this study provided a desire and empathy founded on a deep interest in discovering how effective HPSCs achieve their leadership. These perspectives and motivations, coupled with the single case study research method, offered the best opportunity to reveal the nature of HPSCs' fit and its effects on their leadership. Case study has the advantage of simplifying complex phenomena and exposes the researcher to real life situations (Stake, 1995).

The main goal of this study was to determine how HPSCs develop a contextual fit into their operational environment. I first supposed that this goal could best be realised by examining HPSCs' lived experiences, as through social interaction with their follower agencies, where, from an ontological perspective, they may become consciously aware of their sense of being. However, matters surrounding such experiences also brought an inherent potential for bias. To mitigate for such bias, I asked questions that would lead to a greater understanding of effective elite coaching. I also became an active listener and active learner of the interviewees' stories (Lyons and LaBoskey, 2002; Bruner, 1991), and I asked questions and issued prompts to elicit meaningful responses.

Additionally, I remained cognisant of the potential bias that might come from my influencing interviewees in their responses. This led me consciously to refrain from prompting for possible 'desirable' answers to the interview questions. I sought also to avoid subjectivity during the reporting of the findings (Creswell, 2014) by attaching no extraneous value to the interview responses or to the transcripts during analysis.

In conclusion, I remained aware of the subjective nature of the data and attempted to maintain an open mind for the study. In recognising the complexity of human interaction, sociologists prefer socially constructed explanations of phenomena – a constructionist perspective. According to Bryman: 'Constructionism asserts that social phenomena and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors' (Bryman, 2016, p. 29).

In addition to the problem of potential biases brought to the study, was the challenge of trying to gain access to HPSCs' undisclosed knowledge. In asking HPSCs to describe their experiences, I was aware that a considerable amount of the interviewees' knowledge was tacit.

This reminded me of a statement made by Donald Rumsfeld during a Gulf War news briefing in 2011 where he stated:

There are known knowns; there are things that we know that we know. We also know there are known unknowns; that is to say we know there are some things we do not know. But there are also unknown unknowns, the ones we don't know we don't know (Rumsfeld, 2011, Authors Note).

In making the statement, however, Rumsfeld overlooked an extremely important alternative - that of the unknown knowns - that is the tacit dimension of knowledge (Polanyi, 1966). Knowledge gained consciously through discovery, research and development tend to dominate the published coaching discourses and narrative. The intuitive unconscious domain of the unknown knowns, however, is under-investigated.

The unknown-known dimension, or those things that are known to us unconsciously, should not be disregarded so carelessly. It is arguable that this intuitive domain, which Kahneman (2011) describes as System 1 Thinking, is a rich source of learning that is as yet untapped. In this respect, I took full advantage of probes (Creswell, 2014) to extract meaning where it was otherwise only implicitly delivered by the interview participants.

Access

To gain access to selected coaches for my primary data collection required approaching British Swimming. The incumbent National Performance Director (NPD), however, did not want any external distractions to affect his HPSCs in their lead-up to the 2012 Olympic Games. Initially, this proved to be a significant barrier. Poor performances, however, from the British swimming team at these games resulted in a change of NPD and Head Coach (HC). Following new appointments, permissions were then granted and I was then free to interview HPSCs at Intensive Training Centres (ITCs) and major competitions within the UK.

All of the HPSCs interviewed, with the exception of those employed directly by British Swimming, held the primary leadership position in their organisations. Access to them, therefore, was not an issue. These coaches were approached directly, initially by telephone, and privately to gain their permission as participants and to maintain their anonymity. Communication of all relevant documentation to meet ethical requirements was sent via email to each HPSC directly. As I am known by HPSCs across the UK and speak to them informally on a regular basis, anonymity for any data collected from HPSCs on poolside (observation and questioning) could also be maintained.

Having agreed to be interviewed and having been provided with the background information regarding the face-to-face meetings, HPSCs could reflect on their experiences prior to the interview. These formal interview dates were arranged to avoid interference with any major competitions. All formal interviews were conducted at HPSCs' operational training location and audio recorded. Each interviewee signed a consent form (see Appendix 2) prior to their

interview. Anonymised audio recordings were then later transcribed into text for detailed analysis.

At major competitions I was able to observe the coaches and ask questions in an unobtrusive way, and privately, to ensure anonymity. I immersed myself in the role as participant observer, although now through a different set of lenses (Brookfield, 1995). I recorded my thoughts and feelings of comments that were made during informal poolside interviews/discussions. Any details of observation were recorded together with any coaching comments in personal note books for use in the research analysis. All notes were written in private and post competition. A third source of primary data was obtained from conferences held by the British Swimming Coaches Association (BSCA).

Permission to use personal audio tape recordings, from coaching conference question and answer sessions, held over the period 2012 to 2016, was given by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the BSCA. Although the majority of HPSCs at conferences were UK coaches, a number of visiting speakers from across the world were also in attendance. As these audio recordings were taken from answers to questions in open forum and hence stated publicly to an international audience, anonymity was not required. Recordings were later transcribed into text files for analysis.

Research Method

In face-to-face, semi-structured interviews, 32 HPSCs (anonymised listed in Appendix 1) who work in the UK were questioned at their operational locations. The criteria for sample-selection were designed to find a representative group of HPSCs. This included 6 female and 26 male HPSCs distributed across the UK and who had been coaching at the elite level for at least 5 years. The sampled HPSCs were all currently coaching elite competitive swimmers (athletes) who were, at the time of writing, competing at either senior or junior international level competitions.

For the sample I wanted participants from the main variants of swimming organisations found within the UK. The swimming organisations selected were British Swimming Intensive Training Centres (ITCs), large clubs administered by local government authorities, and a mixture of medium to large sized privately owned clubs. The size of the convenience based sample was in accordance with the recommendations of Creswell (1994), who suggests that for phenomenological studies sample sizes of between 20 and 30 participants are needed.

Morse (1994) suggests that for phenomenological studies the sample should be at least six participants. It was on these criteria that I deemed 32 interviewees would be large enough to achieve saturation and achieve the purpose of the research. Formal interview participants were selected on a purposive basis. As Bryman (2016, p. 408) states: 'The goal of purposive

sampling is to sample cases/participants in a strategic way, so that those sampled are relevant to the research questions that are being posed' (ibid). Purposive sampling, therefore, allowed me to select participants relevant to the purpose of the study (Bryman, 2016; Maxwell, 2013).

In addition, purposive sampling also ensured the specificity of research data (Bryman, 2016). The HPSCs selected were all international coaches from a range of contexts in the UK. They were selected specifically in order to reveal variances in their lived collective experiences (Bryman, 2016). The important factors that determine whether an HPSC can find a contextual fit seem to be their ability to identify what needs to be done, coupled with the capability of following through and carrying out what is needed to be done, while also gaining the consent of followers.

For the HPSC to be effective they need, it would seem, contextual awareness at a macro and micro level. This is in order that they can see where interventions are needed. At a micro level this involves the identification of any deviations from performance or behavioural standards by the athletes. At a macro level any barriers to achieving success, within the swimming organisation or in the wider context, need to be addressed. This might, for example be additional resources or expert knowledge.

Expertise through experience (practical wisdom) allows individuals to see what others cannot see (Gladwell, 2008). The operative here is in the definition of expertise. According to the Dreyfus Novice to Expert Scale (Dreyfus and Dreyfus, 1980), a novice has minimal or textbook knowledge not linked with practice; a beginner has a working knowledge of key aspects of practice; a competent individual has ample working and practical knowledge; a practitioner has in-depth understanding and practical experience; and an expert has profound and tacit knowledge, understanding, and experience.

Therefore, the criteria used for participant selection included the requirement that coaches were experts who had at least five years of experience coaching swimmers at international level swimming competitions. Additional criteria used to recruit expert coaches for the study were gained by consulting the notion of coach expertise set forth by Abraham, Collins and Martindale (2006) and Johnston (2014). These criteria included the following: first, coaches must be considered by peers to be an expert in their field; second, coaches must be able to demonstrate a critical and contextual thinking approach to their role; and third, coaches must be either currently or have had experience of working with elite athletes.

Participants in the face-to-face formal interviews were identified from my personal contact list gathered, over a number of years at major competitions and BSCA conferences. When approached they were advised of the details of the study and, provided they met the above criteria, were invited to participate. Of the number of HPSCs contacted, 32 were invited to be

interviewed. This enabled me to collect enough information to saturate the data categories (Bryman, 2016; Creswell, 2014).

To supplement the face-to-face interviews, informal unstructured interviews and observations conducted at major competition were also used. For this source of research data interviews participants were selected on an ad hoc basis when available (e.g. not working with their athletes). As their priority at competition was for their athletes I had to select an appropriate time to speak to them. Observations were made prior to any approaches such that permission to use examples of behaviour could be gained before the informal interview. My research method in these activities was based on the principles of ethnography.

As ethnography formed a small part of the study I considered sample size based on the advice of Morse (2015) who posits that between 30 and 50 participants are needed. I decided, therefore that over the period 2012 to 2016 at major competition at least six interviewees would be needed per year. Research data from over 35 HPSCs were recorded in personal notes completed privately after the competition on that day. The observations and poolside interviews were conducted on individual coaches that were not participants in the formal interviews. I also collected research data each year from annual coaching conferences.

Personal audio recorded responses, to open forum questions posed by HPSCs, were taken at five BSCA conferences held between 2012 and 2016 inclusive. Coaching panels for questions and answers were held after each session of the 3 day conference. These panels, involving a mixture of UK HPSCs and international coaches from across the world, provided a third source of research data. The audio recordings were secured and later transcribed into text based files for use in the analysis.

Instrumentation

Three sets of primary data were collected for my research. The sources I felt would help reveal all of the determinants that make High Performance Swimming Coaches (HPSCs) effective in terms of both their influence as leaders and their contextual fit. HPSCs, in the course of fulfilling their role, are active in three main locations – namely attendance at coaching conferences, at major competitions and training athletes within their swimming organisation. I therefore gathered research data from HPSCs at these sites.

The main source of research data consisted of formal face-to-face, semi-structured interviews with the 32 selected HPSCs. The interviews lasted between one and two hours. These interviews, conducted at their training locations, enabled me to elicit responses to questions that were relevant to the research questions guiding this study. Qualitative research interviews 'seek to understand the meaning of central themes of the [actor's] lived worlds' (Flick, 2007, p.11) and these interviews were conducted in private at the HPSCs training location. Audio

recordings were taken, with the HPSCs permission, and transcribed into text files for later analysis.

The interview protocol was designed from an epistemological, constructionist perspective. The interviews were conducted in recognition of the nature of the social construction of knowledge (Bryman, 2016; Flick 2007; Marturano and Gosling, 2008) and the power of narrative inquiry. Through interviews, I was able to encourage participants to '…describe precisely what they experience and feel, and how they act' (Lyons and LaBoskey, 2002p.12).

Notably, it was recognised that there are potential problems in using the interview as a means of developing knowledge and understanding phenomena. One important concern is associated with interpretation and meaning. Critics suggest 'survey researchers presume that interviewer and respondent share the same meanings in terms employed in the interview questions and answers' (Bryman, 2016, p.217). It was, therefore, regarded as important to clarify any terminology used in the interview protocol to avoid ambiguities.

The potential for unintended ambiguities was taken into consideration when the interview questions were being developed. The interview protocol or guide was developed following a semi-structured format with the research questions in mind, with an aim of gaining insight into the contextual fit and influence of coaches in high performance sports environments. This method was found to support the collection of relevant data whilst at the same time affording me the flexibility to address and follow up on any unexpected answers and to probe for any incomplete information (Bryman, 2016).

The primary research data posed a considerable challenge in terms of volume. On average, the transcripts were 13,900 words in size with the largest at 25,958 words. In total, there were 472,613 words transcribed into 34 files. Although there were 32 interviewees, one HPSC was interviewed on three separate occasions over a three year period. The reason for three separate interviews arose due to the HPSC changing organisations. This afforded me the opportunity to gain deeper insights into those factors that result in an HPSC's loss of contextual fit with a particular swimming organisation.

In the thesis, transcription files from these interviews (in the period 2012 to 2016) are referenced in the form (Coach #na, personal communication, date, p.n), where Coach #n is the anonymised HPSC and allocated file number n, followed by an alpha character to denote separate personal interviews in the range a-c, followed by personal communication, the interview date, and the page (p) number (n) of the transcript file.

To give complete anonymity to the 32 HPSC interviewees, I have removed direct references to names of the HPSCs, their clubs and any athletes they may coach. Club names carry the corresponding identity of the HPSC such that [Club #13a] refers to HPSC #13 suffixed by an

alpha character in the range a – z, where there is more than one named club. This same format is used for anonymised athletes where more than one athlete is named. These are in the form of [named athlete #a] where alpha letters in the range a - z are used to separate the athletes.

For the second set of primary data, I observed and held informal personal interviews/discussions at major competitions from within a larger body of active coaches over a 5 year period between 2012 and 2017. The HPSCs involved in these informal interviews were larger in number, and additional to the 32 selected for the formal face-to-face interviews. The interviews were, however, much shorter in duration as the HPSCs were active in their operational role. As I am well known on the coaching scene, and speak to a large number of HPSCs in the course of competition on a regular basis, I could ensure interviewee anonymity.

Permission to use any quotes made by interviewees during these poolside discussions, was gained from the HPSC at the time and recorded in my personal notes later. Attendance at competition also allowed for an element of ethnographic type observation. In the competitive arena the HPSCs operational performance is open to scrutiny and this provided an opportunity to observe poolside behaviours and body language more intently. This supplemented the research data and provided for triangulation.

The primary data for this stage of the research was also captured in personal notes completed in private and post competition. I completed 13, A5 notebooks containing a mixture of observations, responses to informal questions and personal thoughts. This allowed me to reflect on my own role as a participant observer. I was aware of my proximity to the HPSC community acting as an 'insider' taking the stance of an 'outsider.' As Mabry states: 'There are drawbacks to case study as a research approach including proximity' (Mabry, 2008, p.219).

Observations, personal thoughts and any coaching comments were all captured in personal notes. These are shown in the form (PNnn, personal communication, date, p.n) where nn is the number of the Personal Notebook (PN), date and the page (p) number (n). As an active coach on poolside with my own athletes I could observe other coaches in an unobtrusive way. This ensured anonymity and allowed me to observe HPSCs interacting with their athletes in the competitive arena. The HPSCs in this setting are open to scrutiny from a large body of athletes, HPSCs, officials and other stakeholders. In this context arena skills and HPSC-athlete relationships are ruthlessly exposed. The salient features of HPSCs' experiences at competition often become the anecdotes for coaching conferences.

A particularly rich source of primary research data was obtained at BSCA coaching conferences. Access to the country's top HPSCs as well as international coaches from across the world was available through question and answer panels following speaker presentations.

The responses to questions were made in a public forum to a large audience of elite coaches. Personal audio recordings were used to capture responses to questions and later transcribed for analysis. As stated earlier, these question and answer sessions were in open coaching forums, and therefore coach anonymity was not necessary.

Transcription files from the coaching conferences in the period 2012 to 2016, were on average 6,500 words and referenced in the thesis in the form (name, personal communication, date, p.n) where the name is the surname of the HPSC, conference date, followed by the page (p) number (n) of the transcript file. Permissions to publish extracts from the transcribed audio files were granted by the CEO of the BSCA. As the invited guest speakers are well known to the international swimming coaching community the names are retained in the thesis. The data analysis plan details how my dataset was structured.

Data Analysis Plan

Qualitative research offers a more inductive approach to research, which 'usually emphasizes words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data' (Bryman, 2016, p.32). The research focussed on explanations for phenomena that emerged from data collection and analysis. The interpretations of these explanations endeavoured to understand the social reality of HPSCs' experiences. In Riessman (2008), types of data analysis are presented for analysing social reality by way of narratives.

Narrative thematic analysis focuses on content, on what is said rather than on how it is said. Narrative thematic analysis also aims to preserve the integrity of the complete narrative. These are characteristics I pursued throughout the research. As it is employed in the human sciences (such as sociology and psychology), narrative thematic analysis allows the researcher to work more closely with a single case study (Riessman, 2008). Whilst the method of narrative thematic analysis was applied in general terms, a more specific protocol was used for this study. This was Braun and Clarke's (2014) six-phase thematic analysis protocol, involving: Phase 1 – familiarising oneself with the data; Phase 2 – generating initial codes; Phase 3 – seeking out themes; Phase 4 – reviewing potential themes; Phase 5 – defining and labelling themes; and, Phase 6 – generating the report.

The Braun and Clarke (2014) method facilitated the extraction of data from interviewees' responses in various respects. Their responses to questions were, then, analysed in terms of: how they identified as HPSCs and how they perceived their contextual fit; how the HPSCs developed contextual fit; what the generic determinants of contextual fit were, including the determinants of contextual fit particular to HPSCs; what the generic barriers and challenges to achieving contextual fit were, including the barriers and challenges to achieving contextual fit

for HPSCs; and how HPSCs overcome challenges to achieving contextual fit. A full list of interview questions is provided at Appendix 4.

In Phase 1, I familiarised myself with the data, via several readings of the research data (transcribed audio to text) to determine points of analytical interest. At this stage, I engaged in active reading of texts with a critical eye toward the meaning-making occurring in each interview and from responses to questions at BSCA conferences (ibid). I also sought relevance in the data and pursued overarching themes and connections among the dataset. I then organised and documented the dataset, assigning numbers to each of the interviewees to protect anonymity and privacy and to facilitate the coding process to begin in the following phase.

In Phase 2, in generating the initial codes, I generated keywords and associated HPSC statements to use for coding the dataset. In Phase 3, in seeking out themes, I again relied upon the reduction and expansion of data in order to capture both the complexity and the contextual nature of each phenomenon or construct under investigation (ibid). Similarity and overlap were identified and codes were clustered at my discretion for categorising and developing the major themes that emerged. This was accomplished through exploring the numerous potential combinations of meaning, clustering them as relevant and maintaining critical observation of the relationships between and among themes (ibid).

During Phase 4, in reviewing potential themes, I worked with the synthesised themes identified and developed in Phase 3 by cross-checking to determine whether coding, categorisation, and data were suited to theme captions. This involved investigating the interview data to ensure that they supported the individual themes, and the connections between or among themes. This step also involved ensuring that the data aligned with or challenged the extant literature, and in each given case contributed to answering at least one of the research questions for this study. This was further accomplished by checking the substantive quality of the data, by ensuring that the data were sufficiently inclusive to address the emerging theme(s), and revisiting the question of whether the data achieved enough coherence to support the theme(s) they fed. A thematic map was generated at this stage to encapsulate the findings accordingly.

Throughout Phase 5, which involved defining and labelling themes, I looked for connections between the expanded themes in two respects: first, to the extent that they conformed to the literature under review (ibid); and, to the extent that related to and helped to answer one or more of the research questions guiding this study (ibid). These guidelines helped to articulate the core meaning or essence of each thematic category. In instances where discrepancies arose, I first considered what the explanations could be for the discrepant cases (Marshall and

Rossman, 2014). This was accomplished by remaining true to the context of the data of concern (Bryman, 2016) and acknowledging (and coding) where discrepancies were apparent.

During Phase 6, which involved generating the report, I collated the findings and generated a narrative that was contiguous to and consistent with the research questions guiding this study. This presentation of the findings described in Chapters 5 and 6 were integrated in Chapter 7. The different themes were used to form subheadings, in order to offer a compelling narrative for the reader (Braun and Clarke, 2014) while also providing a report that accurately conveys and legitimises the findings.

I decided against using computer-aided analysis so that I could preserve the impression of being directly connected to the interviewees and their lived experiences – to be close to the research data. I conducted multiple readings of the interview transcripts and took periods of incubation in order to perceive and derive from the meaning in their statements.

My analysis of HPSCs' statements is represented in the following data structures:

- Figure 3-1 Self Identity (p.61)

- Figure 3-2 Social Identity (p.62)

- Figure 3-3 Relationships (p.63)

- Figure 3-4 Influence (p.64)

- Figure 3-5 Contextualised Identity (p.65)

- Figure 3-6 Contextualised Leadership (p.66)

- Figure 3-7 Contextual Fit (p.67)

Statements from the coaches are shown using abbreviated labels. For example Coach (HPSC) number #13 is shown as C#13 to represent the anonymised identity of that HPSC. Each pair of statements were selected from a larger number and are representative of a particular concept that relates to their identified first order theme.

Figure 3-1 shows the data structure diagram representing the first order themes for self identity, comprising kairotic moments, whooshings, choices of context, coaching philosophy and traits.

Fig. 3-1 Data Structure: Self Identity

Concepts	First Order Themes
C#13: 'I got a pretty severe shoulder injury so I was unable to continue training.'	**Kairotic Moments**
C#8: 'I thought... I can be a lifeguard - which is getting me away from the muck and grime. From there I went into coaching.'	
C#4: 'I got her on her back, talking to her the whole time. Next thing she's kicking her legs, on her back and her face lit up.'	**Whooshings**
C#3: 'I was like - oh my God! I was as surprised as anybody... I knew he was going to win.'	
C#4: 'It was a bit more like football I think. There was the competitive element which you don't get in teaching'	**Choices of Context**
C#12: 'It was also quite hard to get to know people when you are teaching for half an hour a week.'	
C#15: 'My philosophy is based on high volume and fitness. You just have to be the fittest swimmer in the race.	**Coaching Philosophy**
C#31: 'If you want to win at the highest level you have to have a certain level of skill, work bloody hard, and get enough sleep.'	
C#6: 'Trying to get myself the best I could be. Our mum was pretty much like that as well.'	**Traits**
C#6: 'Yes, I always wanted to win. I'm an only child but I wasn't spoilt. I've always had respect for and I've always shaken coaches' hands.'	

Figure 3-2 shows the data structure diagram representing the first order themes for social identity – namely creating context, self-efficacy in context, contextual awareness, learning and the coaching-eye. The data analysis for both self and social identity is detailed in Chapter 5 of the thesis.

Fig. 3-2 Data Structure: Social Identity

Concepts	First Order Themes
C#7: 'I wanted to create a club that had international swimmers – a club that I could be proud of.'	
	Creating Context
C#3: 'It was that much of a culture change from where they were to where I wanted to take the programme. '	
C#8: 'I'm conscious of my status and how people see me... Because you know... you're always remembered for what you did yesterday.'	
	Self-Efficacy in Context
C#20: 'The first question I usually get asked when I arrive on poolside is – how many athletes have you got here?'	
C#31: 'I watched Jacco Verhaeren, the Australian NPD, once doing some sculling drills and I thought – I can use that idea.'	
	Contextual Awareness
C#22: 'I couldn't take my eyes off him. I could hear him giving feedback to the swimmers on their target times.'	
C#3: 'It was just an absolute mind expansion for me... I ordered every book I could order on swimming.'	
	Learning
C#26: 'I have learnt so much from Bill Sweetenham he is a great coach with so much international knowledge'.	
C#30: 'Most of my time is spent watching what my athletes are doing in training and competition.'	
	Coaching-Eye
C#28: 'I see things now that I didn't see before. I don't know how but I seem to learn by just watching.'	

Figure 3-3 shows the data structure diagram representing the first order themes for relationships – namely emotional contracts, engagement, trust, loyalty and care.

Fig. 3-3 Data Structure: Relationships

Concepts	First Order Themes
C#23: 'She is a great athlete and so easy to coach. We both believe in the same things, we are on the same page.'	
	Emotional Contracts
C#16: 'He is a sprinter and just doesn't see the need for any distance work. He is very difficult to work with. We had to part company.'	
C#9: 'It's the greatest feeling when a swimmer engages with you and responds to the coaching. It's just the best feeling in the world.'	
	Engagement
C#13: 'I believe that it's human nature to invest more in someone that wants to forward themselves and someone who engages you.'	
C#15: 'If you are not honest there is a danger that you will eventually lose their trust if things go wrong.'	
	Trust
C#1: 'It was very much an 'us' and 'them' type situation. And I also didn't know who I could trust and confide in.'	
C#6: 'I had a lot of loyalty, not only from the swimmers but from the parents as well and the club stuck by me and had faith in me.'	
	Loyalty
C#2: 'This parent decided he didn't want his boy to swim with us. He wanted him to swim at [named rival club].'	
C#27: 'It is because I care about the swimmers. I love coaching and I love watching my swimmers achieve at competition.'	
	Care
C#26: 'The best coaches are not the ones with the most technical knowledge; they are the ones that care most about their athletes.'	

Figure 3-4 shows the data structure diagram representing the first order themes for influence –
namely attraction, authority, control, coaching style, and mediating forces. The data analysis
for relationships and influence is detailed in Chapter 6 of the thesis.

Fig. 3-4: Data Structure: Influence

Concepts	First Order Themes
C#23: 'My eyes are drawn to the best swimmers. When I am watching the Junior Squad I always seek out those with the best feel for the water.'	
C#8: 'They had this very good competitive older boys' team... it was something I hadn't dealt with and it was a challenge that interested me.'	Attraction
C#9: But I do remember thinking this (swimming club) is mine, I'm in charge of this... and that gave me a buzz. It gave me a real buzz.'	
C#4: 'But the problem with the ITC was... I couldn't do what I wanted. I couldn't just say to a swimmer: you're out, see you later.'	Authority
C#31: 'I control all of the coaching activities. I let athletes have their say but I always make the final decision.' It can't work any other way.'	
C#22: 'There was no discipline...athletes would pick up their bag and just walk off... it was a shambles.'	Control
C#12: 'With age group swimmers I have an autocratic style. I just tell them what to do and they do it.'	
C#26: 'With the elite swimmers there is more of a collaborative approach. They can be quite difficult at times but you have to listen.'	Coaching Style
C#2: 'The best thing I had at [club #2a] was the Chairman. He was really happy that I had decided to go there.'	
C#31: 'I find dealing with parents the most difficult part of the job. I sometimes wonder why I do it.'	Mediating Forces

The first order themes converge into four second order themes of self identity, social identity, relationships and influence.

Figure 3-5 shows the data structure diagram representing the second order themes of self identity and social identity merging to produce the third order theme of contextualised identity.

Fig. 3-5: Data Structure: Contextualised Identity
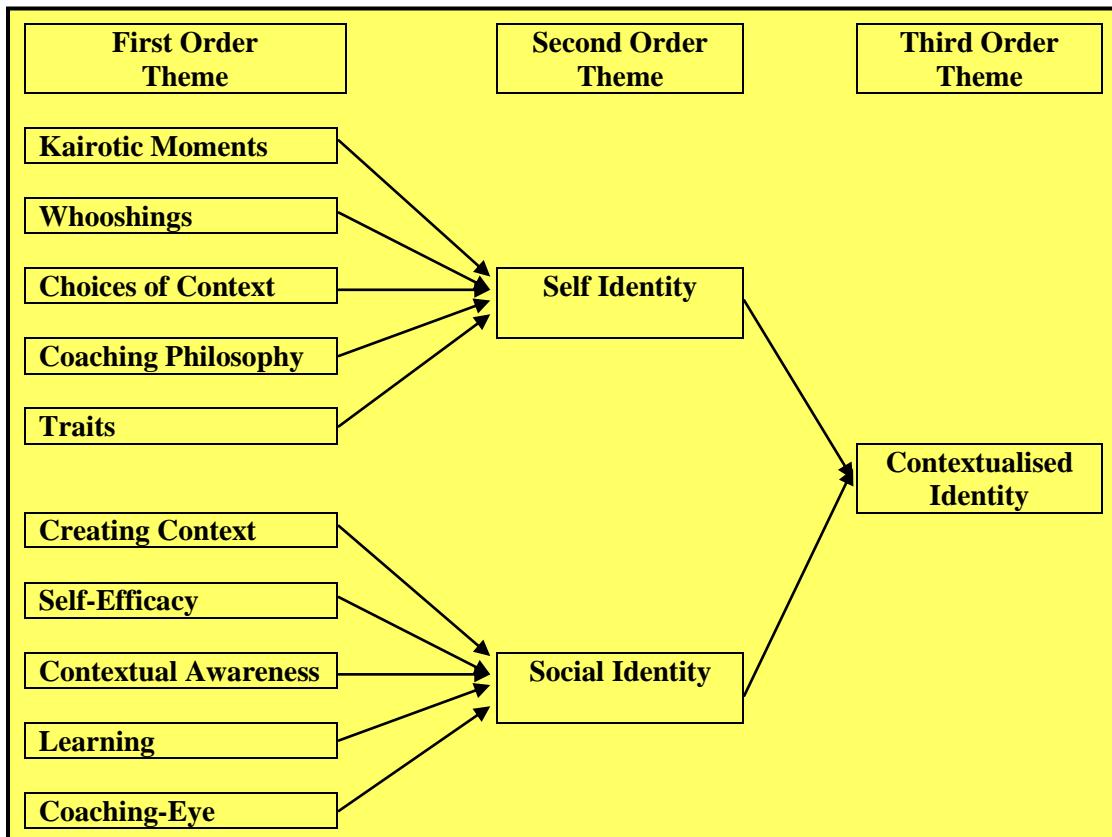
The data structure diagram, Figure 3-6, represents the second order themes of relationships and influence merging to produce the third order theme of contextualised leadership.

Fig. 3-6 Data Structure: Contextualised Leadership
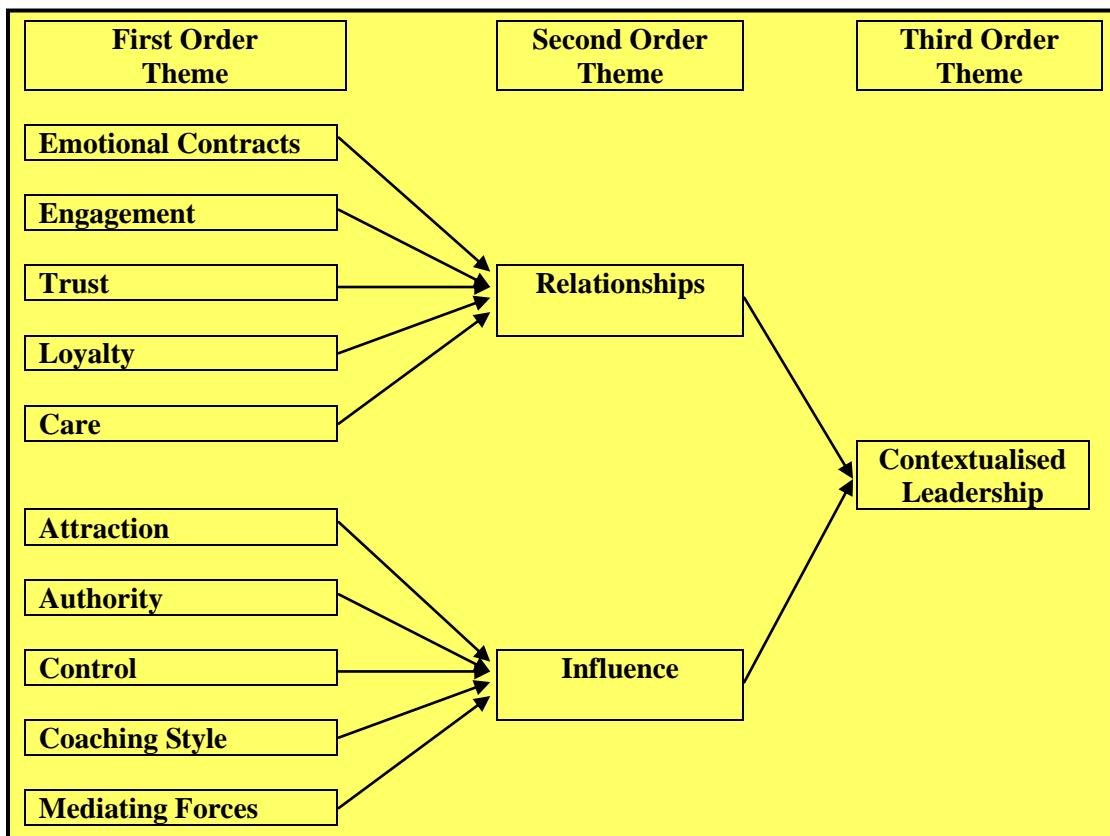
The merging of self and social identity as shown in Fig 3-5 reflect that HPSCs' self identity is contextualised in the social setting of elite competitive swimming. It is in this context that relationships are formed and influence takes place. Shown in Fig 3-6 are relationships and influence merging to form contextualised leadership and which completes the analysis of the second and third order themes.

The analysis of these second and third order themes that culminate in contextual fit is the focus of Chapter 7. Figure 3-7 shows the merging of contextualised identity and contextualised leadership into the final theme of contextual fit. The integration of these themes brings to a conclusion the analysis of my research data.

Fig. 3-7 Data Structure: Contextual Fit

Second Order Theme	Third Order Theme	Final Theme

Self Identity → Contextualised Identity
Social Identity → Contextualised Identity
Contextualised Identity → Contextual Fit

Relationships → Contextualised Leadership
Influence → Contextualised Leadership
Contextualised Leadership → Contextual Fit
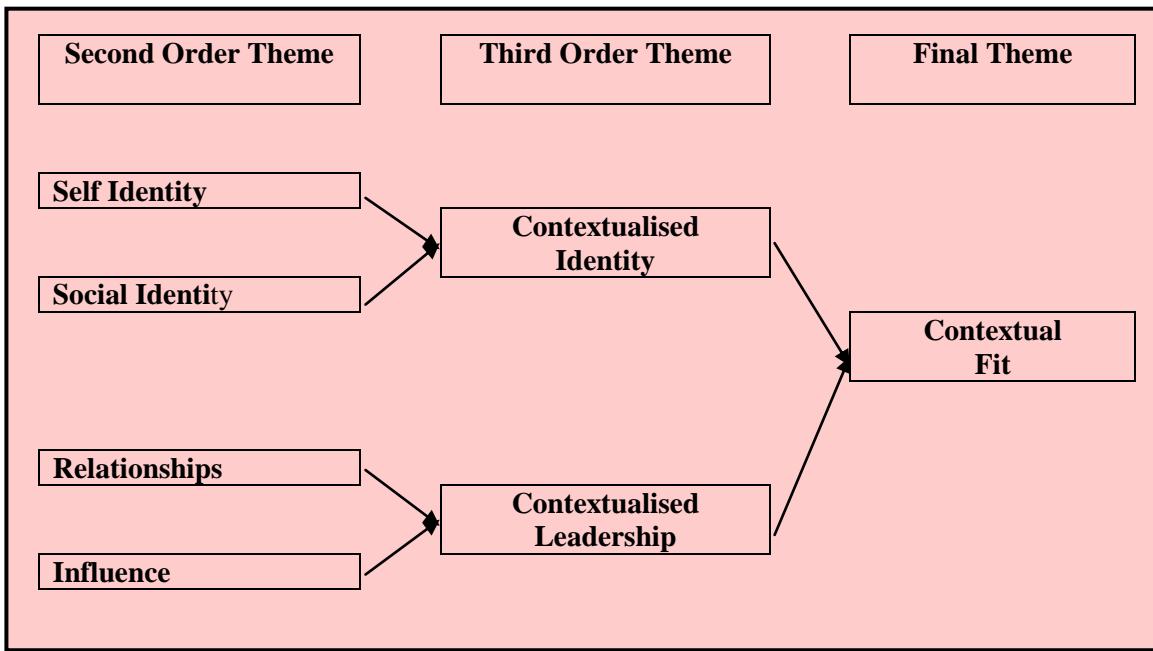
The process I followed whilst conducting my research ensured that I could honour my personal motivation to provide a trustworthy account of what it is to be an HPSC.

Issues of Trustworthiness

I wanted to establish trustworthiness in the research study by seeking to meet four criteria: 'Credibility... Transferability... Dependability [and]... Confirmability' (Bryman, 2016, p.44).These qualitative criteria align respectively with the quantitative criteria of: internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) the former set of criteria ensures rigour in qualitative inquiry.

Credibility, also known as internal validity in quantitative research, was understood as the 'degree to which inferences made are accurate and well-founded' (Polit and Beck, 2012, p.745). My strategies to establish credibility included maintaining saturation, making persistent observation, keeping prolonged contact and using peer process and respondent member checks. Where applicable and appropriate, triangulation was also carried out, using the interview data from the main interviews and the informal discussions, observations, existing literature, and other archival documentation relevant to HPSCs.

Transferability, also known as external validity in quantitative research, was understood as: 'extending the research results, conclusions, or other accounts that are based on the study of particular individuals, setting, times or institutions, to other individuals, setting, times or institutions than those directly studied' (Morse, 2015, p. 1213). My strategies to establish transferability included inquiry audits and maintaining an audit trail, focusing on using 'thick descriptions' (Ryle, 2000) and drawing from a wide range of experiences and participants over an extended period of time.

Dependability, also known as reliability in quantitative research, was understood as: the consistency and/or repeatability of a project's data collection, interpretation, and/or analysis' (Miller, 2008, p. 745). My strategy for establishing dependability involved the triangulation of multiple forms of data.

I attempted to achieve a degree of confirmability, also known as objectivity in quantitative research, by using strategies of triangulation and maintaining an audit trail, the latter of which was accompanied by reflection and reflexivity.

Ethical Procedures

The overt nature of the proposed research was designed to take into account any ethical concerns that might arise. Efforts were made to ensure that all activities conformed to the relevant codes of ethical conduct and the standards of professionalism expected from Lancaster University, the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development and the Society for Education and Training. Agreements to gain access to the participants were made through British Swimming and the selected HPSCs.

Treatment of human participants was purely ethical, and no harm was brought to any HPSC involved in the study. Informed consent was obtained from all HPSCs privately via telephone and email prior to the study. The privacy of all participants was ensured with stringent efforts of confidentiality and anonymity where requested. Research transparency was intended at all times and data was exaggerated, hidden, or otherwise inappropriately represented.

Where there was the potential for subjectivity, there was no conflict of interest, and anticipated subjectivity was attended to with precise care. I was particularly cognisant that one of the major criticisms of qualitative research is that too much subjectivity can have a critical impact on the trustworthiness of the data.

Bryman elaborates:

> Quantitative researchers sometimes criticize qualitative research for being too impressionistic and subjective. By this criticism it usually means that qualitative findings rely too much on the researchers often unsystematic views on what is

significant and important, and also the personal relationship that the researcher
frequently strikes up with the people studied (Bryman, 2016, p.398).

Perhaps the most challenging of considerations was the subjectivity of content derived in this study. Husserl (2012), one of the originators of phenomenology, rejected the premise that objects could exist independently within the external world and that any associated information is reliable. Referring to Husserl's phenomenology Klenke points out the inevitability of subjectivity stating that: 'anything outside immediate experience must be ignored, and in this way, the external world is reduced to the contents of personal consciousness' (Klenke, 2008, p.223).

In this tradition, it was recognised that all experiences are shaped by the subjectivity of the interpreter – in this case, the interviewer-researcher. To investigate HPSC leadership experiences, the use of semi-structured interviews was intended to give me the opportunity to 'seek to understand the meaning of central themes of the [actor's] lived worlds' (Kvale, 2007, p.11). Accordingly, the interviews were conducted in accordance with my ontological and epistemological stance.

At the same time I encouraged actors to 'describe precisely what they experience[d] and [felt], and how they act[ed]' (ibid, p.12), whilst at all times aiming to collect a rich harvest of reliable research data and avoiding the pitfalls of personal presuppositions in questioning and in listening to responses.

Conclusion

The intention of the qualitative research study was to reveal the personal characteristics, forms of expertise and the credibility that HPSCs develop over time to meet the demands of the contexts, in which they operate. Studies carried out by ICCE, ASOIF, and Leeds Metropolitan University revealed that there is a paucity of knowledge regarding the wider nature of elite-level swimming coaching and achievement of their contextual fit.

The selected method for the study was that of a qualitative single case study focussed on the community of UK HPSCs and incorporating the principles of sociology and anthropology. This method was intended to reveal the features and attributes of elite swimming coaches who are successful in that role. To retain the focus on HPSCs, as opposed to variants of organisational structures, the use of a multiple case study was rejected.

The ontological and epistemological stance taken for the research was that of constructionism and interpretivism, respectively. It was on that basis that a single case study to investigate the lived experiences of the community of UK HPSCs would be the most appropriate choice. The method selected was influenced by advocates of phenomenological, heuristic inquiry and ethnography. However, as ethnography would only provide an external perception of the

HPSC performing their role, I decided to limit the use of this method to poolside observations and informal interviews.

The use of heuristic inquiry and phenomenology was intended to reveal the inner world of the HPSCs and how they experienced life acting in their role. My intention was to use the heuristic process and follow my intuition whilst suspending judgements and keeping an open mind. I also wanted to incorporate the principles of phenomenology and become aware of any preconceptions I might foster.

The role of the social researcher is multi-faceted and includes, together with data collection and analysis, observation and interviewing of social actors. Data collection can be covert or overt and conducted by a researcher who is either an expert or novice in the field of study. My role in this study could be described as an expert participant-observer. The main method of data collection was by formal face-to-face semi-structured quality interviews.

My intention in the data collection phase was to determine how HPSCs find meaning and purpose in the environments in which they operate. Informal interviews and observation provided additional research data. I remained aware, however, of the subjective nature of the data and attempted to retain an open mind for the research throughout. In acting as a social researcher I recognised the socially constructed nature of the phenomena.

Thirty two, active and successful HPSCs were interviewed face-to-face over a five year period. Poolside observations and informal interviews were carried out at major competitions. Selection of HPSCs for informal interviews was conducted on an ad hoc basis when the coaches became available. This research provided supplementary data for the study and a degree of triangulation.

Finally, research data was also collected from question and answer sessions at coaching conferences over the period 2012 to 2016. As this latter source of research data was expressed in public, and in an open forum environment, anonymity for the HPSCs involved was not required. This extra source helped provide a thick pool of research data for my analysis.

Braun and Clarke's (2014) six-phase thematic analysis protocol, which includes: familiarising oneself with the data; generating initial codes; identifying themes; reviewing potential themes, defining and labelling themes; and generating the concluding report, was used in the analysis. The narrative thematic analysis was conducted manually in preference to computer aided analysis so that I could remain close to the data. Data structure diagrams representing the themes were constructed to give a visual presentation of the research dataset.

Trustworthiness of research data is an important consideration. Bryman's (2016) four criteria of trustworthiness, credibility or internal validity, transferability or external validity, dependability or reliability and confirmability or objectivity were applied. I was also

cognisant of the need to collect data using ethical procedures. Therefore, I ensured conformance to the codes of ethics of Lancaster University and other professional bodies. I also gained permission from the governing body, HPSCs and the CEO of the BSCA for the interviews and responses to questions at BSCA conferences.

I obtained informed consent from all participants prior to the study. The privacy of all of the selected participants to ensure confidentiality and anonymity was a primary consideration and HPSCs were kept fully informed. Transparency of the research was maintained to ensure there was no exaggeration, hidden or otherwise, of the data and I recognised that experiences are subjective in nature. I therefore attempted at all times to avoid making assumptions and unbiased during the process. Chapters 5, 6 and 7 discuss the study's findings and present an extended analysis, as described in this chapter.

Chapter 4: Research Context

> In a determinate social formation, the stabler the objective structures and the more fully they reproduce themselves in the agents' dispositions, the greater the extent of the field of doxa, of that which is taken for granted (Bourdieu, 1977, p.27).

Introduction

I begin Chapter 4 with a quote from Pierre Bourdieu on the structural foundations of the unconsciously held species of capital that inform the habitus, a mechanism for transforming passivity into activity, and are reflected in our behaviours. Our personal culture is formed through the society we are born into and the experiences we have through our lives, which as Giddens and Sutton (2013, p.302) observe, 'are organized around the repetition of similar patterns of behaviour from day to day, week to week, month to month, and year to year'. This chapter investigates the origins of the social forces in the Bourdieusian fields of power that affect HPSCs in the UK's sporting environment today.

Giddens and Sutton (2013, p.881) describe the social structures, or fields of power, in which competitive strife is endemic: these are where 'social life is organised and power relations operate, with each field having its own "rules of the game" that may not be transferred to other fields'. The HPSC is in this way deeply embedded in cultural influences, which can be likened to Russian dolls with each layer representing a different field. This chapter is divided into three parts, with each one providing background to a different field of cultural influences. I begin with the macro view – that is the outer cultural fields that are most general and often have deep rooted influences that affect HPSCs, to a large extent unconsciously. I follow this by addressing HPSCs' inner contextual fields at organisational and operational level.

Part one details the British culture at its most general level together with its historical links with sport. Part two considers the particular contextual level of an HPSC, as the organised structure of competitive swimming that defines their high performance role. It is in this context that HPSCs interact with the community of UK high-performance coaches, other international coaches and their athletes in the competition arena. Part three considers the coaching of elite athletes at an organisational level, providing an overview of the types of swimming organisations found in the UK. Within these organisations, there are five generic internal agencies that are common to all types of structure. At the heart of each swimming organisation is the agency in which HPSCs perform their primary role.

To assist in analysing the research findings, I developed a series of conceptual diagrams that represent each field of social space. These diagrams are allocated a numerical code in the form #n, where 'n' denotes the field number in the range from 1 to 5. In these fields, HPSCs interact with their direct followers and other stakeholders. These stakeholders include:

technical support staff; assistant coaches; athletes other than those that HPSCs coach personally and organisational administrators. I deemed it most appropriate to begin with the more general macro level view of the social spaces in order to position HPSCs' micro level activity within this wider context.

Sport and the British (Field #4 and Field #5)

The British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, are embedded in and form part of the curriculum currently delivered in schools, colleges and universities throughout the UK (Gateway Qualifications, 2016, p.19). Being a product of the environments in which they are socialised and educated, HPSCs think and behave in ways that are affected by environmental influences. These influences are mainly hidden and deeply embedded. Such environmental influences are the tacit micro-foundations of contextual fit.

It may be naive to believe that the true sources of the British sporting culture can ever be fully revealed. However, it is generally accepted that the British education system, religion and militarism played a role in its formation. British sporting culture is largely a product of these institutions, together with the influences of the British class system, the wealth created during the Industrial Revolution, and the worldwide domination of the British Empire. As Brailsford states:

> The first sporting revolution, in the late nineteenth century, made sport regular, nationally organised, commercially aware, and a matter of wide public interest. The second sporting revolution of the later twentieth century has made it international, freed it from restrictions of clock and season, and made it universally accessible (Brailsford, 1992, p.121).

This comment encapsulates the legacy that has moulded Britain's sporting culture. Whilst we may not be world leaders in sport at the moment, our role in the world is defined by our sporting heritage.

The following discussion describes the emergence of British sporting culture, from the preparation of young men for war in ancient times to the eventual impact this had on the British educational system, through to the moral questions raised regarding competitive sport. The discussion concludes with the impact that money has had on swimming through both commercialism and professionalism.

Moral Perspectives in Sport

Although there is little documented history on the coaching of athletes, the activity is implied in numerous references to the preparation of young men for military battle. Petrus Vergerius,

in his De Ingenuis Moribus et Liberalibus (1402-1403), discusses exercises for the body and training in the art of war. According to Brailsford:

> [Vergerius set] out a programme of exercise deliberately designed to harden boys and give them the stamina to withstand heavy and prolonged exertions. The Greek pentathlon, swimming, horsemanship, and the use of a range of weapons give his scheme of physical education an overwhelmingly military flavour (Brailsford, 1969, p.10).

Five hundred years later, it appears that the habitus of sports coaches remains very much informed by the past and derived from similar notions as Vergerius. The way HPSCs train their athletes has also been heavily influenced by great swimming coaches from the past. Today, HPSCs in the UK are influenced by the society in which they are educated, and by mixing with other international sports coaches, athletes and other stakeholders. An evidently prevailing belief among HPSCs is that success is only achieved through hard work.

As the legendary and charismatic Australian swimming coach, Forbes Carlile, commented: 'It took me a number of years to be convinced that, with certain reservations, swimmers must be driven very hard in their training, almost unmercifully, if world records are to be made' (Carlile, 1963, p.173). The links between modern sport and military history are evident. Early romantic views of sport seem to have emerged out of the great military heroes of past civilisations and their deities. As Holt comments:

> Sports have a heroic and mythical dimension; they are, in a sense, "a story we tell ourselves about ourselves", the nature of which may differ markedly between countries with broadly similar levels of economic development (Holt, 1989, p.3).

These stories help to create the cultural context in which HPSCs and athletes operate. They appear to bring a sense of meaning to their activity, which extends beyond the purely political and military purposes that might be attributed to war.

Describing Pindar, the Greek poet, Bowra remarks:

> He admired heroism, but had no great liking for war...For him victory in the [Olympic] Games raised questions of mystical and metaphysical importance. It illustrated the fact of glory as something which came from the Gods and the reality of success which is won by a proper use of natural gifts and laborious effort (Bowra, 1969, p.11).

In his poetry and song, Pindar articulates the inner feelings that athletes experience and, I would suggest, also their coaches. Celebrating Hieron of Syracuse winning the horse race, Bowra translating Pindar writes:

> Water is the best thing of all, and gold shines like a flaming fire at night, more than all a great man's wealth. But if, my heart, you would speak of prizes won in the games,

look no more for another bright star by day in the empty sky more warming than the sun, nor shall we name any gathering greater than the Olympian (ibid, p.64).

Pindar's work highlights the dialectic between the pursuit of sport for higher, exalted reasons, as opposed to its pursuit for the material gains that may be made from winning military battles. Nevertheless, the benefits that accrue from soldiers' physical training are readily seen in their performances in battle. It was the success of the British military, contrasted with the defeat of the French in the Franco-Russian war, that influenced the thinking of Baron Pierre de Coubertin, founder of the modern Olympic Games, during his visit to Rugby School in 1883 (MacAloon, 1981).

The history of both the British culture and the British education system seem to have moulded unconsciously HPSCs' beliefs, values and thinking. As Riesman, Glazer and Denny articulate:

> The source of direction for the individual is inner in the sense that it is implanted in life by the elders and directed toward generalised, but nonetheless inescapable destined goals (Riesman, Glazer and Denney, 2001, p.15).

British Sporting Culture

Thomas Elyot, a 15th century English diplomat and scholar brought a moral and ethical dimension into the education of young men. His thinking aligned closely with Greek philosophy, with notions of wholeness, in training the mind and body.

> In The Governour, Elyot brought to the beginnings of English thinking on sport and physical education, both the native stresses appropriate to his use of the vernacular and also the continental influence of classical humanism (Brailsford, 1969, p.17).

According to Hill, it was the value of sporting activity in education in particular that inspired Baron Pierre de Coubertin to revive the ancient Olympic Games and create the modern Olympic Games we recognise today.

> His passion was for education, and in particular for sports education (pédagogie sportive), and in 1883 his first visit to England convinced him that Thomas Arnold's methods at Rugby School...had been responsible for the great growth in England's power in the nineteenth century and should be exported to France (Hill, 1996, p.5).

Modern sport and its associated ethics emerged, to a large extent, from the public school system of Victorian Britain as epitomised by the work of Thomas Arnold. Headmaster of Rugby School from 1828 to 1841, Arnold's reformation of the education system at Rugby, with the intention of preparing young gentlemen for leadership, was copied widely by other public schools. Mangan repeating the words of Coubertin states: 'Pierre de Coubertin once

asserted that from a moral point of view, no system could stand higher than the English athletic sports system' (Mangan, 2006, p.16).

De Coubertin appeared, however, to view the Olympic Games from a romantic, idealistic perspective borne from his study of the classics. He saw the unity between young and old, different classes, and cultural backgrounds that could be afforded by sport as a means of bringing success back to France. He was wrongly accused, however, of unconsciously assisting an attempt by the upper classes to take sport away from the working classes in nineteenth-century Britain. Coubertin believed that the ancient Games should be limited to amateurs (Hill, 1996, p.6).

The latter half of the nineteenth century bore witness to the formulation of many sporting bodies. National governing bodies were formed to regulate and codify British Sport (Mason, 1989), including: the Amateur Boxing Association (f.1880), Football Association (f.1863), Lawn Tennis Association (f.1881), Rugby Football Union (f.1871), Amateur Athletics Association (f.1879), Amateur Swimming Association (f.1869), and the Amateur Rowing Association (formerly Metropolitan Rowing Association f.1879). It is in this context that a tension between amateurism and professionalism emerged.

According to Holt and Mason:

> Amateurism came into general use in the second half of the nineteen century to indicate someone who played for the love of the game rather than the purposes of gambling or financial reward...Amateurism was a marriage of honour and competition (Holt and Mason, 2000, p.36).

The term professional at that time referred to those individuals who gained financial reward for playing sport. During the Victorian era, amateur and professional sport became increasingly distanced from each other, creating difficulties for sports' governing bodies long into the twentieth century. The negative effects of money in sport persist into the twenty-first century. Sporting opportunity, it seems, still favours the wealthy as Vasagar points out:

> More than a third of British medal winners in the 2012 London Olympics were from private schools which educate 7% of the school population, a study by the Sutton Trust shows. The dominance of private schools is particularly evident in sport such as rowing where more than half of the gold medallists were privately educated (Vasagar, 2012).

It is clear that there are still 'huge inequalities in sport performance exist because the wealthiest clubs, nations and social groups can afford the most scientifically advanced facilities and personnel' (Giulianotti, 2015, p.32).

Lottery funding introduced in 1994 by the Conservative government was intended to finance a renaissance in sport. To claim funding, however, an athlete must already be at an elite level of competition. UK Sport, in each Olympic cycle, provides funding directly to senior elite athletes through an Athlete Performance Award (APA). This is based upon their international ranking for their event. Olympic Games, or Senior World Championship Medallists, Band A - athletes, can be awarded up to £28,000 and Band B - athletes ranked in the world's top 8 up to £21,500 (UK Sport, 2018).

Direct funding to athletes was introduced in 1997. Athletes during the formative years must therefore be self funding. Factors other than social class, such as sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and religious belief also disadvantage athletes. Whilst there is a trend towards widening participation in sport, there is still considerable disparity between the levels of diversity found within the general population and the diversity found within sport. Moreover, the issues that remain such as commercialisation, class, gender, ethnicity and disability will undoubtedly re-occur. Craig and Beedie comment:

> Just as the growth in women's sport participation is not reflected by a comparable
> change in the number of female sports administrators, so too with race and ethnicity...
> [and] although great strides have been made in changing the sporting landscape to
> accommodate diversity, there is still a gap between the rhetoric and the reality...
> (Craig and Beedie, 2008, p.123).

These matters raise the moral question of whether sport is good for us and whether commercialisation and politics have corrupted sport beyond redemption.

The Commercialisation and Politics of Sport

It is axiomatic that money now pervades the sports milieu and is a significant source of mediating influence. According to the Sunday Times Sport Rich List, published in May 2017, the top-ten sports people in the UK had a collective net worth of over £794 million. Comprising owners, managers and players from a range of sports (e.g. motor racing, football, tennis etc) the list reflects that in modern sport, large commercial sponsors see all such stakeholders as potential sources of marketing influence - with the majority of commercial sponsors drawn to affluent countries' mass-spectator sports (Sunday Times, 2017).

Commercialisation, or the exploitation of sporting activities for financial gain, has been a part of sport, especially major games, for nearly two centuries. 'From the beginning of the Olympic movement, civic leaders and entrepreneurs have recognised the political and economic benefits of hosting the Olympic Games' (Magdalinski and Naurigh, 2004, p.185). Governments see sport as beneficial from a number of perspectives, including: the affirmation or justification of views in political philosophy, the elevation of a country's global status and

its people's social identity, economic prosperity, in addition to health and well-being. So great was the appeal of hosting a major sports event that even renowned non-sports people, such as Hitler and Goebbels, saw an opportunity to promote their government and racial supremacy (Kruger and Murray, 2003).

Political involvement in sport can be viewed ethically as either good or bad. Adolf Hitler recognised the potential of international sporting events to be used for political purposes. He used the 1936 Olympic Games as a propaganda machine to promote his Aryan ideal and justify his ethnic cleansing policies. Sport can, then, be used to justify 'pseudo' or 'dark' leadership, as in Hitler's case. In the mid-twentieth century, sport-related political activity increased significantly as tensions heightened between the East and West.

> After World War II, sport took an increasingly political stance, not only with the Cold War rivalry between capitalists and communist states, using sporting victories as evidence of political superiority, but also with previously underprivileged and persecuted groups gaining support for attention and even integration – blacks, women, the disabled, the gay community (Riordan and Kruger, 1999, p.10).

One of the most prominent events in recent history, where sport was used by a government for political purposes, was the boycott of the 1980 Olympic Games. When the US government decided to boycott the 1980 Games over Russia's invasion of Afghanistan, President Carter tried to influence other nations to do the same, with some success. The effect of Carter's intervention was highlighted by Caraccioli and Caraccioli who stated: 'The Carter Administration's hope that other countries would follow the United States' lead was beginning to come to fruition' (Caraccioli and Caraccioli, 2008, p.149).

In addition to political interference, anti-social behaviour in the youth population arising from class division, coupled with poor performance in elite sport, were the main drivers of change in the mid-twentieth century. Beyond those factors, however, a major catalyst for such change in the UK was the Wolfenden Committee, established in 1957 by the Central Council of Physical Recreation (CCPR). Comprising a cross-section of educationalists, sporting heroes and heroines, religious figures, and business leaders, the Wolfenden Committee was commissioned to create an inclusive sporting culture.

> It was the first time that a body of responsible men and women had sat down to examine the relationship between sport and the welfare of society. The committee recognised that British Sport and recreation was in need of a new deal and to that extent Wolfenden looked bravely into the future (Holt and Mason, 2000, p.149).

Debates were held regarding 15 to 20 year-olds out of school (known as the 'Wolfenden Gap'), amateurism, international competition and requirements for sporting facilities.

Following these debates, one of the recommendations of the Wolfenden Committee was the creation of a Sports Development Council to distribute government funding for sports. These recommendations were accepted by both the Labour and Conservative parties, culminating in the formation of the Sports Council in 1972. With a Royal Charter bestowed in 1970, this body became the intermediary between sport and the government, with the purposes of widening participation, promoting sport, increasing sports facilities and improving the performance of British athletes at an international level (ibid).

From 1983 until 1996, prior to Lottery funding in 1997, a small number of UK international athletes gained support from Sport Aid. Previously called the Sport Aid Foundation they raised funds from the private sector. However, poor results at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics reflected a need for a strategic review of athlete funding, sports science and coach education. British swimmers underperformed at Atlanta and also gained no medals in the 2000 Sydney Olympics. It was questionable whether the investments made in British Sport up until that time had been value for money.

Historically, in swimming a large part of the success that the Australians enjoyed in the 1956 Melbourne Olympics had been attributed to their HPSCs working in close partnership with sports scientists. 'Behind the scenes, always coming up with new ideas, was Professor Frank Cotton...Doctor of Science and Professor of Physiology at the University of Sydney' (Carlile, 1963, p.173). It was these lessons that had informed the Australian Institute of Sport. The Conservative and Labour governments during the late 1980s and 1990s had, however, left a legacy of a much higher participation in sport but without any serious financial investment at the elite level.

A major failing of the British Swimming team at the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games highlighted the importance of finance to success. Mark Reason, reporting for the Daily Telegraph, suggested 'that a lack of funding has resulted in no Olympic medals for the first time since 1936' (Reason, 2000, p.47). He reported:

> The Sydney Olympics have been a humiliating experience for British swimming. The failure to win a medal for the first time since 1936 was an astonishment to the team and their fans, but utterly predictable for the Australian media. They did not mention a single British swimmer in any of their major previews (ibid).

In 2002, the English Institute of Sport (EIS) was established for the purpose of injecting much needed funding for sports science in order to provide support for elite coaches and athletes. This increased financial investment saw a reversal of fortunes. The results in the 2008 Beijing Olympics placed Great Britain fourth in the medal table. At the London 2012 Olympics Britain again increased its medal count, although not in swimming. This overall

achievement reflected the impact of increased investment made in sport. Despite the poor result for swimming in 2012, at the Rio de Janerio Olympic Games in 2016 the British team had their most successful games since 1908. Increased funding in the UK, however, has not made a significant impact on participation levels in sport. Elite sport is still predominantly enjoyed by the middle and upper classes of society.

Social issues remain, and time will tell whether the increasing levels of expenditure on sport will help to resolve them. The London riots in August 2011, only one year before the opening of the Olympic Games in the same city, provided a stark reminder of the challenges. There are also ethical issues associated with the funding of elite athletes. However, with increasing wealth and access to university and sporting facilities for the general public, disparities in funding may, in future, have more to do with talent than class. The discussion surrounding the gentleman amateur may finally be drawing to a close.

Professionalism and Amateurism in Sport

If ever there was a breeding ground for hypocrisy, it is the divide between amateurism and professionalism in sport. This is the divide between the Corinthian ideal of playing sport as an end in itself, and the notion of prostitution of self in the unworthy and corrupt use of one's talents for personal or financial gain. Following the London Olympics in 2012 a number of Gold Medallists were reported to have been paid significant amounts of money for appearing in advertisements. The emergence of sports merchandise for wealthy sporting celebrities, for example, is expressed by Giulianotti who states:

> [P]ost-Fordist principles have become far more prominent in the design and marketing of sport merchandise: aestheticized sport shirts have come to be packaged as general leisurewear and a highly diverse range of models and styles are continually redesigned and subsequently endorsed by the latest celebrity athletes (Giulianotti, 2015, p.201).

Contrast this situation with what was happening in 1984 prior to the introduction of lottery funding in 1997. Trust funds were introduced into swimming in 1985 allowing athletes to gain income from monetary prizes offered by the competition organisers. After winning three swimming gold medals in Amsterdam, British Olympian Adrian Moorhouse complained about the £75 prize money, paid by the competition organisers, being given to the Amateur Swimming Association.

News reporter Willis recalls Moorhouse's comment: 'It's not as though the ASA needs the money. I'd be happier if it was paid into a trust fund for us swimmers' (Willis, 1984, p.26). Trust funds for athletes were established in the latter half of the 1980s allowing control of any payments made to them for sporting achievement. This allowed athletes to use some of that money for their expenses. The term amateur, therefore, became increasingly redundant. As

Taylor comments regarding the Corinthian spirit: 'Curiously enough , the moment at which the dwindling of that word (amateur) in the public imagination was first brought home to me back in the late1970s' (Taylor, 2006, p.36).

An amateur is generally considered as a person who engages in a pursuit, especially a sport, on an unpaid basis. As amateur athleticism is devoid of any notion of financial gain, it is the antithesis of sport as a commercial enterprise. However, developments away from amateurism in sporting practice raise ethical issues regarding fairness not just for sport but for society in general. When elite athletes in sport receive government funding, they gain an advantage over those who are self-financing. Money for equipment, clothing and facilities can be an inhibiting factor. Thus non-funded athletes can view the system as unfair.

Professionals can often enjoy scarce resources not generally available to amateurs, such as the additional time to train, extra sports facilities, equipment and support from specialist agencies. The question that emerges is whether the true amateur was just an illusion, a label for Victorian morality. When the IOC abandoned their commitment to amateurism, in the early 1980s, it seemed that, while British athletes were 'playing by the rules' other nations were not. In the USA athletes were supported through the college system whilst a number of socialist governments were supporting athletes by secondment into the armed forces.

By the turn of the twenty-first century, most of the major sports had turned professional. As Slack comments: 'In Britain, the lure of commercialisation gradually undermined amateurism in a number of sports' (Slack, 2004, p.32). The flame of the Corinthian ideal still flickers in a few amateur sports in Britain, but it appears to have long since died in most others, as is seen in professional football.

Today's reality sits in stark contrast with the sporting philosophy written into the Olympic Charter, which expresses Baron Pierre de Coubertin's original concept of Olympism:

> Blending sport with culture and education, Olympism seeks to create a way of life
> based on the joy of effort, the educational value of good example, social responsibility
> and respect for universal fundamental ethical principles (Olympic Charter, 2011, p.10).

At the elite level, most major sports are now 'industries', with multi-million pound budgets – 'a term that would have sounded strange to post-war years when industry still meant coal mining and shipbuilding' (Holt and Mason, 2000, p.177). Sportsmen and women are now highly skilled professionals trading their labour for money.

With the high financial gains available, cheating in all professional sports has reached epidemic proportions, raising challenges for international regulatory bodies. 'Although the image of the perennial good sport is (at least) exaggerated, it nevertheless seems fair to say that more unethical behaviour is appearing in sports' (Stoll, 1993, p.73). It appears that

athletes of today make the Kantian choice of doing what is good, or enriching themselves, rather than doing what is right, as is defined by the morality of pure practical reason.

> Elite sport is now, more than ever before, a commodity – a commercial enterprise governed by the laws of supply and demand. Its aims, ethos, institutional organisation and very ludic structures are increasingly determined by market forces (Walsh and Giulianotti, 2007, p1).

It is evident now that the terms amateur and professional have developed different and new meanings: 'the relationship between the words amateur and professional, both of which at the close of the nineteenth century meant practically the reverse of their current definitions' (Taylor, 2006, p.31). The amateur now is seen as a part-time, semi-skilled individual who pursues sport mainly for fun, whilst the professional is seen as a highly skilled, educated and qualified person who is paid well for their labour. For some, however, the money is not enough. Rokur discussing the former German Olympic swimming celebrity Michael Gross states:

> 20 years after his triple Olympic gold winning career, the Gross hardly ever follows swimming. "I've seen nothing from the last World Championships. It is pure coincidence if I watch any swimming." Gross criticizes the lack of professionalism in swimming: "There is too little money in swimming to build any professionalism", he says, "You need professional teams with personal responsibility" (Rokur, 2011, p.17).

It would be inaccurate to suggest that all sports have been corrupted by money. There are still a significant number of athletes who participate in sport for the opportunity to fulfil their dream of winning gold at major competition. Like George Leigh Mallory the British climber lost on Everest in 1924 - they do it *because it is there*. They want to fulfil a fundamental human need, that of 'self actualisation' (Rogers, 1998).

The Swimming Competition Arena (Field #3)

Regarding the direct coach-athlete, leader-follower relationship, there are three contextual domains in which HPSCs operate: international and national competitions; preparatory training camps; and, local training venues. In the case of the latter, most training is conducted in Long Course (LC) 50 metre swimming pools or Short Course (SC) 25 metre facilities. There are also a number of older facilities that vary in size, both metric and imperial, in which some elite athletes may train. In addition to these tangible facilities there are the less tangible cultural layers that define the contextual domains in which HPSCs operate.

From a sociological perspective, these contexts, or fields (Bourdieu, 1977), form cultural layers that can be likened to Russian Dolls in that they are cultures within cultures. These layers form a complex milieu, or webs of influence, some of which the HPSC appears

consciously aware and others not. Some influences, such as the social doxa for example, may be invisible in the swimming context, but the HPSC can still be affected by those influences despite not being conscious of them. It is in this sporting context that feelings of being at home are further formed, feelings which seem to be linked to habitus. From a functionalist perspective, there are a number of regulatory bodies that are in control of activities and provide structure for the elite level of competitive swimming.

Certain main international bodies collectively provide a uniform legislative framework for international competition, including codes of conduct, entry standards and developmental support for the NGB (British Swimming). These bodies are: the Fédération Internationale de Natation Amateur (FINA); the International Olympic Committee (IOC); the Ligue Européenne de Natation (LEN); the British Olympic Association (BOA); and the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF). In the UK, British Swimming has the greatest influence on HPSCs. Some HPSCs will work directly within the organisations and are employees, whilst others are self-determining and in control of their own destiny.

Regulatory Bodies

British Swimming is the National Governing Body (NGB) in the UK for the sport of competitive swimming, at both junior and senior elite levels. British Swimming is responsible, internationally, for the high performance representation of the sport (British Swimming, 2016). Membership of British Swimming comprises swimming associations of the three home countries, namely:

> England (Swim England), Scotland (Scottish Swimming) and Wales (Swim Wales). British Swimming seeks to enable its athletes to achieve gold medal success at the Olympics, Paralympics, World Championships, and Commonwealth Games (ibid).

Known as the Amateur Swimming Federation of Great Britain (ASFGB) prior to 2006, British Swimming is affiliated to a number of international governing bodies.

The ultimate prize for any elite athlete and their HPSC is an Olympic Gold Medal. The regulatory body in the UK for all Olympic sports is the British Olympic Association (BOA), which is affiliated to the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

> The International Olympic Committee is the supreme authority of the Olympic Movement. [It acts] as a catalyst for collaboration between all parties of the Olympic family (International Olympic Committee, 2016).

The IOC set the standards and rules of competition for the Olympic Games. The conditions for participation are detailed in the Olympic Charter:

The Olympic Charter (OC) is the codification of the Fundamental Principles of Olympism, Rules and Bye-Laws adopted by the International Olympic Committee (IOC). It governs the organisation, action and operation of the Olympic Movement and sets forth the conditions for the celebration of the Olympic Games (ibid).

Affiliation to the BOA gives British Swimming and the elite athlete access to the Olympic Games. The principal role of the BOA is:

To prepare and lead our nation's finest athletes at the summer, winter and youth Olympic Games. Working with the National Governing Bodies, the BOA selects Team GB from the best sportsmen and women who will go on to compete in the 26 summer and 7 winter Olympic sports at the greatest sporting competition in the world (British Olympic Association, 2016).

The modern Olympic Games are held every four years (even years since 1896). At the Olympics, the ultimate swimming competitions are considered to be those held in Long Course (LC) 50 metre pools. Long Course World Championships held every two years (odd years, since 2001) are also held in very high esteem by NGB's and their athletes. Short Course (SC) World Championships held in 25 metre pools are held every two years (in even years). As 25 metre SC events are held earlier in the calendar year, clashes with the Olympic Games are avoided.

World Championships are governed by the Fédération Internationale de Natation Amateur (FINA). In addition to setting standards and rules for international swimming, the role of FINA is to develop the sport worldwide. It has five main objectives, which are to:

Adopt necessary uniform rules and regulations to hold competitions in swimming...promote and encourage the development of swimming in all possible manifestations throughout the world...promote and encourage the development of international relations... organise World Championships and FINA events [and to]... increase the number of facilities for swimming throughout the world (Fédération Internationale De Natation, 2016).

The highest authority in FINA is the General Congress, which is the body that makes decisions on any relevant matters that arise within the 207-member federation. There are a number of specialist bodies that report to the General Congress, such as the Technical Congress, Bureau, Executive, Technical and Specialised Committees. In 1926, FINA established the Ligue Européenne de Natation (LEN) to organise and manage swimming events for Europe.

Although LEN was formed originally to organise competitive swimming events, diving and water polo, their current role now includes masters, open water, and diving competitions. The

organisation is also active in education and provides information on all aquatic disciplines. A considerable amount of their resources are now used in dealing with legal and medical matters.

> LEN started as a small organisation with little money and a quadrennial role which meant that it had much less relevance than it has today. Now we have a wide network of committees that meet regularly and help to guide and inform thinking on all aquatic matters across Europe (Ligue Européenne de Natation, 2016).

Whilst LEN and FINA provide the main legislative framework for elite athletes within the UK, there are other major competitions that athletes and their coaches attend for formative development. One of the major meets of this type is the Commonwealth Games, held every four years, coinciding with the gap between the summer Olympics.

The Commonwealth Games are directed and controlled by the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF), which also decides on the sporting programme and the selection of host cities. The CGF is an association of independent sovereign states from across every continent and ocean. As with LEN, the CGF 'encourages and assists education via sport development and physical recreation... [it has]... three core values, equality, humanity and destiny' (Commonwealth Games Confederation, 2016). Whilst the Commonwealth Games is a closed group competition, some of the major swimming countries allow entry into their national competitions and also host privately organised 'open competitions'.

There are a number of recognised 'international open meets' that are organised by independent swimming organisations. These meets are available throughout the year and are used for developmental purposes. Within these events, there are competition rules, set by organisers, which add a further layer of control to govern the swimming activities. This overt legislative framework is dynamic and the rules of the relevant sports are being continually revised and subjected to political interference, often from the media broadcasting major events.

Part of the role of an HPSC is to maintain their knowledge of the laws of the sport. It is within this wider context of sport in general that competitive swimming organisations operate. These organisations are, however, not without their critics.

Toxic Cultures: Alienating Factors for HPSCs

In September 2016, following the Rio Olympic Games, Olympic Committee President Carlos Nuzman was remanded in custody, under suspicion of being involved in a vote-buying scheme in the Brazilian city's bid for the event. This was not the only major regulatory body to be accused of internal corruption, but the incident serves to highlight the danger to sporting culture. Inside-the-games reporter Liam Morgan comments:

The Brazilian has not been charged with anything but is suspected by prosecutors of being the main link between Arthur Cesar de Menezes Soares Filho, a businessman nicknamed "King Arthur", and Diack, the Senegalese who was President of the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) between 1999 and 2015. "The IOC Executive Board reaffirmed today that it goes without saying that infringements from the past will also be addressed"... (Morgan, 2016, p.31).

In a bid to stem the growing criticism, the IOC introduced a new code of ethics one year later in October 2017. As Nick Butler of Insidethegames reports:

Members of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) are being forced to sign-up to a new set of "ethical principles" governing their behaviour on issues including conflicts of interests, the accepting of gifts, and the use of tickets for the Olympic Games, Insidethegames can reveal. The new rules, which go into far more detail than previous ones set out in the Ethics Code, have been introduced at a time where there are investigations into possible corruption surrounding bidding procedures for successive editions of the Olympic Games (Butler, 2017, p.2).

These allegations of financial corruption followed a number of far more serious issues affecting the sporting world. A major scandal regarding doping in sport rocked the sporting world in 2015. A report from the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) in November 2015 revealed incidents of state-sponsored doping in both Russia and China. A WADA Report in November 2015 states:

These allegations, if established as accurate, would represent unparalleled levels of cheating, directly attacking the principle of "Fair Play" within sport and illicitly securing unlawful and significant advantages over athletes who complied with the World Anti-Doping Code (Code) and traditional ethics of fairness and honour (World Anti Doping Agency, 2015, p.5).

It was as if the clock had turned back to the state-sponsored doping incidents surrounding the 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal: after the fall of communism in 1989, the German Democratic Republic was found guilty of the wide-spread doping of athletes, including athletes in the period between 1970 and 1980. The East Germans and Russians, however, were not alone in this activity.

The Chinese also have, allegedly, a long history of state-sponsored doping. At the 1994 World Aquatics Championships, the Chinese won 12 out of a possible 16 medals. In the period 1990 to 1998, there were 28 athletes who tested positive for performance enhancing drugs. Loretta Race in SwimSwam comments:

The subject of anti-doping within worldwide sport has riddled the headlines throughout history, but has been an especially persistent newsmaker in swimming over the past year. Recurring issues originating from nations of Russia and China, specifically, have kept the anti-doping conversation in a never-ending cycle that has lasting impact across the swimming globe (Race, 2016, p.7).

Former Chinese Olympic Team doctor, Doctor Xue Yinxian has alleged that China was involved in the state-sponsored doping of 10,000 athletes from the late 1980s onwards. This revelation prompted an investigation by the World Anti Doping who are currently questioning the main regulatory bodies in sport (Lord, 2017a).

These incidents have a marked effect, not only on athletes but also on their HPSCs. Leading into the 2016 Olympic Games at Rio de Janerio, FINA were heavily criticised for lifting a doping ban on one of the Russian athletes. As James Law of the BBC reports:

Swimming's governing body has been criticised after dropping a doping charge against Russia's Yulia Efimova. Efimova, who won the 200m breaststroke bronze at London 2012, could compete at the Rio Olympics after a provisional ban – imposed following a positive test for meldonium – was lifted by FINA (Law, 2016, p.6).

This was not, however, the first doping ban served on Efimova.

After she re-surfaced at the 2016 Olympics, the alienating effects on other athletes and their coaches were evident for some time. The reaction from HPSCs and elite athletes from across the world culminated in a challenge to FINA. Having been directly affected, British HPSC Jon Rudd, coach to international swimmer Ruta Meilutyte, was one of the most outspoken. According to Rudd, Meilutyte, a Lithuanian Olympic Champion in the London 2012 Olympics, had been psychologically affected.

News reporter Craig Lord quotes Rudd who stated:

Competitive swimming is one stroke away from allowing money, politics and bad influence to unlock the key to the drugs cupboard and allow a free for all...She (Meilutyte) struggled with the injustice of the Russian situation in Kazan. She would have won gold had she done her heat times but with every round she got slower. She just could not get past her emotions over Efimova's presence. She was furious with FINA, with the Russians, the injustice of the whole thing (Lord, 2016, p.5).

The consequences of losing to an athlete deemed to have cheated can have lasting effects. Shirley Babashoff, former Olympic swimmer and sports star from the United States of America, was denied an Olympic gold medal by one of the German Democratic Republic team in 1976. She registered her doubts and was criticised heavily by the press and suffered a

loss of status at the time. As public awareness grew, people wanted to know her story. She recalls the deep psychological effects:

> As the truth spread about what had happened at the '76 Games, people began stopping me on the street and asking for my thoughts on the issue... I just didn't want to talk about it... I had simply compartmentalized that part of my life; I had been able to put it away in a place where it couldn't bother me anymore (Babashoff, 2017, p.74).

These remembered pains and the lack of an adequate response by FINA and WADA to state-sponsored doping by Russia prompted a move to replace FINA. As Craig Lord in SwimVortex remarks:

> Little wonder, then, that on September 1 in Washington, the World Swimming Association met – with 19 nations in the room among the 49 countries represented at the event going on beyond the door at the American Swimming Coaches Association's World Clinic – to settle on a constitution for an organisation that will challenge FINA for the running of global swimming in the years ahead (Lord, 2017b, p.2).

It seemed that the patience that had been held by athletes and coaches had run out. The discourse had centred on the threat to the integrity of the sport. The lack of fairness, experienced by athletes and their coaches, had caused a major international call for action.

The doping issue has become even more complex since the exposure of athletes who have been using higher-strength medication to enhance performance. The use of Therapeutic Use Exemptions (TUEs) has become more widespread, casting doubt over whether ethical boundaries have been breached. It is alleged that some sports scientists are encouraging athletes to take, with the collaboration of medical staff, medication stronger than needed for their current condition to enhance their performance.

Whilst the exempt medications may conform to the legal requirements within the sport they give, what is seen by other stakeholders, as an unfair advantage. The 'Combating Doping in Sport' report, published in February 2018, raises serious questions for all sports' NGBs (House of Commons, 2018). Although doping is now a major problem across all sports there are other issues that governing bodies need to address. As with doping, bullying and toxic cultures can also have alienating influences on HPSCs.

Unfortunately, accusations of bullying are not uncommon in sport. Early in 2017, British Swimming commissioned an internal inquiry into bullying. Reporting in the Telegraph, Rumsby and Davies explain:

Swimming became the latest major sport to be engulfed by a bullying scandal on its elite programme on Thursday after it emerged that an investigation had been launched into multiple claims by Paralympians about a coach (Rumsby and Davies, 2017, p.42).

These claims, coming from a number of athletes, concerned an elite HPSC working for British Swimming. The coach in question was accused of making inappropriate comments to those athletes and creating a culture of fear. It seems that the targets for medal success set by UK Sport were a contributing factor.

It may be necessary for an HPSC to walk the thin grey line between hard-nosed challenging, to improve performance of their athletes, and bullying. When the athletes are treated as a means rather than an end, however, some HPSCs can ignore their duty of care and become abusive. Kelner cites cases of bullying in British swimming stating:

> The duty of care scandal engulfing Olympic and Paralympic sport has plunged to a new low as British Swimming admitted disabled [athletes], including vulnerable teenagers, were subject to a "climate of fear" while training for Rio 2016. The former head coach of British Para-Swimming, Rob Greenwood, has left his post and the governing body took the rare step of publicly apologising to athletes he was found to have verbally abused and used discriminatory language about, as well as their families (Kelner, 2017, p,8).

There is some question regarding the validity of these allegations. Psychological pressure techniques, using role play, were employed to prepare athletes for the rigours of international competition. Attempting to distance themselves from the allegations, the EIS issued a statement:

> We are aware of comments made which refer to the way that performance psychology was utilised as part of the Para Swim world-class performance in the run-up to the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games. The pressure technique is an example of a range of services that a performance psychologist would routinely deliver as part of their work to support coaches and athletes in achieving improvements in performance (Lomax, 2017, p.7).

Nevertheless, as tough, hard-talking coaches preparing athletes for the cauldron of competition can sometimes be perceived as bullies, allegations about bullying in the sport are a concern for all HPSCs. This remains true even though such allegations often seem to be made by athletes who are either underperforming or have lost their funding. This may be due to the athlete feeling they have been let down by the system that they have invested their time and effort into. It is possible that they feel too much pressure has been unfairly placed upon them.

Higher authorities may also present a source of pressure on athletes and coaches. Demands made for medal success at major games can be an alienating – a negative force acting on HPSCs in the core context while they work with their selected athletes. This was seen when expectations were high for medals from the British athletes at the Athens 2004 Olympics: a toxic culture emerged when those expectations were not realised.

The result at Athens followed the Sydney Olympics in 2000, which was the worst performance that British Swimming had seen. Formal internal investigations into bullying were implemented in 2005.

> British Swimming is to launch an independent inquiry into allegations of bullying made against Bill Sweetenham, the national performance director, by former members of the national team... Complaints against Sweetenham have been led by Mark Foster, a world short-course champion and former world record-holder, who said that: were he younger than his 35 years, he would change nationality because "the bullying dished out by Sweetenham is too much to bear"... (Lord, 2005, p.3).

Even though the investigation could not substantiate the case against the NPD, the choice of words in a Pullbouy article seems to have left some lingering doubts in people's minds. Pullbouy, an independent website, a useful source of information for British coaches, swimmers and key stakeholders, in a later article stated:

> British Swimming has confirmed that the independent report into allegations of bullying against National Performance Director Bill Sweetenham has largely cleared him of any wrongdoing. In a statement issued today, the governing body said "British Swimming can confirm that, broadly speaking, the Report suggests allegations of bullying are not proven... Critics of the Australian's approach have attacked the thoroughness of the investigation which did not meet with many of the athletes named in the original Times article which sparked the enquiry (Pullbouy, 2006, p.3).

These developments notwithstanding, in September 2007, Bill Sweetenham tendered his resignation citing personal reasons for his decision, despite three years after his appointment in 2000 British Swimming achieving its best results ever at a World Championships.

> The British team returned from last weekend's World Championships in Barcelona with a record-breaking haul of two gold medals, three silver and three bronzes. To put that into context, Britain has only ever had one individual world champion in history, David Wilkie. And in the last major competition before Sweetenham took over, the 2000 Olympics, Team GB came home without a single medal, with only four [athletes] reaching individual finals (Fordyce, 2003, p.5).

There can be little doubt that Sweetenham's reasons for resigning were linked to the criticism he received and how he was treated by British Swimming. It appears the NPDs detractors within British Swimming were successful in removing him prior to the 2008 Beijing Olympics. In the comments, 'has largely cleared him' and 'allegations of bullying are not proven', the Pullbouy article reveals that residual doubt regarding Sweetenham's conduct remained. It seems ironic that on his appointment in 2000, Bill Sweetenham had stated that: "The British train was on the wrong track, and I was the bully-boy who changed that." (Sweetenham cited in BBC Sport, 2003). The comment seemed somewhat prophetic.

Al-Samarrai of the Daily Mail, however, raises the challenging question: is bullying really the only way to win gold medals? In his article, Al-Samarrai cites sports coaches who have been highly successful and who have also been accused of bullying – namely, Shane Sutton from cycling, Paul Thompson from rowing, Sir Alex Ferguson from football, and Bill Sweetenham from swimming. Al-Samarrai states:

> The view that hard words and environments prepare an athlete for the furnace of a final is one shared by Bill Sweetenham, one of swimming's sharpest minds. He [Bill Sweetenham] says "you can stand on the blocks next to someone six inches taller. Or next to a Chinese or Russian who may have cheated to beat you. Your training environment must prepare you... You can make training as soft and calming as possible but at some point the athlete has to look the opposition in the face and believe "This is mine" (Al-Samarrai, 2017, p.73).

With expectations high, the pressure on elite coaches and athletes can result in the development of a toxic culture. A further example, relating to the Australian team, emerged post London 2012.

The Australian swimming team came under severe criticism after the London Olympics. Following their poor performance Australian Swimming commissioned British psychologist Pippa Grange of Bluestone Edge Consultancy to conduct an in-depth review of their swimming team's culture immediately after the London games.

Grange revealed serious issues with the team ethos which she highlighted in her report titled *The Bluestone Review*. Serious incidents that compromised their espoused values are revealed when she stated:

> Realistically there was no single headline problem and no single "bad apple" in London. Neither did things just 'fall apart' all of a sudden in London. It seems instead there was a confluence of circumstances that built up over a couple of years and were not adequately foreseen or addressed by the leadership... There were enough culturally toxic incidents across enough team members that breeched agreements (such as getting

drunk, misuse of prescription drugs, breeching curfews, deceit, bullying) to warrant a strong, collective leadership response that included coaches, staff and the swimmers. No such collective action was taken (Grange, 2013, p.3).

At the time of this review of the Australian team, British Swimming conducted an internal enquiry into their poor results at the competition. Whilst there appears to have been no incidents of an unethical nature in the British team, serious failings regarding leadership and team culture were identified as the root cause of performance deficiencies. The NPD and Head Coach of British swimming were subsequently replaced.

> Michael Scott, the man responsible for British Swimming's flop at the London Olympics, resigned on Saturday night. The National Performance Director had been widely criticised after Team GB picked up just three medals in London despite £25 million of public money (Griffiths, 2012, p.4).

Scott's lack of understanding of the British culture was cited as one of the main reasons for the NPD's departure. However, rather than creating a toxic culture, he had been criticised for creating a 'soft culture', due to his numerous absences spent commuting between Australia and the UK. A cultural change programme was the inevitable outcome.

In summary, it is evident that HPSCs are open to accusations of bullying. Winning medals requires an HPSC to be tough on standards while being athlete-centred. Toxic cultures can emerge due to a range of factors, as seen in the effect of regulatory bodies and in the circumstances surrounding the Australian team's culture at London 2012. NPDs can also be responsible for creating a culture that is too 'soft', which can also have detrimental effects on performance. Whilst team culture at major competitions is important, the organisation to which athletes belong will have its own internal culture that can also influence performance.

Organisational Contexts in UK Swimming (Field #1, Field #2 and Field #3)

The majority of small, medium and large swimming organisations and clubs in the UK follow a classical constitution, established by the Amateur Swimming Association in the 1950s. Brian McGuiness, CEO of the BSCA speaking at the 2013 BSCA Conference, stated:

> [T]he key word being amateur and in the very early days you had clubs run by the baths manager who did, what we would now, call Learn to Swim (LTS). He would run swimming lessons and racing classes. The constitution was set up under the auspices of the ASA some 50 or so years ago. The current constitutional model was established in the 1950s and takes place over all the home nations. The vast majority of clubs in the UK still run to that 1950s model (McGuiness, personal communication, 27th September, 2013, p.3).

Under this model, the training programme, competitive outlet and administrative committee, are combined into one amateur swimming club. During the latter period of the 1960s, the late British HPSC Hamilton Smith was awarded a Churchill Scholarship to investigate structures in the most successful swimming nations, such as North America and Australia. This research culminated in a report which recommended the establishment of professional coaches in a supported environment.

In 1971, the Coventry City Swimming Club became the first competitive club to follow the recommendation to separate the professional swimming coach and training programme from the competitive outlet. The training facilities and the coach were funded by the local authority whilst the competitive outlet was administered by the club. Having a full-time professional coach and increases in training facilities resulted in significantly improved swimming performances at all levels. This became a model for the future and the establishment of Britain's first professional HPSCs.

This new model of professionalism was extended to other large cities across the UK. Larger organisations, in centres such as Leeds and Manchester, became hubs for local, smaller clubs operating as satellites. However, as they were financed by local authorities, issues have emerged over recent years. A reduction in funding from central government, together with higher demands from local residents, have placed considerable financial pressures on these local authorities, and hence also the clubs. The constitutional model has expanded over time, offering more financial stability to coaches. Alternative models employing professional coaches have emerged in more recent years, which place additional requirements on their roles.

Educational establishments, such as universities and public schools, have entered the fray. These institutions may either own their facilities or hire them from local authorities. In addition, there are also a number of privately managed clubs that pay full-time professional coaches. An example, given by British HPSC Dave Heathcock at the 2013 BSCA Conference, is Ealing Swimming Club. Established in 1994 under a charitable trust, it has a turnover in excess of over £1M per annum and employs 100 administrative staff (Heathcock, personal communication, 27th September, 2013, p.3).

Such swimming clubs are administered by elected committees that operate in accordance with NGB constitutional guidelines. The club and individual members affiliate to Swim England (formerly the Amateur Swimming Association) at a national and regional level. In these larger organisations, the professional swimming coach has a significantly more complex role than under the majority of smaller clubs operating on the classical model.

Unlike local authorities and private swimming clubs, the NGB, British Swimming, enjoys lottery funding enabling the employment of a team of professional HPSCs and technical support staff. It also employs a National Performance Director (NPD) and a Head Coach (HC), who provide strategic leadership to the organisation. British Swimming operates through two Intensive Training Centres (ITCs) co-located with the universities of Loughborough and Bath, each with a lead HPSC. Funded elite athletes train under the leadership of designated HPSCs.

At an internal organisational level, the HPSC interacts with five domains: the Executive Agency, which is an enabler, providing strategy, structure, systems and scarce resources; the Athlete Agency, which involves other athletes not directly coached by the HPSC; the Coach Agency, which involves assistant and peer coaches; the Core-Coaching Agency, comprising the HPSC and their athletes, and the Technical Support Agency, which is a secondary source of expertise for the HPSC.

These domains, or agencies, will provide a platform for discussing HPSC experiences in the subsequent chapters of this thesis. They will also provide a basis for future research and discussion. It is the experiences of the HPSCs within each of these agencies and at competition that provide insights to their feelings of belonging and of their contextual fit - that is, of being right for their context.

Russian Dolls

Both the stories the HPSCs told of their experiences and my discussions with them seemed to focus on a set of discrete contextual fields, each with its own culture, purpose(s) and demands. To clarify how these fields relate to each other, I have generated a series of representations, shown below, which invoke two of Bourdieu's fundamental concepts. First, there is the 'accumulation of being' (Bourdieu, 1977) – that is the absorption of contextual complexities. This appears, according to most of the interviewees, to bring a sense of aliveness.

Second, there is the concept of a 'field', which helps differentiate the areas of context in which HPSCs perform their multiple roles. These separate but connected fields each have their own purposes, written and unwritten 'rules of the game' and webs of influence (Capra, 1996). Within each field, the HPSC has a defined role, status, and position. Finally, within each field there is competition and potential for conflict. I, therefore, sought to articulate these fields as a set of conceptual diagrams to assist in framing and elucidating the analysis.

Figure 4-1 depicts the five main fields in which the HPSC is embedded and influenced by throughout their coaching career. As the primary role of the HPSC takes place within Field #1, Field #2, and Field #3, these three fields became the main focus of attention for the research.

Fig. 4-1 Russian Dolls - Five Contextual Fields

British Society (Field #5)
UK Sport (Field #4)
Swimming Competition Arena (Field #3)
Swimming Organisation (Field #2)
Core-Coaching Agency (Field #1)
(Field #1a – Swimming Organisation)
(Field #1b - Competition Arena)

The findings of the research are addressed in Chapter 5 – Exploring Identity, Chapter 6 – Relationships and Influence, and in Chapter 7 – Integrated Findings: Contextual Fit. In these three chapters HPSCs' experiences in each of the defined fields are analysed.

The Core Coaching Agency (Field #1)

It is within the Core-Coaching Agency that HPSCs find their main purpose – their raison d'être. It is within this field that the HPSC works on a day-to-day basis with their athletes, either at swimming competitions or in a training environment. Figure 4-2 depicts the context, which is at the very heart of an HPSC's role, in greater detail. This is the field in which they interact directly with their core followers – namely their elite athletes.

Fig. 4-2 The HPSC-Athlete Relationship (Field #1a and #1b)

HPSC

RECEIVES
Athlete feedback;
Feedback on performance;
Outcome rewards

SUPPLIES
Leadership
[Followership]
Inspiration
Motivation
Programme
Opportunity
Feedback
Support
Friendship

HPSC-Athlete
Symbiotic Relationship

Output

Athlete Performance

SUPPLIES
Followership
[Leadership]
Legitimacy
Engagement
Responsiveness
Work
Feedback
Support
Friendship

RECEIVES
HPSC feedback;
Feedback on performance;
Outcome rewards

Athlete

The training environment may be at home, in their own swimming organisation's facilities, at an off-site training camp, or at a preparatory training camp organised and managed by

the NGB. In each context, however, the HPSCs and their athletes are operating in their own organisational context either at home or in a virtual off-site temporary setting.

Figure 4-2 shows the HPSC-athlete relationship using a general systems view (Bertalanffy, 1951) comprising of inputs and outputs in a figure of eight customer/supplier configuration. The image depicts the HPSC as the supplier of leadership and the athlete as the supplier of followership in a mutually beneficial symbiotic relationship.

Fig. 4-3 Core-Coaching Agency (Field #1)
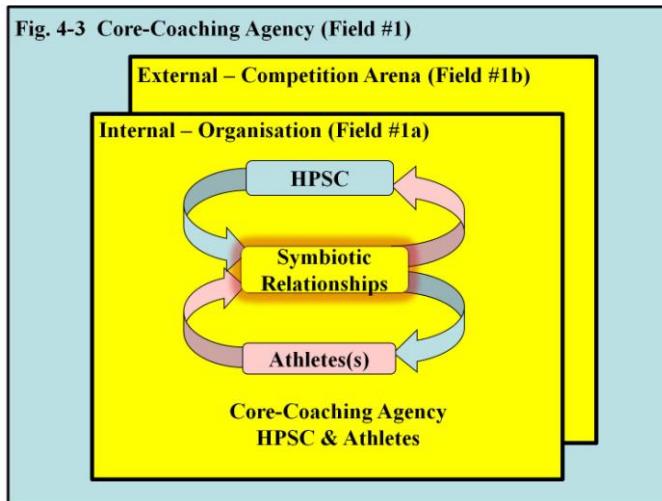
It became apparent during the interviews that the main coaching activities occurred in the two micro-foundational fields of training and competition. This configuration is shown in Figure 4-3 – Core-Coaching Agency as Internal Field #1a and External Field #1b. It is also evident from the interviews that HPSCs' roles and skill-sets are quite different in the internal and external fields when coaching athletes. In the external element they use what are referred to as 'arena skills' at competition. This term emerged from conversations post London 2012 Olympics and in the lead up to the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro. The Core-Coaching Agency is not, however, viable in isolation. It requires the enabling resources provided by an affiliated swimming organisation, labelled as Field #2 and shown in Figure 4-4.

The Swimming Organisation (Field #2)

Regardless of the type of swimming organisation, there seems to be a set of common internal components (see Fig. 4-4). This became apparent during interviews, when HPSCs made implicit references to five possible discrete internal agencies within their swimming organisations. For the purpose of this thesis I describe

Fig. 4-4 Organisational Context (Field #2) – Five Agencies
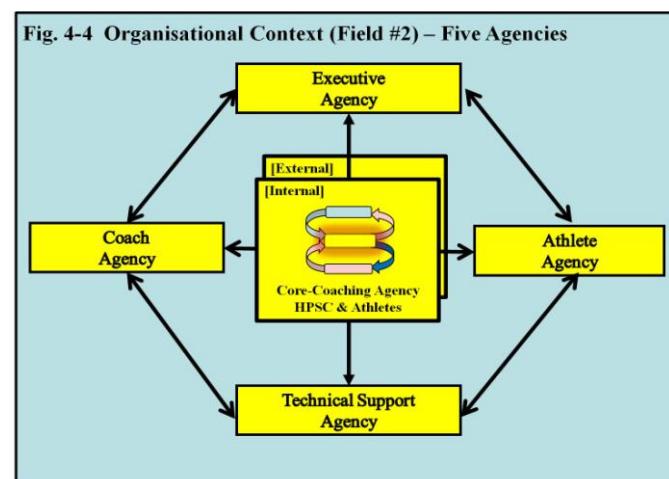
these internal components as: the Core-Coaching Agency, the Athlete Agency, the Coach Agency, the Technical Support Agency and the Executive Agency.

The Executive Agency provides scarce resources to enable the HPSC and their athletes in their joint pursuit of medals on the world stage. In this agency, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Executive Board or Committee, Internal Administrative staff, National Performance Director (NPD), and Head Coach (HC), all ensure the viability of the organisation and provide its necessary resources. In private swimming organisations or in clubs administered by local authorities, the HPSC usually performs a combined role of HC and NPD. Separate HCs and NPDs are only normally found within National Governing Bodies (NGBs) or very large swimming organisations either under local government control or run privately. The skill required for HPSCs to operate within the Executive Agency, coupled with a lack of training for their role in that agency, sometimes comes as a surprise to them. For the longer term viability of the organisation, and its ongoing performance, there is need for a constant flow of talent. This is the purpose of the next agency to be considered, the Athlete Agency

The Athlete Agency comprises all athletes other than those directly coached on a regular basis by the HPSC. They form part of a value chain (Porter, 1985) of athletes who have future potential and from whom the HPSC can, when they deem the athletes ready, select for induction into the Core-Coaching Agency. Whilst the Athlete Agency provides an internal source, athletes from other swimming organisations or satellites to an HPSC's own organisation can be alternative sources of talent. For a swimming organisation to be able to provide coaching for athletes internal to the organisation, but outside the Core-Coaching Agency, the organisation must also have coaching assistants or peer coaches who work with other elite athletes. This function is carried out by the Coach Agency.

Assistant coaches in the Coach Agency operate with delegated authority of the HPSC and are directly responsible for coaching athletes in the value chain on a day-to-day basis. An assistant coach's performance is measured by the number of their athletes who gain promotion to an HPSC's in-group (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1991). In large organisations and within British Swimming, there may also be peer HPSCs operating with their own elite athletes in a separate Core-Coaching Agency. In addition, to be competitive, HPSCs, assistants and athletes also require technical support from the final internal agency: the Technical Support Agency.

The Technical Support Agency provides expertise in a number of areas, including: strength and conditioning; nutrition; medicine; psychology; biochemistry; biomechanics and performance analysis. Providing the HPSC with competence through secondary sources, experts in this agency can be employed by the swimming organisation itself or from external

sources, such as British Swimming, the English Institute of Sport (EIS) or UK Sport. Collectively, experts from the Technical Support Agency together with the HPSC, prepare athletes for competition at the highest level in the sport-specific Swimming Competition Arena (Field #3).

The Swimming Competition Arena (Field #3)

As mentioned in the first part of this chapter, the competitive swimming context (shown in Figure 4-5) is itself embedded in the two other external social fields: those of British Society and UK Sport. Whilst HPSCs do not refer to these fields explicitly, their behaviour does appear to be influenced by them. When analysing the competition arena, it became apparent that there is a community of HPSCs.

This is the context in which the HPSC meets and interacts with peer coaches, athletes and other stakeholders. Members of the Technical Support Agency may also accompany the coach at competition to support athletes. It appears that the technical knowledge required to perform at the international level is beyond the capability of one person and requires a team effort. Coach #13 remarked; 'This is where it is at, this is what matters. Here I feel at home' (Coach #13a, personal communication, 23rd September, 2012, p.6). It is within this milieu

Fig. 4-5 Swimming Competition Arena (Field #3)

that together with the swimming organisation, strong mediating influences can impact on contextual fit. It is within this field that, as a kind of swimming micro-organisation, the Core-Coaching Agency, delivers performance.

Conclusion

This chapter began by investigating the contextual factors relating to the British culture in which sport functions in today's environment in the UK. A degree of historicism is needed to reveal hidden political motives and corruption in sport. From a moral standpoint, narratives have been used to invent a tradition that legitimises the education of the young in desirable values, beliefs and norms of behaviour. The preparation of young men for war and the British education system appear to be inextricably linked in these narratives. For most of the medieval period, practices that we would recognise as sporting or leisure related were often
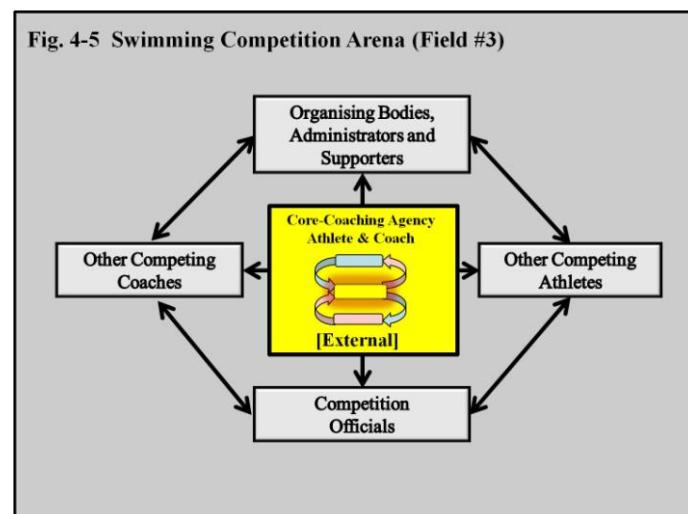
functional in that they were based on military or economic activities. The hidden motives also appear to have a strong religious connection (Brailsford, 1991).

The wealth created through the industrial revolution from the mid-eighteenth century and through the nineteenth century helped define the UK role in the world as the inventors, codifiers and distributers of global sports. Significant sums of money have resulted in a heavily commercialised sports industry, beginning with the establishment of the Wolfenden Committee in 1957 by the Central Council of Physical Recreation (CCPR), the introduction of the Sports Council in 1972, the establishment of the UK Sports Council in 1994, and the introduction of lottery funding in 1997 (Holt and Mason, 2000). It can be argued that sport is now an industry and has replaced religion – athletic performance being the new God. The cultural legacy of the British past defines the context in which sport and sports-coaching operates and presents the focus of the research to be discussed in the subsequent chapters.

Finally, this chapter described the swimming context in which HPSCs are embedded. The discussion detailed the contextual domains in which the HPSC interacts solely with their direct-follower athletes, namely: international and national competitions, preparatory training camps, and local training venues. It was argued that these contexts form cultural layers, cultures within cultures, creating webs of influence. The regulatory bodies that form the legislative framework were reviewed from a functionalist perspective. These bodies include: FINA, LEN, IOC, BOA, and CGF. Forces that potentially alienate HPSCs were highlighted. Financial corruption, doping, bullying, and racial discrimination were all identified as sources of toxic culture that, if not addressed, could subvert HPSCs' feelings of being at home and of having a strong contextual fit. This contextual background provides the basis for the analysis of findings in Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

Chapter 5: Research Findings 1: Exploring Identity

> The structures constitutive of a particular type of [context]... produce habitus, systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles of the generation and structuring of practices and representations which can be objectively "regulated" and "regular" without in any way being the product of obedience to rules, objectively adapted to their goals without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary to attain them and, being all this, collectively orchestrated without being the product of the orchestrating action of a conductor (Bourdieu, 1990, p.53).

Introduction

The above quotation from Pierre Bourdieu introduces the key concepts for this chapter: the role of habitus, in the formulation of self and social identity as a socially constructed phenomenon (Berger and Luckman, 1979). This chapter is divided into two main themes – namely, self identity and social identity that emerged from the data analysis and shown diagrammatically in Chapter 3 (see Fig. 3-1, p.61 and Fig. 3-2, p.62). Sub-headings for the two second order themes are shown in italics.

An HPSC's identity is formed from their lived experiences in competitive swimming and their subsequent entry into the role of coaching elite athletes. Although most HPSCs were formerly competitive athletes, there were some who had never experienced competitive swimming. Identity, however, goes much deeper than the role. It is also determined by how coaches perceive themselves and whether they feel at home in their chosen context.

The research findings related to identity are analysed through the theoretical framework of leadership and the sociological lens of Bourdieu, using his two concepts of *being* and *field* as described in Chapter 2. The exploration of identity towards contextual fit, it seems, begins with the individual consciously choosing to become an HPSC and finding purpose in that role. Analysis of the findings in this section concentrates on the experiences of HPSCs on their journey towards self and social identity within their chosen role.

The formulation of a coaching habitus in a range of contexts/fields depends upon a growing awareness of self, and an expanding awareness of the wider international context in which the coaches operate. Whilst not explicitly stated, it appears that the HPSC is seeking to answer the question: 'Is this role a good fit for me?' Identity, however, can be defined at three levels – personal, relational, and collective (Schwartz, Luyckx and Vignoles, 2012; Jenkins, 2008).

The need for an HPSC, as a leader of athletes, derives from the context. The swimming organisation and swimmers are in need of leadership and relevant scarce resources. The need for an enabling context and directional influence is born out of a collective social

need to achieve world-class results on the international stage. This chapter, then, investigates self identity and social identity as seen through the eyes of the HPSC. The chapter seeks to reveal, through the analysis of HPSCs' experiences, their search for *being* - that is, purpose, recognition and efficiency (Bourdieu, 1977).

Self Identity

Personal identity refers to aspects of self-definition which may include: values; beliefs; goals (Waterman, 1999); standards of behaviour; decision making (Atkins, Hart and Donnelly, 2005); self-evaluation (Kernis, Lakey and Heppner, 2008); expected future selves (Marcus and Nurius, 1986) and creating own identity (Jenkins, 2008; Côté and Levine, 2002). Also as humans we are social animals, and a deeply held need for human beings is that of recognition from others (Herzberg, Mausner and Snyderman, 2004).

Kairotic Moments in the Context

Coach #13 talked about how a severe shoulder injury suddenly ended his very successful career as an international athlete. Being based in a large performance centre, he was then afforded the opportunity to enter directly into coaching elite international athletes.

> I got a pretty severe shoulder injury so I was unable to continue training. And throughout my period of rehabilitation I was very fortunate to assist in coaching [named athlete] who was an international breaststroker (Coach #13a, personal communication, 23rd September, 2012, p.5).

Coach #2 explained that he too had to retire from the sport through injury, but unlike Coach #13 he had temporarily lost his passion for the sport.

> I was absolutely devoid of any passion for swimming due to having to retire early due to a swimming accident. I didn't even watch the last Olympics. I'd had enough of it. I'd switched sports and become a footballer. I got quite good at it mainly due to the fitness from swimming - completely gave swimming away (Coach #2, personal communication, 4th November, 2014, p.1).

Another interviewee also commented on his loss of passion for the sport of competition swimming. This, however, was associated with his remembered negative experiences of training.

> I hate getting into swimming pools. I don't mind getting into the sea and mucking around, going down flumes with my kids and playing but I don't like getting in a regular, rectangle of swimming pool water. I think it brings back those um (long pause)... I remember Sarah Hardcastle saying something about, you know, crying into your goggles because the sets were so hard (Coach #1, personal communication, 3rd July, 2015, p.1).

Whilst Coach #1 and Coach #2 had negative feelings towards their former sport, they became two of the UK's most successful and respected HPSCs. It seems that the experience of coaching can have a greater social pull than the sport of elite competitive swimming itself. To support this premise, a number of interviewees were not former swimmers.

Coach #3, who had never been a competitive swimmer himself, enjoyed his early experiences of being a part-time assistant coach. He described the moment of his life-changing decision stating:

> I applied for the army and randomly out of the blue a few months later when I was going through the whole process to join the army I got this phone call from the coach of a pretty large club offering me a job. I was astounded - this was a big decision for me to make. I did, after some thought, take the job (Coach #3, personal communication, 4th February, 2016, p.10).

In the sample group there were former international athletes who had retired from the sport for a variety of reasons; a common theme among them was that they had not achieved their lifetime ambition as a competitor. A significant aspect of their personal drive seemed to emerge from their desire to help others to capture what they themselves had failed to accomplish. At the time of writing there were no former Olympic champions in the UK operating as HPSCs. Some HPSCs were former international athletes, including Olympians, and some had been club swimmers at various levels of ability, but none had achieved the coveted Olympic gold.

Coach #1 described his initial involvement with competitive swimming and recorded the fact that he did not see himself as a high achiever in the sport. He placed heavy emphasis on his lack of achievement, but also recalled his attitude towards training – an ethic of hard work.

> In terms of getting into coaching, I was a competitive swimmer right through my school years. I would say I was very much a work horse rather than a thoroughbred. I was always the guy who did all the metres the coach asked me to do. I did it as hard as I could, but never actually got the results that I probably wanted. I was always the guy that got 7th or 8th in the final; I never got the medal (Coach #1, personal communication, 3rd July, 2015, p.1).

This self appraisal – 'I didn't have the talent but I did have the mentality to do the work' – revealed the importance Coach #1 placed upon a strong work ethic. He also used the metaphor of thoroughbreds and work-horses to contrast elite athletes against average ability swimmers.

This cultural and symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1977) gained during their formative years as competitive swimmers and interacting with their own coaches and fellow swimmers was

cited in a large number of cases as the main reason for becoming a coach. The initial force that attracted individuals into the role of an HPSC varied significantly across the sampled cohort. A common initial entry point was through lifeguarding or teaching swimming.

> Having been a competitive swimmer, and not a particularly good one, I thought I can be a lifeguard – which is getting me away from the muck and grime and crawling underneath cars and trucks. And I got a job as a lifeguard (Coach #8, personal communication, 26th February, 2015, p.8).

> I worked in an office and got bored with that. I was an ex-swimmer... went travelling and ended up in Australia with no job, no money and worked on a vineyard for a while. I went to my local pool and saw swimming teachers at $25 an hour and I was earning $10 an hour and thought [pause]...I could do that (Coach #4, personal communication, 13th November, 2014, p.1).

Throughout the interviews, lifeguarding and swimming teaching emerged as two common entry points into coaching. In most cases, the coaches had enjoyed the experience of teaching, so my subsequent probing questions were: 'Why not remain in teaching? It is a value-add activity – that is helping others. It develops swimming skills and there is a high level of interaction, so why did you go into coaching, and elite swimming coaching in particular?'

> I think there are three main reasons why I prefer coaching. First I am a very competitive person... I have always been that way. Secondly I enjoy the challenge of helping my swimmers compete for medals. I also like the relationship you have with competitive swimmers. It's over a longer period of time. This means you get time to see them develop as a whole person...not just as a swimmer (Coach #31, personal communication, 11th June, 2013, p.5).

Whilst former competitive swimmers from a range of backgrounds were more common in the HPSC role, there were a small number who, surprisingly, had little or no significant experience as a competitive swimmer. Coach #3, in response to the initial question 'How did you enter the role of an HPSC?' said:

> It wasn't by design. I never planned it. My brother used to swim for [named club]... and I never did. I went down the athletics road. I played football, volleyball, table tennis. I did all sorts of different sports. I had a real eye for it right from the start (Coach #3, personal communication, 4th February, 2016, p.1).

Coach #11 expressed his experience stating:

> I've always swum myself but never enjoyed the swimming environment as a club
> member. I had my brother - he swims internationally for [named country]. His coach
> wasn't able to travel with him for what was required of him in competitions
> abroad...and probably due to a lack of assistant coaches back home I was asked to go
> with him to major competitions. It went on from there really (Coach #11, personal
> communication, 22nd December, 2014, p.1).

These findings resonated with my own experience: a former swimmer, I represented my
county but failed to reach the higher levels of the sport. As a county swimmer I can relate
to the reasons Coach #2 gave for entering the coaching field:

> I made National finals. I didn't want to finish with the sport, I thought I had done OK in
> swimming but I had always wanted to represent Great Britain and thought that was the
> level I wanted to operate at. I felt a bit dismayed and disappointed that I hadn't done
> that while I was swimming so I started coaching. I was quite young, only 19 or 20 and I
> wanted to coach Great Britain (Coach #2, personal communication, 4th November,
> 2014, p.1).

Having failed, in his own eyes, it seems that Coach #2 was more intensely motivated to
help others achieve what he could not. Similar comments, even if not explicitly stated,
appeared on a number of occasions from ex-competitive swimmers at all levels.

Whooshings

One of the interviewees talked about how he initially found what he referred to as his calling
in life, his sense of purpose, through teaching. He described the experience of teaching a
young girl beginner to swim:

> I got her on her back, talking to her the whole time. Next thing she's kicking her legs,
> on her back and her face lit up. Her mum was crying. I thought I'm pretty good at this
> and the thrill I got out of that I knew right there and then that's what I'm going to do.
> I just knew it (Coach #4, personal communication, 13th November, 2014, p.2).

The joy he derived was evident in the enthusiasm he conveyed during interview. He
became animated and the volume and speed of his speech accelerated as he described these
feelings. He followed this with an aphorism of unknown source: 'The two most important
days in your life are the day you are born and the day you find out why' (ibid, p.2). This
moment in his life evidently held great significance for him.

From such accounts, it seems that the contributions a coach makes to athletes' skills at any
level can be a more important factor than experience in the sport of competitive swimming.

Another senior GB coach, who was not a former competitive swimmer, revealed feelings of satisfaction when first starting out as a young-age-group coach.

> It was just almost a feeling of [pause]... I can influence these people in a positive way. I was making a difference; and I was making people happy. I was making people smile; and I was making people get better at something and that gave me a real buzz right from the start (Coach #3, personal communication, 4th February, 2016, p.2).

The social pull, in this case, seemed to derive from making a difference in a young child's progress in age-group competitions. The significance this HPSC placed on making people happy revealed the importance given to developing skills through social interaction. This self awareness through positive contextual feedback was a recurring theme. Coach #2 commented: 'I always thought to myself, rightly or wrongly, that I'm pretty good at this, I need to stick with it' (Coach #2, personal communication, 4th November, 2014, p.4).

It seems that this positive feedback from the operational context enhances the social pull and increases feelings of a calling in the chosen role. An increasing mastery in the primary coaching role, coupled with swimmers' improving performances, it seems, strengthens this social bond.

> The kids that I was coaching...were just shooting forwards and a couple of them won the [named county] right out of the blue and nobody had won [named county] from that club (pause)... and it's weird because everyone started telling me that I was a great coach and that I was a natural and that they'd never heard of me (Coach #3, personal communication, 4th February, 2016, p.3).

A second interviewee commented:

> Our girls were winning gold medals and breaking records and that was a fantastic time and we had a great time. And I think at this time I really loved this and I was really happy with everything at that time (Coach #6, personal communication, 6th November, 2014, p.6).

I could also relate to these two comments from my own early experiences as an age-group coach. Unexpected outstanding performances can invoke strong emotional reactions. This positive feedback from the context validates the coaches' perception of self and helps develop a social identity with other coaches at competition.

Coach #3 continued:

> I was like: oh my God! I was as surprised as anybody. And so with 15m to go on his 50 fly (butterfly stroke) I knew he was going to win (pause)... Just that whole feeling of: bloody hell! It was a combination of real pride in him – because he'd done so well this

lad – and then a real pride in myself with everyone coming up and saying "you've done a great job" (ibid, p.5).

It is as if, within their role, the HPSCs are having a series of spiritual experiences occurring in fleeting moments of time. Coaching in this context, it seems, becomes a sacred pursuit.

In discussing Homer's perspective on such phenomena, Dreyfus and Kelly (2011) describe these great fleeting moments in time as involving 'whooshing':

> These are the shining moments in Homer's world. And whooshing up is what happens in the context of the great moment in contemporary sport as well. When something whooshes up it focuses and organises everything around it. The great athlete in the midst of the play rises up and shines – all attention is drawn to him. And everyone around him – the [athletes] on the field, the coaches on the sidelines, the fans in the stadium, the announcers in the booth – everyone understands who they are and what they are to do immediately in relation to the *sacred* event that is occurring (2011, p.200).

The shining moment created by an athlete's performance, it seems, reflects light onto the HPSC so that they become part of the socially constructed sacred event. Our natural inclination to teach and see others succeed in virtue of our efforts is a powerful motivator. We have a vested interest in their success and we share in their glory. For a fleeting moment in time, feelings of being at home emerge and create a sense of identity. In my own experience, watching one of my swimmers achieve at a major championship brought a feeling of being alive. Momentarily, the world looks as though it is a very different place. The inspiration to coach does not always, however, derive from experiences with athletes.

In a number of cases, HPSCs are inspired by their own coaches while training in a competitive swimming context. They talked of their coaches as being role models. In one case, an HPSC attributed to their coach a charismatic status. As Coach #6 remarked:

> My last coach at Club #6a was [named HPSC] and I worshipped the ground he walked on. I thought he was fantastic. He had the style of a coach I liked and I thought (pause)... I want to be that (Coach #6, personal communication, 6th November, 2014, p.1).

In discussing his own former coach, Coach #6 described him as being highly effective and extremely athlete-centred. As he talked about the coach, the expression on his face revealed his obvious admiration. There appears to be an important need to feed the ego and become the centre of attention.

Coach #22, the parent of a former international swimmer, talked of a lasting impression made by a GB Coach in the 1980s:

I used to go down to [named training venue] and watch my son being coached by [named HPSC]. I was always impressed by his command on poolside. The swimmers seemed to hang onto his every word. He was a really tough hard-nosed coach but the swimmers seemed to like him very much. I used to write down all of his sessions and thought (pause)... I would like to try doing some coaching of competitive swimmers (Coach #22, personal communication, 10th June, 2015, p.13).

Whilst role models had inspired a few HPSCs, for the majority their inspiration came from a winning performance. For some it was at an age-group competition, for others it was a first win at a major senior event. Coach #13 spoke of an unexpected gold:

I just had a feeling he was going to do it because it was almost as if the stars were in a line... He made the Olympic final and that was everything. So he had already achieved his goal; nothing else mattered past the point of making an Olympic final... We went out on the night afterwards and got so fucking drunk (Coach #13c, personal communication, 1st January, 2014, p.10).

The comment 'we went out' refers to a close mentor HPSC that had helped Coach #13 in his relatively new role. The incident was to mark a major turning point in his career. His long-term choice of context had been decided.

Choices of Context

As Frankl (2006) identifies, 'the will to meaning' is a powerful drive in human endeavour. For many coaches, then, choosing to become an HPSC seems to be a first step towards finding what they require in terms of purpose in their lives. The observations of two thinkers are relevant to this point: as Sartre (1958) posits, 'existence precedes essence and we become what we choose to be in life.'; and, along a similar line of thought, Bourdieu (1984) supposes that there is no intrinsic purpose in life, we create our own purpose(s) by investing the self in a chosen Field of Interest (FoI). In the case of the current discussion, the HPSCs had chosen to coach elite athletes and that appeared to satisfy their needs for purpose.

One of the first themes arising out of the research was the degree to which HPSCs invested themselves and became fully absorbed in a the role that they had chosen. Throughout the interviews, it became apparent that the path they had elected to follow demanded a total commitment to the challenge of coaching their athletes.

Well, it absorbed me more and more. It started to become my life's work and the university degree studies ticked along on the side... so a lot of my life decisions started to reflect the fact that this was consuming me (Coach #1, personal communication, 3rd July, 2015, p.4).

One of the first questions I asked each interviewee was why they wanted to coach elite athletes, specifically, what it was that attracted them to that role. In assessing their responses, I noted the advice given by Drucker that the most important thing in communication is hearing what isn't said, which he refers to as 'the silent language' (Drucker, 1977, p.391). I had originally assumed that the main attraction might be directly related to the sport of competitive swimming. Surprisingly, HPSCs' initial reasons for entering the role were more diverse and the sport itself was not always the primary attraction, or even important.

There were similar comments in other interviews regarding experiences. One HPSC reflected on his earlier experience as an age-group coach, and described similar sentiments to those of Coach #1 (cited above):

> It is just being able to pass on my skills I suppose. I quite enjoyed it. It doesn't really feel like a job at times. It feels more like a hobby. The enjoyment aspect of it was pretty good and [so was] being a role model as well (Coach #12, personal communication, 27th August, 2014, p.1).

It appeared that HPSCs who had started their career in teaching found that in time coaching became a preference over their former roles. Responses to subsequent questions concerning HPSCs' preferences of coaching over teaching were also revealing. Coach #12 explained why he preferred coaching over teaching in his early career:

> I did find it just a bit more fun. The age is generally older a bit as well, so you can talk to them a bit more like humans. I quite enjoyed having a laugh... It was also quite hard to get to know people when you are teaching [them] for half an hour a week and half the time the kid gets put there rather than wanting to be there (ibid, p.1).

Surprisingly, most HPSCs cited the development of relationships and the competitive challenge as the two primary sources of their drive to coach. As one HPSC commented, 'it was a bit more like football I think. There was the competitive element which you don't get in teaching' (Coach #4, personal communication, 13th November, 2014, p.3).

A GB Coach gave a revealing comment that related to the social gravity which attracted him to the role. In his case, the sport itself was not particularly alluring. His needs came more from the instructional element of coaching, in performance, and in the relationships he enjoyed with his athletes.

> But I still don't feel like I'm part of the swimming community because swimming isn't my thing. If I'm really honest I'm not that interested in swimming as such. It's not that that floats my boat. It's that feeling of those individuals receiving information from me and instruction from me and them getting better and then me getting a buzz from that... And also, just the verbal interaction between myself and the swimmers in the banter and

I just love that. And it's still that that motivates me now (Coach #3, personal communication, 4ᵗʰ February, 2016, p.7).

While the HPSCs could be altruistic in wanting to help their athletes to reach their full potential, throughout the interviews it was evident that they were primarily driven to meet their own needs for achievement. The research revealed that, having discovered a pursuit that they found initially satisfying, HPSCs' chosen path in coaching was defined by their inner drive for a context in which they believed they could produce world-class athletes.

Coach #6 was not completely able to express his reasons for becoming a coach:

I don't know really. I suppose it is in my blood. I had done it for so many years. I actually love football but I wouldn't want to coach it but there was something in swimming that just triggered it in me. I could have probably got on in football, I'm not sure how far but I preferred swimming. I like the environment, the friends, the club; everything was just in place for me. It was a good fit. It was right for me (Coach #6, personal communication, 6ᵗʰ November, 2014, p.1).

Coach #27 had similar difficulty in articulating his reasons for becoming an HPSC. It took several weeks after the initial question to receive an answer from him. When talking with him again at a competition a few weeks later, he responded:

That question you asked me at the interview; I've been thinking about it. I have been thinking about it a lot. I have come to the conclusion (pause)... It is because I care about the swimmers. I love coaching and I love watching my swimmers achieve at competition. I think it is because I want them to achieve what I couldn't achieve myself at that level. I was a national standard swimmer but never quite made it (Coach #27, personal communication, 4ᵗʰ October, 2015, p.5).

This self-realisation of a deep seated need for vicarious achievement emerged in a number of the interviews. It appears that a self-perception of failure became a significant motivation for coaches to help others achieve what they could not achieve for themselves.

An HPSC who accepted a position in a large swimming club administered by a local authority explained how he felt when he later discovered in a conversation with his supervising manager that the club had a non-competitive culture:

It was a cultural thing... It was purely the fact that the whole thing was totally non-competitive... I said: "Look, you've got to alter this attitude. This is going nowhere." She said: "You can't alter the attitude; that is it, that's the way the borough is run." And I just thought: that's it (pause)... it's not for me (Coach #8, personal communication, 26ᵗʰ February, 2015, p.7).

The HPSC left when he realised that the mismatch in his values and the club's culture would not be resolved. It was a local authority scheme where the Executive Agency resides in two elements: a local authority sports department and a separate club committee. Issues stemming from a club's internal politics and culture can, therefore, be a disincentive in a coach's choice of organisation, but there are also other factors for them to consider.

Contexts can be chosen by HPSCs who may wish to select a more secure position for personal and family reasons. Large schemes administered by local authorities can offer a more stable working-environment. I asked Coach #5 why he opted for a local authority rather than join a private swimming club or British Swimming.

> I wouldn't like to work for 'British Swimming'... I just think that your NPD (National Performance Director) comes in: they clear the decks; new people come in; they clear the decks. So there's no consistency for your working life... Whereas in a club programme, you've got that stability - which you know in four years' time you're not going to get pushed aside... Providing for my family is important to me (Coach #5, personal communication, 15th July, 2015, p.10).

Even though HPSCs seek to fulfil their ambitions, different enablers present varying levels of risk. Hence, Coach #5 decided that security had a priority over the positive aspects of the NGB or private club settings, which might lead to substantial risk and lack of control. Despite being faced with such conundrums, where the HPSCs were given autonomy and were able to influence a club culture, they were frequently able to create a context that embodied their aspirations as a coach.

Coach #1 made a defining statement that seemed to stem from his finding purpose in the role. He said that if you cut off his arm you would find his club's name 'running through it like the middle of Blackpool rock' (Coach #1, personal communication, 3rd July, 2015, p.4). The degree to which these HPSCs invest themselves in the role is clear.

> It started to become my life's work.... There's blood, sweat and tears in there and it's never been a job... It's always been a hobby, a passion and at some stages, not so much now, but it's been an obsession (ibid, p.4).

The first element of Bourdieu's accumulation of being links self identity to organisational social identity. This element is apparent in those HPSCs who had created a performance club through their own endeavours. Whilst less obvious in HPSCs who were employed by British Swimming or large government organisations, a high level of personal drive was evident in all interviewees.

Coaching Philosophy

Although not stated explicitly, certain common coaching philosophies emerged from HPSCs' comments during interviews, and question and answer sessions at BSCA conferences over the 2012 to 2016 period. Athlete commitment to HPSCs' training programmes featured high on the list of what HPSCs' value and what they believe is a main enabler for world-class performance.

> The three things I believe in are skill, fitness and an athlete lifestyle. If you want to win at the highest level you have to have a certain level of skill, work bloody hard, get enough sleep and stay away from alcohol and drugs (Coach #31, personal communication, 11th June, 2013, p.4).

Head Swimming Coach from Millfield School in Somerset Jolyon Fink, at the 2013 BSCA Conference, referred to a story about Grant Hackett, the Australian 1500 meter Olympic champion. The 'talk met with rapturous applause' (PN05, personal communication, 27th September, 2013, p.65), evidencing how swimmer commitment is valued, not only by him, but also by his peer coaches.

> Training starts at 5.30 am... Hacky wasn't there... this was a guy who never, ever, ever missed practice... his fire alarm has gone off... he gets ready...[and walks] to the lift and presses the button... what happens? – Nothing; the power is out... that's when you've got to make the first decision about how committed you are... you are 49 stories up... what does Grant do? He puts his backpack on and runs down 49 flights of stairs... drives [his car] up to the roller-door... press the button and what happens? – Nothing; the power is out. And that's when you've got to make the second decision about how committed you are. And so... he ties up his shoelaces and puts his backpack on and [runs the] two and a half miles to the pool (Finck, personal communication, 27th September, 2013, p.23).

Athlete subordination of self to an HPSC's programme also emerged as an important factor regarding contextual fit. A similar common theme extended to the athletes' lifestyle outside the training context. British HPSC Jon Rudd, responding to questions at the 2012 BSCA Conference, commented on Ruta Meilutyte, gold medallist in 100 metres Breaststroke at the 2012 London Olympics:

> She lives the lifestyle 24/7. The lifestyle that we all ask our athletes to do but we know they do it 85%, 90%, 95% at best. Here's a girl who really does it 100%, her diet, her sleep pattern, her social life, absolutely everything is driven by the sport. And that isn't something I think that we've instilled. I think we've always tried to get athletes to do that and to educate them as to what that might be and sometimes we

drive them a little, as we all do, and lead them by the nose. That isn't that necessary here (Rudd, personal communication, 21st September, 2012, p.1).

A commitment to the training programme and a wholesome lifestyle are two of the characteristics that were lauded by HPSCs. The value of these characteristics is only surpassed by the athletes' work ethic and willingness to tolerate pain in the pursuit of extreme fitness. All of the coaches gave examples of athletes who worked at the high intensities needed for world-class performance.

A former British HPSC Clive Rushton, at the 2013 BSCA Conference, told how he once made one of his athletes repeat a set of swims because the athlete in question had fallen below this HPSC's expected standards of performance stating:

> I made one of my swimmers repeat a set of 20 x 200 metres of butterfly because he broke stroke in the first 25 of the first 200 [metres]... Some years later, immediately after qualifying for his first Olympic team, he mentioned the incident ... "Do you remember ...?" "Oh, yes," I replied, "I thought you might have punched me." "Nah," he said (long pause)... "That was the best thing you ever did for me. I've never broken stroke on a fly set since that day" (Rushton, personal communication, 27th September, 2013, p.4).

Even though they had not explicitly stated their values and beliefs, interviewees' comments were revealing in this respect. Without exception they all referred to their direct followers as 'my athletes' or 'my swimmers'. They evidently believe that only conformance to high standards, hard work and the swimmer's commitment to an HPSC's programme would bring success.

Responding to questions at the 2013 BSCA Conference, American HPSC Bud McAllister discussed athlete mind sets. It seems that above all HPSCs place a high priority on attitude.

> Absolutely, I would say attitude is probably the most important thing that separates them from the other swimmers; even the ones that have as much talent. I mean they just have a different mindset in the way they approach things and usually they're not afraid to fail. If they fail you explain it to them and they're fine with it (McAllister, personal communication, 27th September, 2013, p.5).

An element of the HPSCs' philosophy that emerged from the research is that some preferred the art of coaching to the science, where art relates to skills and science to aspects of fitness. Responding to questions at the 2015 BSCA Conference, French HPSC Romain Barnier explained:

> So it's hard because you're never going to fit everybody and you've got to find a way to be very artistic for some swimmers and very scientific for others. I know that some

swimmers really get better when you get rid of talking about physiology to them and when you talk to them about skills and crafting those skills (Barnier, personal communication, 25th September, 2015, p.6).

Some HPSCs focus more on swimming technique and the 'soft skills' concerning relationships, whilst others focus more on the training methods. In terms of training methods, different philosophies emerged.

I must admit I am not really a maths-type person. I don't really understand the science side of coaching. I have a broad understanding of lactate testing and heart rate but to be perfectly honest I just get the swimmers super fit through bloody hard work (laughs)... I say to my swimmers we just have to be the fittest in the world (Coach #31, personal communication, 11th June, 2013, p.9).

Modern approaches are based more on race-specific approaches that merge the art with the science. 'The days of training in the grey zone are over, it's all about technique now and quality training' (Coach #6, personal communication, 6th November, 2014, p.11). The term 'garbage yardage' was used by a number of the more experienced coaches, but it seems that philosophies vary.

At the 2016 BSCA Conference one of the attendees asked the panel: "How is it that all of the speakers use different training systems and yet are all successful?" British HPSC Mark Perry answered:

I'm not entirely sure I believe in any of those systems and at the same time I believe in all of them which probably doesn't make any sense at all... And I try and tell my coaches all the time that your job is to be aware about everything. So understand every system but don't try to become one of those people who only believe in one because I'm not sure that anyone yet in swimming knows everything about our sport (Perry, personal communication, 23rd September, 2016, p.11).

Some HPSCs favour distance programmes with a high emphasis on fitness whilst others favour sprint based programmes with an emphasis on technique. It appears, however, that early experiences and inherited traits are dominant.

Coaching Traits

It emerged from the interviews that a trait all HPSCs share is that they are highly competitive. Coach #2 described what he believed to be the source of his competitive drive stating:

Whether it's me being competitive or naturally driven – no, not naturally driven because I'm not sure I believe in that… there's me and I have two brothers so it

was a naturally competitive household. My dad was pretty competitive as well
(Coach #2, personal communication, 4th November, 2014, p.5).

Coach #6 gave insights into his own sources of competitive drive which he believes was inherited from family values saying:

Yes, I always wanted to win. I'm an only child but I wasn't spoilt. I've always had respect for and I've always shaken coaches' hands at Arena or Speedo – win, lose, or draw, whatever. I like to be a good sportsman in a way so even if we don't perform and have had a bit of a nightmare, OK, I'll shake your hand and say well done, congratulations. But I do like to succeed (Coach #6, personal communication, 6th November, 2014, p.17).

Coach #3 described what he believed to be the source of his tough, no nonsense approach to coaching, and in doing so revealed the source of his emotional intelligence.

And the honest truth is I think I got that off my mum because my mum was really tough on me as a kid. Because my dad left home when I was very young so we were a single parent family and she was tough on us. And it's that before she punished us she would always tell us that she loved us. She always said she was doing this because she loves us (Coach #3, personal communication, 4th February, 2016, p.23).

Parental influence featured highly in responses to questions regarding personality and traits. A feature of the majority of HPSCs interviewed was the level of their emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1996) - that is, their awareness of their own and others' emotions and to manage situations accordingly.

It seems that HPSCs most suited to the context in which they find their self identity, are highly competitive, ruthless on standards, and high on emotional intelligence. Referring to another common factor - namely work ethic, Coach #6 commented:

Yes, definitely in terms of just wanting to be better all the time. Trying to get myself the best I could be. Our mum was pretty much like that as well. She had three kids and a full-time career as well. So, from that side of things, my early role models in terms of work ethic were my parents (Coach #6, personal communication, 6th November, 2014, p. 5).

On reflection, my own parents were a very hard-working and competitive couple. I was always challenged to do better and I had a high degree of emotional support in the family, which meant that the comments made by the majority of HPSCs resonated with my own experiences as a child.

This cultural inheritance gained through experiential learning featured highly in the interviews. So too did social capital, which was indicated by interviewees' name-dropping of high profile coaches. Evaluation of self through comparison with other HPSCs at competition revealed two components of their self identity – namely, identity as derived from either the internal core coaching context or the external competition arena.

Other qualities and traits revealed by the HPSCs also emerged from the interviews. First, I was surprised by how honest HPSCs were throughout the interviews. Promised anonymity, some of their revelations were deeply personal. The high-stress situations in which they operate had resulted in marriage or partnership breakdowns, alcoholism, drug abuse, depression and in a few cases physical violence. Some interviewees were also honest about the perceived level of value that they added to their swimmers and clubs.

Coach #1 gave an example of this regarding the level that HPSCs contribute to athlete performance.

> I get concerned at times that we blow our own trumpet. So, I am a world-class coach; reason? I've got a world-class athlete, in fairness. And there are things that I do with [named athlete] that I do with other female breaststrokers that ain't going to make them break the world record. So, it isn't just the coaching. It's the raw material, the raw talent, the athleticism of that individual, the psyche, all of those things and then you add your bit and that's what takes them to where they are. But we've got to stop, as a profession, saying the reason that kid is good is because of me. Because [we are] very much part of the reason, not *the* reason (Coach #1, personal communication, 3rd July, 2015, p.13).

A number of the HPSCs were also very honest about their ruthlessness in creating a context suited to their own needs. Coach #31 relayed a conversation he had at a club Annual General Meeting stating:

> I said: "This is the set up I want us to adopt. Can you all read it now and give me some feedback so I can reflect on it." And one of the secretaries said: "Yeah, I don't like this it's far too elitist." And I just went: "Right, has anybody relevant got anything to say?" And so she just packed her stuff and said: "I resign" and walked out. I said: "Good – is anybody else going to resign?" And I was that ruthless (Coach #31, personal communication, 11th June, 2013, p.8).

Coach #27 described how he had also taken over control of his club, by personally selecting members for their executive agency that would support him and his assistant coach. This, he said, was so that he could create a high-performance club.

Anybody that was coming on the Committee did not come on unless it was either me or [named assistant] that was saying: "Yep, I like those people. We think they're coming on for the right reasons." I was then just extremely blunt with them. I spoke to the committee and said: "If you're not here for the right reasons then go; I tell you what to do in this committee. I'm the Head Coach of this swimming club. If you don't like it please leave." That was how I took it over (Coach #27, personal communication, 4th October, 2015, p.18).

In these contexts, the underlying, unwritten and dominating view of HPSCs is that high-performance overrules participation. Although in potential conflict with British sporting institutions' espoused values on athlete inclusivity the ruthless nature of the longer-term professional HPSCs appears to form the bedrock of their success. They are ruthless on standards which is often a good thing.

One of the traits that emerged related to awareness and foresight. The HPSCs' ability to look to the future and to see potential was apparent in a number of interviews.

I could see that this could make a great performance club. It was a sleeping giant. I don't know why others couldn't see it too. It is a large town with two pools, plenty of water time and a waiting list for swimming lessons. I looked at the club swimmers and could see straight away that there were some good ones (Coach #15, personal communication, 27th June, 2015, p.5).

Coach #15 said that it surprised her that the existing coaches did not seem to realise what they could do with the club. An aspect of her perspective was revealed when she commented that 'there were some good ones'. This kind of high level of awareness, as shared by HPSCs, became more evident as the research progressed.

I could see at least three swimmers in there that were outstanding. None of the coaches seemed to be taking any interest in them. There was a young girl doing backstroke and she had such a feel for the water. You could see the acceleration during the pull. I thought to myself I would like to coach that (Coach #25, personal communication, 25th October, 2014, p.7).

In summary, the cohort of interviewees had certain main traits in common. They were all: extremely competitive, highly driven, ruthless on standards, high on emotional intelligence, extremely honest, and had a highly developed awareness of contextual factors they have foresight.

Social Identity

Relational identity encompasses notions of identity related to role, as defined by the HPSC in their interpersonal space (Chen, Boucher and Tapias, 2006). On this basis, it can be argued that the individual cannot define roles alone but requires an involvement in social groups (Swann, 2005). Collective identity, then, relates to how the HPSC identifies with social groups while in their operational role. The social groups that have an impact on the HPSC are defined by each of the five specified fields detailed in Chapter 4. Each field presents a different social grouping and hence differing roles for the coach.

> Social identity theory describes processes of social categorisation into groups followed by social comparison between these groups by people who define and identify themselves as members of one of these groups' (Schwartz, Luyckx and Vignoles, 2012, p.203).

According to Jenkins 'People must have something intersubjectively significant in common – no matter how vague, apparently unimportant or apparently illusory – before we can talk about membership of a collectivity' (Jenkins, 2008, p.102). According to Tajfel and Turner (1986), individuals derive value from belonging to a particular group, and are motivated towards differentiating the group from others in order to enjoy positive feelings of belonging when they seek identity validation.

Creating Context

During the research, it became evident that, in order to meet their personal needs for recognition through credibility in the role, some HPSCs were forced into creating their own high-performance context. The need to gain access to elite athletes was revealed in numerous cases in the words 'I wanted', as related to the HPSCs' intense desire to achieve at a higher level. The research also revealed a political dimension to the HPSCs' role. It seemed that creating a high-performance context often required that an HPSC had full control of the primary core coaching context.

> I used a standard test set and they (the athletes) found it very difficult to achieve... and I remember people flying out of the pool everywhere and after about five [repeat swims off a set time] they couldn't do it. They were nowhere near where I thought they would be or where I wanted them to be (Coach #3, personal communication, 4th February, 2016, p.4).

Coach #3 described the impact he made on the membership, revealing: his contextual awareness regarding elite standards, his own values as related to work ethic, and the degree of his competitive drive as evidenced by the financial sacrifice made concerning his monthly salary.

Within the first year we had gone from 120 members to 60 because it was that much of a culture change from where they were to where I wanted to take the programme. A lot of people left because I was uncompromising. We were in a position where we couldn't afford to do it so I had to say, well, actually I'll do it for nothing. Keep that £500, I'd rather have the pool time and we'll drive the programme forward (ibid. p.5).

The unwritten, but seemingly accepted, psychological contract had changed from an existing organisational culture built around participation to one that met HPSCs' needs for achievement. This was enabled by members of committees allowing the HPSC to control the core training context. Members of the committee, however, can also come into conflict with and even reject an HPSC due to differences in philosophy.

Coach #1 recalled how one committee forced him out of the club due to, in his own eyes, his 'over ambitious style' (Coach #1, personal communication, 3rd July, 2015, p.3). The intensity of his coaching style and his behaviour with some club-members led to him being ejected. Nevertheless, he felt that he had left a legacy and it is evident that he impressed at least some of the athletes and internal stakeholders. He commented on the impact he had on those athletes:

I remember some of the swimmers' comments. I was hearing like: "It's nearly 2k (2000 metres) more than we've ever done in a session"... those kinds of things, which as a coach at that time were like... that's a nice comment... "It's the hardest thing we've ever done"... and I took that as a plus (ibid, p.3).

He noted the personal characteristics that he felt some committee members found difficult. It was, however, his self-confidence and his background as a former athlete that gained alliances with the more competitive members of the club.

I was 19 years of age and I called a spade a spade...I was seen as conceited; I was seen as arrogant; I was seen as brash and I probably was some of those things a lot of the time. But at the same time I was doing it in the best interests of this thing that I was trying to make better (Coach #1, personal communication, 3rd July, 2015, p.3).

The comment 'this thing that I was trying to make better' again revealed the drive to create a context that matched his achievement needs. A change of some key committee members resulted in him being recalled.

At one point I was sacked for 6 months and the committee were thrown out and a new committee came back and I was brought back in but I had to all but re-build it at that point… a lot of swimmers had left because I had gone and it was a mess' (ibid, p.4).

His re-appointment gave Coach #1 the authority to re-shape the context into one that matched his personal philosophy and ambition; and a contextual match that allowed him eventually to create a very successful performance club.

In unguarded moments when HPSCs were telling their stories, sometimes they let their true feelings emerge.

> We had about 70 swimmers and they were all rubbish. And there was no structure to it. The parents had taken over (pause)... and the committee had no power, and I remember [named HPSC] saying to me once I'd taken over, he said: "You've got to do the hatchet work early." I will always remember that advice (Coach #31, personal communication, 11th June, 2013, p.7).

'Rubbish' was not an uncommon term used in my poolside discussions with HPSCs. This was the term they used to describe athletes who, in their eyes, have little or no potential for making the higher levels of competition. The act of creating a performance club with selected followers was a common theme among the cohort of interviewees operating in private clubs.

> I had created [named club]... It was very satisfying because you just thought, yes, I've done this. And a perfect example of that would be what I did when I took it over. I gradually got rid of those committee members and... I reorganized the squad system... The wasters went... because they couldn't train properly (Coach #8, personal communication, 26th February, 2015, p2).

In this case, the term 'rubbish' was replaced with 'wasters', but the sentiment reflects the extent to which HPSCs are driven to succeed and their willingness to eject athletes and administrators who do not have the attributes for elite performance or share their philosophy. A consequence of creating a performance-based club was that it attracted other athletes.

> I was doing it in the best interests of this thing that I was trying to make better. Well eventually, it felt that I'd turned it from something I'd inherited to something I'd created. It very much changed... and more and more swimmers from [named club] left and came to my swimming club (Coach #1, personal communication, 3rd July, 2015, p.1).

I gained the impression that the terms 'rubbish', 'wasters', and 'also-rans' were not intended as derogatory comments about the athletes as human beings, but as general descriptors of their abilities as athletes. Yet, although these seemed to be flippant throw-away comments without malice, they reveal that HPSCs' selection criteria for swimmers for their direct coaching groups are based primarily on their potential for elite level competition.

In response to the question of how competitive they were on a scale of one to a hundred, all of the HPSCs quoted figures in the high nineties. As an outcome of an intense desire for performance at an international level, this extreme competitiveness appeared to manifest itself as ruthlessness.

In some cases, however, a high-performance context is already in place, which may mask an HPSC's underlying ruthless nature. In British Swimming, for example, high-performance athlete recruitments are sanctioned by the Head Coach in collaboration with the National Performance Director. These actors operate within the Executive Agency and have a higher authority over the core coaching context. Similar arrangements exist in some very large swimming clubs in which the HPSC has limited authority.

Whilst the HPSCs being interviewed were not explicit about their need for recognition, they were open in their description of their inner drives for success. Coach #5, from a large city council, explained his ambition when asked what he wanted to achieve. He emphasised athletes coming through his programme, ones that his club produced, and not ones that entered when already successful.

> Well, you know – I want us to win an Olympic medal – gold, silver, or bronze. I want to put people on international teams, junior and senior. And I want to do it regularly. I want to do that with people that have come through the programme more than people that come into the programme (Coach #5, personal communication, 15th July, 2015, p.5).

As seen in the case of Coach #5, the need to create a status-enhancing context extended beyond coaching individual athletes to establishing a process, or value chain (Porter, 1985) which would produce the future potential athletes he needed in the core coaching context. He explained the creation of a successful club:

> Because when we have people getting on international teams who have come through the system, it shows the system works – what we're doing is correct. The journey we're giving them to go on is on the right path... and I just thought I could make a difference in terms on how we delivered. I like the thrill of working with a group of coaches and being in charge of them, not in dictatorial terms but just in charge of providing the programme [for athletes] to go on the journey (Coach #5, personal communication, 15th July, 2015, p.5).

The need for personal validation is revealed in this coach's concern for showing that 'the system works' and, as he says, 'what we're doing is correct' and 'on the right path.' Such insecurities, reflected in the need for validation and respect, therefore, extend beyond the athletes, to a much wider set of people. Coach #6 articulated his feelings following the

construction of a successful programme which culminated in him being selected for international duty.

> I like this pat on the back, so I suppose it's in a selfish way as well. And following on those few years I was involved in a lot of camps, so I think I was regarded as a good up-and-coming coach. So I think I was all of a sudden being respected as a coach, by other coaches. Swimmers from other teams recognised me (Coach #6, personal communication, 6th November, 2014, p.6).

The word 'respect' featured in a large number of interviews. An incident experienced by Coach #16 indicates the importance HPSCs place on being respected by athletes. He reflected on a case where an athlete was starting a trial at his club:

> He came for a trial and he was swimming up and down and just threw his drink bottle at me and said: "Fill that up." You should have seen the response of the others swimmers in the squad. And one of my swimmers literally grabbed hold of him and said: "Don't you ever fucking say that to our coach again." I liked him doing that (Coach #16, personal communication, 20th April, 2015, p.12).

When the coach told his story, his pace and tone of voice revealed how extremely important it is to him that he is respected by his athletes; it was evident that he took pride in the way that one of his senior international athletes had dealt with the visiting trialist. A high level of respect seemed to be important for feelings of self-efficacy.

Self-Efficacy in Context

An HPSC can feel at home in their internal organisational context and yet on occasion feel like a 'fish out of water'. This is especially so in the early days of an HPSC's development whilst operating in the external competition arena. Coach #6 explained his first experience of being invited onto the GB team.

> Then all of a sudden I had this top on with England on it and I thought wow! This is what I have always wanted to do. I am representing my country, so I was proud as anything. But I didn't feel I was good enough. So I suppose my first ever experience, when I thought it was going to be the best moment of my life, probably wasn't (Coach #6, personal communication, 6th November, 2014, p.10).

This resonated with my own early experience as an age-group coach on my first attendance at a national competition. With only a small number of swimmers, the context seemed very intimidating, I felt like an imposter (Clance and Imes, 1978) in the coaching role. All of my peer coaches seemed to know the rituals and routines at the event and seemed confident and at home in their role. Coach #1 explained a similar experience.

I remember standing on the end of the pool with [named HPSC]. He was there with the bloody great team and I'm there with my two or three kids... I was conscious that I had only two or three and that they were also-rans and I didn't like that... I felt like I was looked down upon. I probably wasn't but I felt like I was being looked down upon (Coach #1, personal communication, 3rd July, 2015, p. 6).

It was evident in the case of Coach #1 that he was conscious of the small number of athletes in his team, which reflected a certain level of achievement. This was, in his perception, affecting his status in the eyes of his peer HPSCs. He indicated in the interview that, as a leading figure in the sport, he now ensures that he speaks to young novice coaches to help alleviate their feelings of alienation and insecurity.

It seems that these feelings of being an outsider are linked to self-awareness and self-confidence in unfamiliar situations. However, not all HPSCs had issues of confidence at competition, as Coach #3 recalled:

It's interesting because, with people I don't really know, I've got quite a bad habit of not giving a shit what they think. And so I never feel pressure to impress other people. So, when I went to the first Nationals, I wasn't intimidated by the people that were there. I guess I was quite excited and intimidated by [the thoughts] "am I good enough to do the job for the swimmers? Have I prepared them properly?" (Coach #3, personal communication, 4th February, 2016, p.18).

It is as if, in the early periods of coaching, the HPSC is learning to like the self rather than find the self. It appears that they are testing themselves within a unique context of elite performers and their coaches, and gaining an increasing awareness of standards which they then aspire to achieve.

All of the HPSCs interviewed were conscious of how they felt their social identity was affected by the number of their athletes qualifying for national and international competition. Together with their athletes' performances, the size of an HPSC's squad attending a competition provides a visible sign of their ability to produce world-class athletes – that is those that are sufficiently prepared to win medals. Coach #5 described his feelings of wanting to belong to a successful team.

You, kind of, don't understand when you're inside the bubble, but when you're outside the bubble you're like God! – Even as a swimmer, the likes of [named swimmer #5a] coming through, [named swimmer #5b] and all those guys. So I decided that I was going to go for [club #5a] and that's how I got to [club #5a] really. When you're not in the [club #5a]'s bubble, how I felt about [club #5a] was like, they've got amazing

swimmers and I wish I was part of that (Coach #5, personal communication, 15th July, 2015, p.6).

This response was revealing in a number of ways. First, it highlights the drive that this HPSC had for wanting to coach swimmers competing at the highest level. Second, it shows a need to belong to a club or squad that has a strong social identity through athlete performance. The use of the term 'bubble' defined a boundary around the club and this HPSC's social identity.

If the selected club or group underperform, however, HPSCs seemed driven to move to one with a greater status – that is, unless they could build a club that matched their ambition. This point conflicts to a degree with Tajfel and Turner's (1986) suggestion that being a member of a group means you tend to favour that selected group.

Coach #7 discussed how the club she belonged to had limited ambition, which was out of step with her desire to produce world-class athletes. This story became a common theme among coaches who had elected to build a performance club.

> And then I made the decision that I needed just to move on to somewhere that had ambitions similar to mine. And true ambitions and obviously the fact that [named swimmer] was there, and the history of [named swimming club] displayed that they actually truly understood what was required to produce an elite international athlete (Coach #7, personal communication, 4th September, 2015, p.4).

It appears that to build their personal social identity (a self in context), these HPSCs needed to develop a club with a social identity that matched their own ambitions. There was a need to use a form of tempered radicalism (Meyerson, 2003) to win the hearts and minds of the stakeholders of the club they entered. Speaking at the 2013 BSCA Conference, British HPSC Melanie Marshall highlighted the way she worked to match the club to her values and beliefs.

> Another reason in terms of why I wanted to create a performance environment within a club was, is, my values... For me, I coach and do whatever I do and I work as hard as I can work at it to get the most out of it. I never ever give up on anything ... And the key things for me were the environment and the culture. For us to achieve what we wanted to achieve was that big dream of taking kids from all the way from grass roots all the way to the big stage (Marshall, personal communication, 27th September, 2013, p.2).

In her discourse, Marshall showed her personal drive and ambition together with the desire to take key stakeholders with her in the process. The interplay of the words 'I' and 'we' were revealing: 'what we wanted to achieve' changed into 'I wanted to establish a culture of excellence that ran through everything we did' (ibid, p.3). In these cases, the social

identities of both the HPSC and that of the club are reliant on the HPSC producing world-class athletes.

Coach #8 explained how he saw his club as the embodiment of himself, believing that the club's existing name could be replaced by his own. This perspective was reiterated by his club chairman, who had joined the club because of the coach's high profile social identity.

> Oh yes. I think to be a coach you've got to rule it. You've got to be the club. And when I was talking to [the club's chairman] about it, he said: "You are the club. That's it; this swimming club is [Coach #8] and the only reason I wanted to come and work with you was because I know what you've done" (Coach #8, personal communication, 26th February, 2015, p.17).

The social identity of a club appears, then, to be one and the same as the HPSCs themselves, and both are enhanced by performance. An underlying theme throughout the interviews was one of legacy; HPSCs seem to be willing to leave a club if they foresee that their name might be tarnished by underperformance. Emphasising this point, Coach #8 explained:

> I'm conscious of my status and how people see me... Because you know... you're always remembered for what you did yesterday and not what you did last week. So people will soon forget that you coached [named athlete #8a]; [named athlete #8b]; [named athlete #8c]; and [named athlete #8d]; all to be National gold medallists. They'll forget that tomorrow. As soon as the club fails then you'll be the person who ruined [named club]... But if it comes to it I'd rather walk away and just say I'll leave it while I'm on a high, rather than leave it when it's on a low (ibid, p17).

In many cases, the language used by the HPSCs to describe their athletes had connotations with manufacturing and accounting, as if the athletes were a resource. They commented on the number of athletes they had produced and on their performances.

> The first question I usually get asked when I arrive on poolside is – how many athletes have you got here? Usually followed, at the end of the competition, by – how did your athletes get on? I feel, at times, that they are looking for an opportunity to brag about their success rather than being interested in how my athletes got on (Coach #20, personal communication, 4th November, 2015, p.23).

This rivalry and interaction among the community of coaches is a major source of HPSCs' socially constructed identity. For the HPSC, the more athletes that gain qualification to competition and the more medals they win, the greater their status in the coaching hierarchy. What did become evident during the interviews was that HPSCs possessed a strong contextual awareness.

Contextual Awareness

Without exception, all of the HPSCs had an intense desire for technical sport-related knowledge and self-knowledge. It was apparent that they immersed themselves into the role to the extent that this occupation became a pre-occupation. Each interviewee had stories to tell of how their awareness of context at macro and micro-foundational levels had rapidly expanded on entering the role. This process appeared to begin by watching other coaches.

> 'I watched Jacco Verhaeren, the Australian National Performance Director, once doing some sculling drills and I thought – I can use that idea and add it to my underwater practices. It really did help my athletes gain feel for the catch in the stroke. Rather than just kicking for front crawl I get them [the athletes] to do a form of doggy paddle with a front-end scull. I haven't seen anyone else doing that' (Coach #31, personal communication, 11th June, 2013, p.23).

Coach #22 recalled watching a high profile senior coach at [elite training venue]. He talked of watching him intently and on a regular basis while his son trained in an elite group of senior national swimmers.

> I couldn't take my eyes off him. I could hear him giving feedback to the swimmers on their target times. He would show them the stop watch and add comments like: "That is good, let's have some more of that." He would also tell them they looked like other internationals that were well known. I think he did that to make them feel good. He walked along the poolside with such an air of confidence and his voice was so strong. I don't think any of the swimmers would argue with him. I even copied the clothes he was wearing and bought the same type of stopwatch (Coach #22, personal communication, 10th June, 2015, p.14).

It seems that an HPSC's first experiences at major competition increases their awareness of self in context. Seeing other successful peer coaches interacting with each other and with their athletes can be both intimidating and, at the same time, illuminating.

> I can remember the first time I went to Nationals... I felt totally uncomfortable... because I only had two swimmers with me... and there's all these coaches who know each other and they're all having a laugh and I'm standing there... like 'Billy no-mates.' I don't know anybody. I was totally uncomfortable from the start and I was having to go round and ask everybody questions about what's this, what's that and what's the other because I quite honestly didn't understand it (Coach #8, personal communication, 26th February, 2015, p.10).

Coach #4 revealed how he had copied the style and manner of his head coach. The poolside positioning, body posture and the way he spoke to the athletes in the core context at training had all impressed him and raised his awareness regarding the role of an HPSC.

> I got a series of National qualifiers and of course when I took [named assistant coach]'s group they were all good. There was [named athlete] in there and a great group of kids and in effect that's when I copied [named HPSC] in his manner, his sessions, his style because I thought I had to be like him because he was good (Coach #4, personal communication, 13th November, 2014, p.10).

HPSCs talked of spending most of their time in the early part of their coaching careers in the core coaching context, when their attention was occupied at the micro-foundational level with swimming skills and training methods. Visiting a first, major competition changes their perception of the sport.

> 'My first visit to major competition was a real eye opener. I had never seen so many top-class athletes. What struck me more than anything was the standard of competition. I must admit I was intimidated but at the same time sort of excited' (Coach #20, personal communication, 4th November, 2015, p.5).

A telling comment from one HPSC summarised how their contextual awareness expanded over time. In reflective mode, Coach #31 related:

> I am not sure if I had known what being a Head Coach was going to be like, I am not sure I would have taken it on. I enjoy coaching the swimmers and going to competition with them but all the other stuff I had never considered. I had no idea what it would be like working with committees and being in charge of assistant coaches. It's like a business – you have to run it like you would run a company. New coaches coming in have no idea what it's like dealing with bloody parents either (Coach #31, personal communication, 11th June, 2013, p.17).

He talked of the issues in dealing with parents of athletes in the Athlete Agency as one of the most difficult areas to deal with. 'Don't get me wrong, we need the parents. They are a major resource, but they can be a pain in the arse' (ibid). He also talked of being a jack of all trades.

> You don't have to be an expert in finance but the club can't run without money coming in. You also need to get the right people on the committee. If you don't it will come back and bite you. I also have to be careful that I keep as many swimmers as I can to bring in the money. No money - no club. It's as simple as that (ibid).

Dealing with the Executive Agency appeared as a source of conflict in the majority of interviews. HPSCs talked of the continual churn of actors in the agency and the need to be aware at all times what is going on. 'You have to keep a close eye on them' (Coach #12, personal communication, 27th August, 2014, p.6).

Another aspect of contextual awareness that emerged related to the micro-foundational level of performance data. What became apparent was the micro-level detail of world-class performances and attention to detail.

> These days you have to know what everyone in the world is doing in terms of performance. Their start time to 5 metres, their 15 metre time, and every 5 metres of the race you have to analyse. You have to know what the best in the world are doing and find ways to beat them – high speed video analysis is essential (Coach #13c, personal communication, 1st January, 2014, p.9).

It seems necessary to know where to find the world's best experts in their field in order to gain a competitive advantage. As Coach #13c related, 'I only work with world-class experts; I need to find ways to win' (ibid). Awareness of context from the macro-level of each contextual field down to the detailed analysis of skill at a micro-foundational level are, it seems, key differentiators for the effectiveness of the HPSC. It appears that contextual awareness forms a large part of their learning.

Learning

It is a commonly held belief in coach-education circles that an HPSC can only improve if they have self-awareness. It is only through knowledge of self that HPSCs can identify any gaps in their competence. Nietzsche discussed such a notion when he said:

> We are unknown, we knowers, and ourselves to ourselves: this has its own good reason. We have never searched for ourselves - how should it then come to pass, that we should ever find ourselves? Rightly has it been said: "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Our treasure is there, where the hives of our knowledge stand (Nietzsche, 2003, p.1).

Emerging out of the interviews were varying levels of HPSCs' self-awareness, of how they perceived their own identity in a coaching context. In some cases, HPSCs had some difficulty in expressing their rationale or motivations for choosing to embark on a coaching career.

The cognitive act of presencing (Scharmer, 2009), of bringing the future into the present, pervaded the interviews. HPSCs sensed future performance through their coaching activities, and contextual awareness was reflected in a number of their responses. The aphorism of Nietzsche – 'our treasure is there, where the hives of our knowledge stand'

(Nietzsche, 2003, p.1) encapsulates the importance of gaining essential knowledge from experts in the field.

Speaking at the 2012 BSCA Conference, British HPSC Terry Dennison, former coach to Olympic champion Adrian Moorhouse, explained his learning journey, which typified the responses from a number of the interviewees:

> I went to spend a week with Dave Haller... in Cardiff, first time around to see what he was doing. I went to Beckenham to see Hammy Smith for a week. I went to Coventry to see Hammy Bland for a week. And that was my first three years of coaching. I spent time with each of them. Just to see what the best were doing. When I thought I knew what was happening in Britain I then travelled to America (Dennison, personal communication, 21st September, 2012, p.2).

Below, Coach #3 recounted a similar pathway in regards to his intensity of learning. The thirst for not only technical training-related information, but also contextual factors connected to socialising with other highly successful HPSCs, plays a major part in the formulation of their cultural, social, economic, and symbolic capital.

> It was just an absolute mind expansion for me... I ordered every book I could order on swimming... First was Doc Counsilman's book – the big one... I just used to go and photocopy ten pages every night and make notes on them... And I went to Texas to spend some time with Eddie Reese... And I watched the way he coached. It's really interesting because he's never written a session in his life, didn't keep log books, didn't do test sets, didn't monitor heart rates, didn't do any of that. He coached the artistic way (Coach #3, personal communication, 4th February, 2016, p.13).

Learning-agility appears to play a much greater role in an HPSC's formulation of self identity than I had anticipated. Coach #15 talked of having to learn very quickly when taking on the role.

> It's like being a parent in many ways. There is no real training available for being an HPSC it's something you [learn as you] go along. You have to learn very quickly to survive in this job. Most of my learning has come from visiting other coaches and seeing how they do it. They all seem willing to share knowledge (Coach #15, personal communication, 27th June, 2015, p.13).

It seems that the first significant learning experience HPSCs have is becoming (self) aware of knowledge gaps. A number of HPSCs talked of the mentors that opened their eyes. British Swimming and UK Sport provide funded leadership development programmes that involve the allocation of mentors. These programmes, however, are not available to all and have a limited number of spaces.

Selection of coaches for these programmes is primarily based on athlete performance. Coaches that demonstrate an ability to produce athletes who perform well at the highest levels are therefore the ones most likely to be selected. The majority of coaches in the UK develop themselves through the standard coach education programmes, informal networking with other coaches and sports scientists.

British HPSC Jon Rudd, responding to questions at the 2013 BSCA Conference, spoke not only about Bill Sweetenham the former GB NPD, but also of experts outside of swimming. Learning can come from a range of people, including folk heroes.

> You know, love him or hate him, Sweetenham did a massive amount of things for us and he did a lot of things for me in my programme. Dragged me from being a coach who thought he knew what he was doing to a recognition that I really didn't and I needed to learn a lot and that was a big eye-opener for me. I've also got a lot of people who have inspired me from other sports – Clive Woodward, Brian Clough (Rudd, personal communication, 27th September, 2013, p.10).

Visiting other programmes featured very highly in the interviews. It seems working alongside other HPSCs with your own athletes can be a powerful learning experience. Coach #9 discussed how she started her learning journey:

> My first choice of learning was from other coaches at major competition. I would expand this to include visits to other clubs with different programmes. I have gone away with one or two of my swimmers to visit other coaches and their programmes... One of the other main resources that I use is the internet and a few blogs that I read on a regular basis and I find very helpful for stimulating ideas and thought processes (Coach #9, personal communication, 21st July, 2015, p.12).

A relatively new source of learning has emerged with the use of technology. References to YouTube, the Internet, and electronically held performance data occurred in most of the interviews.

> My swimmers often come to me with YouTube clips. They show me what they have found and we discuss it. You can learn so much from your athletes. They are a great source for learning. I am using them more and more (Coach #31, personal communication, 11th June, 2013, p.15).

Responding to questions at the 2014 BSCA Conference, British HPSC James Gibson revealed his early learning experience as a new coach to elite athletes. He referred to Australian Swimming's NPD and HPSC Jacco Verhaeren and leading international sport scientist Jan Olbrecht stating:

Leading into 2012 I started to work with Jacco Verhaeren and was gifted an opportunity to learn from the best. I know that some of you were here a couple of years ago when Jacco spoke, his methods are out there and his work with Jan Olbrecht is very focused on low yardage and high skill work. So I was very fortunate to work with some of the best people in the world (Gibson, personal communication, 26th September, 2014, p.3).

Given the opportunity and finances, the most successful HPSCs tend to seek out learning from some of the world leading experts. Coach #28 provided an excellent summary of her sources of learning.

I have my Internet search routine and that ramps up in the off-season. It has become so easy to find so much online now. It's lovely. This has to be number one for me. Second best is showing up on a colleague's pool deck... Third is publications and books. I love adding to my library... Fourth is conferences and clinics. When I go, I end up feeling like I have been stuffed full of all sorts of wonderful ideas until my brain is talking a different language than my mouth (Coach #28, personal communication, 5th May, 2014, p.1).

The final comment resonated with my own experiences in new learning. It seems that cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957) plays a significant role in the learning process and holds importance in the formulation of habitus and the Coaching-Eye.

The Coaching-Eye

According to Bourdieu (1977), the habitus is a mechanism for translating passivity into activity. It is through an HPSC's habitus that they act out their role in the context in which they operate. A sense of purpose and a sense of being recognised in terms of their relational and collective identities are translated by the habitus into role behaviours. The more efficient the HPSC feels in the context is reflected in their levels of confidence and resulting athlete performances.

A common theme emerged in the interviews regarding talent-spotting. It seems as though all of the HPSCs were adept at seeing what other coaches are unable to see. British HPSC Melanie Marshall, speaking at the 2013 BSCA Conference, revealed the time she found a young talented athlete named Adam Peaty when a local coach visited her club with their swimmer stating:

He happened to bring to Derby one day a little lad called Adam Peaty and when I first saw Adam he was 14 at the time and he was in lane 3 with 10-year-old girls. His front crawl looked as if he was going to kill himself in two minutes it was that awful... And I thought: oh God he's going to be one of these swimmers that pay the bills and that clog up the lanes... And then I saw him do breaststroke and I saw him do breaststroke fast, and I thought bloody hell that's a bit different. When I saw this I thought this kid has

got something, fast hands, fast feet, incredibly raw, raw with his talent. So, what I had to do was to get him across to us on a full-time basis (Marshall, personal communication, 27th September, 2013, p.11).

Marshall's discussion is revealing in a number of ways. First, the term -'get him across to us' shows her desire to recruit a follower with talent. Second, the reference to the athlete as: 'one of those swimmers that pay the bills' indicates that some athletes are retained mainly to secure club finances. Finally, it would appear that others had not spotted the athlete's potential, regarding his unique style of breaststroke. This Coaching-Eye would gain greater significance as my research progressed.

A primary differentiator in HPSC effectiveness was the degree to which coaches had an expanding contextual awareness. A question I asked of a large number of HPSCs at major competitions over the study period was: what do you spend most of your time doing in your core-coaching role? A surprising response, from most of the HPSCs, was that most of their time was spent just watching their athletes. It appears that developing the 'Coaching-Eye' played a major part in their learning process. This watching-in-context moves the HPSC from the 'I' of self as coach, to the 'eye' of watching others.

> Most of my time is spent watching what my athletes are doing in training and competition. I have noticed more over time as they swim. I am looking at swimming skills; the effort they put in and how they behave. I like watching other athletes and their coaches at big competitions – I just like seeing what they do (Coach #30, personal communication, 5th February, 2015, p.13).

A former international athlete moving from swimming into the coaching of elite athletes also commented.

> I spot more every day, more and more. When I first got on deck it was like a huge amount of knowledge coming. I think I could have been a better athlete myself from what I saw on deck (Coach #13a, personal communication, 23rd September, 2012, p.8).

From a skills perspective, it became evident that mentors, formal training, literature and electronic sources provided means for HPSCs to be proficient in understanding and forming mental structures regarding: starts; underwater skills; strokes; turns and finishes. However, HPSC mentors seemed to offer the greatest source of learning. Coach #13 talked of models that he had learned from his former head coach.

> In my head, I have this model, this is what we do. And if it doesn't work for someone it doesn't work but this is how we are going to coach, this is the technique. And that is essentially what I have taken forward in my coaching. I have a technical model in my head, for backstroke, breaststroke, frontcrawl, and butterfly (ibid, p.2).

A further theme emerging from the research was the development of this learning. It seems that independent experiential learning in the form of tacit knowledge takes the HPSC from a state of competence closer to mastery. As Coach #25 commented:

> I think being able to coach internationals is about adding experience to my basic skills. I try things out and I don't worry about failing. If they don't work I try something else. It's about trial and error over time (Coach #25, personal communication, 25th October, 2014, p.22).

The need for a competitive advantage at the highest levels in the sport appears to require that an HPSC is able to extend tacit learning into explicit learning through experimentation – the interplay between the mental structures and feedback from context, enhancing their economic capital, or sport-specific technical knowledge.

One of the interviewees talked about an intervention regarding one of his athlete's strokes involving a change to the athlete's butterfly technique shortly before a major competition:

> So I've got a highly intelligent athlete, an athlete who is willing to learn. So I took a risk – I say risk but it wasn't really a risk – because I was convinced it would make him swim faster. I asked him to fix the head position during recovery to keep the body flat. There was too much body movement caused by lifting of the head. It worked; he did a personal best at the event (Coach #19, personal communication, 15th December, 2012, p16).

It became evident from a number of the HPSCs that learning had been quite independent of any external formal or informal sources. There was inductive experiential learning through watching athletic movements and identifying important features in the execution of the skills. It seems the eye is drawn unconsciously towards the aesthetic beauty of great athletes. Asked about whether he had mental structures relating to the four swimming strokes, Coach #3 explained:

> Yes, all four really and right from the start I modelled the way I coached swimming on certain swimmers and looking back now I instinctively picked the right ones. Because even now if anyone asked me who should [they] study if [they are] going to be a backstroker I'd say Egerszegi (Coach #3, personal communication, 4th February, 2016, p.4).

Coach #3 had no contact with other coaches, coaching literature or any formal sport-related education prior to becoming an assistant swimming coach. He had only observed the sport through family connections. Another HPSC, a former athlete turned coach, also discussed his own informal learning prior to becoming a coach.

I was just starting to get sick of it (lifeguarding) and just mentioned to [named HPSC] the Head Coach about [named athlete]'s stroke. I'd seen (Kieran) Perkins swim and seen him break the World's Short Course record... I started to get back into watching what was happening (Coach #4, personal communication, 13th November, 2014, p.2).

Coach #31 made a revealing comment:

I see much more now than I used to. I watch my athletes all the time they are in the water. I see more and, I don't understand it fully but I know so much more now about their strokes. For some reason I see new things that I had not seen before. I am looking, I suppose, for some root cause, especially if the stroke doesn't seem to look quite right (Coach #31, personal communication, 11th June, 2013, p.9).

The ability to see with a Coaching-Eye and make interventions to improve performance was crystallised in Coach #31's comment:

She looked very clumsy on breaststroke and I happened to see her head dropping low very early in the propulsive phase of the kick. I just said: "Just let your head follow your hands." It suddenly looked much more effective. Nobody ever taught me that and I am not sure where it came from. She did a huge personal best at the next competition. That made me feel so good (ibid, p.4).

As a follow on, I asked the interviewees whether they had created any swimming drills of their own, ones that had not been used by other coaches. The responses varied, with one coach explaining how he synthesised three well known frontcrawl technique development drills into one he thought to be his own.

One of the boys was doing a drill to develop the hand entry. Another one was doing an arm recovery drill... and a third he was just doing a sculling drill ... I just went: "Great, where did you get that from, that drill you were doing?" He said; "Oh so-and-so from [named training venue] told me to do it when I was on such-a-such training camp." I thought that's good, I like that and I just wrote it down and I went home and I was jotting things down and I suddenly thought (pause)... I'll try putting all three of those together - that would work (Coach #8, personal communication, 26th February, 2015, p.14).

A number of other HPSCs gave examples of how they had created their own drills by synthesising from others what they had seen or gleaned from their athletes. An innovation and synthesising of knowledge appears to be one of the ways that HPSCs gain a competitive advantage. A number of the interviewees highlighted the added motivational effect that these new drills had on their athletes and the contribution they made to their social identities. It seems that at least some of this learning is largely independent to coach education.

A remark which seems to epitomise HPSCs' sharp awareness was made by Coach #3:

> But the thing which always frustrated me was that the ASA courses never matched up
> with what I was watching with my own eyes... It was plainly obvious to me that there
> was a total mismatch in coach education from a very early age. From the early 1990s,
> what we were being taught in ASA courses was not what the best swimmers in the
> world were doing and wasn't even close (Coach #3, personal communication, 4th
> February, 2016, p.4).

Once the HPSCs had entered into the coaching of elite athletes they highlighted mentoring
and the reading of recommended coaching-books as their main sources of deductive
learning. All the HPSCs reflected on how other coaches had had an impact on their
technical knowledge. The contextual awareness and contextual analysis, it appears, affects
their behaviour in the way they coach their athletes.

Conclusion

These findings show that identity and context are inextricably linked. The HPSC enters the
context of elite competitive swimming out of personal choice, a context that suited their
idiosyncratic needs. All of the HPSCs exhibited a set of common traits which appear to
account for their choice of context. They are all extremely competitive, have a high level of
personal drive, are ruthless on standards, have a high quotient of emotional intelligence and
want to achieve at the highest level. In entering their context of choice their needs emerge out
of that context and are met by that context.

The athletes that HPSCs choose to work with also have a number of common traits. They are
highly competitive, achievement driven and want to be successful on the international scene.
They too are embedded in context. Their needs also arise out of the context and are met by the
HPSC in that context. The needs of the athlete are for competitive performance, whilst the
needs of the HPSC are to facilitate that performance and gain vicarious success.

These findings also show that HPSCs either choose a context where elite athletes already exist
or they endeavour to create one. It seems that early achievement in coaching elite athletes is
the very reason why HPSCs invest themselves in the role. Whether an illusion or not it is in
this role-in-context they find purpose and meaning – their self identity.

This socially constructed self identity, formed through feedback from the context, in a
Bourdieusian sense, continues the accumulation of being – the development of efficiency
or habitus matched to context. The contextual need for recognition, arising out of the
context from athlete and HPSC, can only be met in a wider social context.

It is apparent from the findings that results alone do not fully meet HPSCs' needs. It seems they wish to belong to a successful organisation either inherited or created. In essence they seek to create a strong social identity that is recognised by their organisation, the athletes they coach and peer international coaches. In doing so their self identity as an HPSC merges with their social identity – they become the swimming organisation or club they lead.

The two second order themes of self identity and social identity merge in the third order theme of contextualised identity. Chapter 7: Integrated Findings and Analysis considers how self identity and social identity merge to form contextualised identity. The HPSC, however, can only feel at home if they have been successful and if they perceive that their influence, achieved through building effective relationships with key stakeholders, has facilitated the results. Relationships and influence are the subject of Chapter 6.

Chapter 6: Research Findings 2: Relationships and Influence

> It is the structure of the relations constitutive of the space of the field which determines the forms that can be assumed by the visible relations of interaction and the very content of the experience that agents may have of them (Bourdieu, 1990, p.192).

Introduction

I begin Chapter 6 with a relevant quotation from Pierre Bourdieu regarding his concept of *field* - that is the social space in which human interaction takes place. This concept draws an analogy between individuals in their social settings and the magnetic forces at work in an electrical field. Hence, 'the field' refers to a social field of power that is defined by the interdependence of a set of entities, and is composed of the structure of their positions and power relations (Hilgers and Mangez, 2015, p.5). As Lewin and Durkheim observed, fields are always in a continual state of flux, and the instances of leadership within them take place in fleeting moments of time (Durkheim, 1951; Lewin, 1951).

In this chapter my research findings are analysed under a theoretical framework defined by the concept of leadership and Bourdieu's notion of field. The HPSC operates across a number of discrete social settings, each with its own purposes and challenges. The intention here is to explore, from an ontological perspective, HPSCs' interactions with the stakeholders that form the cultural webs of mediating influences within the range of unique contexts in which they operate.

The research findings described in Chapter 5 revealed that the strongest attraction to the role of HPSC is a coach's influence on elite athletes in the context of a symbiotic facilitative relationship. The HPSC achieves validation and recognition in their role by helping their athletes achieve world-class performances on the international stage. The problem-solving challenge of consistently placing athletes on the podium at international competition is the measure of coaching ability – it is a measure of their value-add in their relationships giving them credibility – an increase in their symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1977).

This chapter explores HPSCs' experiences in terms of relationships and influence. The main themes emerging from the research data regarding relationships were: emotional contracts, engagement, trust, loyalty and care (see Chapter 3 Fig. 3-3, p.63). Regarding influence, the emergent themes were: attraction, authority, control, coaching style, and mediating forces (see Chapter 3 Fig. 3-4, p.64). In essence, these components are the main attracting and alienating influences acting on the HPSC in their operational role. Sub-headings for two second order themes of relationships and influence are shown in italics.

Relationships

The state of connectedness between the HPSC, their athletes, and the other key stakeholders in five contextual fields is determined by the degree of influence that HPSCs hold in their respective relationships. The essence of leadership is change, accomplished through influence in effective relationships. As Joseph Rost states, 'Leadership is an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes' (Rost, 1993, p.102).

The HPSC in this sense is a change agent and their achievements are dependent upon the strength of relationship and emotional contract they have with their athletes. As British HPSC, Melanie Marshall, responding to questions at the 2013 BSCA Conference, commented:

> I think the coach-athlete relationship is the most important thing... and it beats any facility... it beats anything. It's about knowing your athlete and them knowing you, and how you can get the best for them when it really matters (Marshall, personal communication, 27th September, 2013, p.15).

This type of comment was a common response when HPSCs were asked about the relationships and emotional contracts they have with their athletes.

Emotional Contracts

In the Core-Coaching Agency, it appears that matching philosophies are a key factor in the relationship between HPSCs and athletes. Where values and beliefs align the HPSC-athlete relationship is strengthened. As Coach #23 commented: 'She is a great athlete and so easy to coach. We both believe in the same things: we are on the same page' (Coach #23, personal communication, 3rd June, 2015, p.12). However, relationships with highly driven elite athletes can be problematic.

> Probably two of the most difficult years in the whole of my entire life were working with [named athlete]. She was a high-maintenance girl, questioned everything about the programme. It was an experience I look back on. But at the time you sometimes wanted to pull your hair out (Coach #13a, personal communication, 23rd September, 2012, p.11).

Athletes continually challenging the coaching programme were a common feature in a significant number of the interviews. Questioned on his experience coaching sprinter Mark Foster, British HPSC Dave Haller, speaking at the 2012 BSCA Conference, highlighted the philosophical mismatch in their leader–follower relationship.

> He was very resistant and maybe because he was 24 years old and he had some success, but I did fail with Mark even though he got a few British Records. He didn't fulfil his potential with me. I just couldn't convince him. But he came from doing a lot of miles

with Mike Higgs as an age-group swimmer so he had a distance background (Haller, personal communication, 21st September, 2012, p.2).

In this case the athlete's resistance related to the volume of work undertaken in training. There were, however, also differences regarding swimming skills. It became apparent during interview that there appeared to be very little formal explicit contracting relating to philosophies. Issues only seemed to emerge after the HPSC and athlete began their partnerships. Mismatches in philosophies often led to conflict and a breaking of the relationship. As Coach #13b commented:

I actually told her I didn't want to coach her anymore. This is a world-championship level athlete, a girl that's highly ranked in the world. She just didn't believe in my programme so I told her to find another programme (Coach #13b, personal communication, 28th September, 2013, p.2).

This uncompromising attitude of HPSCs towards their coaching programmes became a common feature of the interviews. The more successful HPSCs tended to insist on conformance to their philosophy albeit after the relationship started.

Responding to questions at the 2016 BSCA Conference, British HPSC Jon Rudd commented:

I think the athlete goes through three phases... First there is dependency where they rely on the coach's leadership. Second, is their independence phase, where we have the "I have arrived syndrome". And [the] third phase is the interdependence phase, where the athlete realises that they need to work with the coach to gain any further success (Rudd, personal communication, 23rd September, 2016, p.11).

Having achieved at important competitions, athletes can lapse into what Coach #2 referred to as 'athletes in a prima donna state' (Coach #2, personal communication, 4th November, 2014, p.19). There are, however, other actors with whom the HPSC needs to contract.

Whilst a strong emotional contract is essential for organisational performance in the Core-Coaching Agency, there are other stakeholders who are enablers to organisational success. The most important enablers to HPSCs' operational success are the swimming organisations' Executive Agency. The importance of having an emotional contract with key members of this agency was raised by all of the interviewees.

I did the right thing and said to the Chairman: "This is going to happen. You're going to have a trail of complaints... the council questioning you on welfare issues..." And I said that to my council boss as well. I said: "You are going to have complaints... But I

need you to believe in me because I feel I know the path" (Coach #3, personal communication, 4th February, 2016, p.21).

This verbal emotional contracting, occurring at the beginning of Coach #3's appointment to his position, ensured his longer-term success. Other enablers in the swimming organisation, where an alignment of emotional contracts is important, reside in the Coach, Athlete and Technical Support Agencies.

The stronger the emotional contracts are, within these agencies, the more the HPSC feels valued and at home in context. Such a sentiment is revealed in the comments Coach #16 made about an assistant coach's level of support:

He follows religiously what I have written for the session... He has qualities that you couldn't get from any course or any book on competitive swimming. He has a great personality and gets on with all the swimmers and their parents. I couldn't wish for a more supportive and trusting assistant (Coach #16, personal communication, 20th April, 2015, p.3).

The same sentiment was expressed unanimously by HPSCs when they talked about assistant swimming coaches and other coaches working within the Technical Support Agency. The degree of connectedness with actors in the main agencies seemed to be reflected in the coach athlete engagement.

Engagement

When talking about their athletes, HPSCs' discussions, invariably centred on athlete behaviours and attitudes towards the HPSC, their coaching programmes, and towards their competitions. 'It's the greatest feeling when a swimmer engages with you and responds to the coaching. It's just the best feeling in the world' (Coach #9, personal communication, 21st July, 2015, p.6). This responsiveness to the HPSC leadership and to their work programme appeared to have the greatest effect on contextual fit.

It is the greatest feeling when an athlete comes to you and asks for help. I remember when [named athlete] came to me as an eighteen-year-old and said "I want to go to the Olympics can you help me?" That is such a great feeling when they do that. You know you have them then (Coach #15, personal communication, 27th June, 2015, p.7).

This statement revealed two important aspects of the leader–follower dynamic: the 'I want to go to the Olympics' revealed the athlete's need for direction from the HPSC; the - 'You know you have them' revealed this HPSC's perception that the athlete was willing to engage with him. Athletes at this level often demanded an HPSC's attention.

She came up to me, looked me straight in the eye and said: "I want to make the Nationals. You are my coach and I don't think you are giving me the attention I need. I will do anything you want but you need to tell me what to do." It took me back a little but she was right. In that single moment I thought - I can do something with this girl (Coach #21, personal communication, 23rd June, 2015, p.13).

This statement revealed the same two important aspects of the leader–follower dynamic. The comment, 'I want to make the Nationals', revealed the athlete's need for direction. The comment, 'you need to tell me what to do', revealed the HPSC's confidence that the athlete was willing to fully subordinate themselves to an HPSC's leadership. Coach #9 expressed a similar view: 'It's the greatest feeling to have an athlete buy into you as a coach' (Coach #9, personal communication, 21st July, 2015, p.3). Conversely, there are athletes that only subordinated themselves out of sheer self-interest, without recognition of or respect for their coach having an interest in them.

I'm very aware and I quite often drive home from training at night... And I honestly drive away thinking [about the swimmer]: "you're nothing but a little shit - I really don't like you at all... all you're doing is using people." But that's the environment we're in (Coach #8, personal communication, 26th February, 2015, p.3).

It appears that athlete engagement in the programme does not depend upon the athlete or HPSC liking each other. A number of HPSCs told of athletes they had coached within the context of a 'frosty' relationship. In the Core-Coaching Agency External (Field #1b), the stresses of competition can also seem to affect levels of engagement between HPSC and athlete. Speaking about one of his female elite athletes at the 2016 BSCA Conference, British HPSC Dave McNulty highlighted the dynamic nature of coach-athlete engagement stating:

She [Jazz Carlin] hit rock bottom... There was just no engagement there at all. She wasn't talking, she wasn't laughing and I had to put that right. I had to get a smile on her face and get her happy again. And she qualified (for the 2016 Olympics), and she had a dream (pause)... probably from the trials through to the summer. She was outstanding and it brought her and me really close. And we just learnt from it (McNulty, personal communication, 23rd September, 2016, p.2).

Coach #18 discussed how engagement was an important enabler to understand the athlete. During interview he relayed how working with a temperamental athlete revealed personality issues.

She came up to me and said: "I don't want to swim"... I said: "OK it's up to you." She said: "No you don't understand, I don't want to swim today." I said: "OK" and went for

a coffee. When I came back and she was just sitting there but I convinced her to get in. Reluctantly she put her suit on and said: "I don't want to swim." I still didn't believe her (Coach #18, personal communication, 30th October, 2014, p.13).

He went on to describe how the athlete responded to a very poor performance.

She said: "Well I told you I didn't want to swim. It's your fault."... I spoke to the NPD and said: "I don't understand why an athlete wouldn't want to swim." He was like: "This is the nature of the girl. You have to understand that she didn't really mean it." This was a very big learning curve... when she is in a high-pressure situation she wants to protect herself (ibid, p.14).

All HPSCs interviewed commented on the importance of 'knowing their athletes' and how they would respond under competitive pressures. It seems that they are also contextually aware of this when selecting athletes from the Athlete Agency within their swimming organisations.

I sometimes take the lower squad swimmers. I like to see the swimmers, look at their strokes and how they train. To me it's all about attitude; can they work? Do they listen? And I ask their coach for their opinion on the swimmer (Coach #17, personal communication, 2nd March, 2013, p.8).

It appeared important to the HPSC to be able to spot a future athlete. As discussed in Chapter 5, the Coaching-Eye applies to a range of contexts, including engaging with assistant coaches and seeing potential.

It seems to be important for HPSCs to engage with actors in the Coach Agency, although for a different reason. All of the HPSCs interviewed gave examples of assistants that fully engaged with them as a leader. The majority of interviewees appeared to enjoy the collaboration of other coaches.

An assistant coach will come over and say: "He's losing a bit of his connection." I would respond with: "What do you mean he's losing a bit of his connection – I can't see it." He challenges me, I challenge him and then afterwards we would sit and we'd have an active discussion in the middle of a training session about what he [the athlete] is doing (Coach #13a, personal communication, 23rd September, 2012, p.4).

Engagement with assistants helps in the joint development of the Coaching-Eye and areas for future development. Some HPSCs, however, did allude to the less-engaged assistants.

What annoys me about him is that he will set them work and within a few minutes he is on his mobile, texting or looking at YouTube. He doesn't talk to his swimmers he just

writes the schedule up on the board... He really makes me angry - I don't need assistants like this (Coach #31, personal communication, 11ᵗʰ June, 2013, p.10).

Coach #31 talked of how his success was being affected by poor, disengaged assistants who 'only do it for the money' (ibid). He attributed the source of this issue to the Executive Agency.

Engagement with key interlocutors in the Executive Agency relates more to an understanding of HPSCs' needs for enabling resources. It presents a customer–supplier relationship. An important aspect of any relationship, however, is trust.

Trust

Trust featured highly throughout the formal and informal interviews. HPSCs spoke about being able to trust actors within each of the agencies. It seems that one of the strongest sources of social gravity is the interlocutors within the Executive Agency, who are the providers of scarce resources.

> The best thing I had at the club, the person I most trusted, was the Chairman... It was the Chairman and me who drove the programme forward... He was there off his own bat and I think that was the biggest single factor in us being able to get us to where we wanted to get to (Coach #2, personal communication, 4ᵗʰ November, 2014, p. 7).

Coach #2 talked about the trust he had in the Chairman of his former club. The fact that the Chairman's children had retired from swimming left him free to give complete and unbiased support. However, that coach had a different experience at his second club, which was located at and owned by a local school, when dealing with a different interlocutor.

> When I first started there the headmaster was really very good, but after a couple of years he left and we had a new headmaster come in. I would say the term to use about him was untrustworthy... Because he did things without talking to me that I felt could have a negative influence on the swimming programme (ibid, p.8).

In similar respects, alienating effects on HPSCs ensued when decision-makers in the Executive Agency did not trust them. Coach #18 talked of his experiences working for a large swimming organisation:

> They didn't really trust me. I would come back from a training trip and I would find that the Head Coach had been looking through my training programmes. I know from his sarcastic remarks that he didn't think I was giving the athletes the right sort of training. He could only get that from my files (Coach #18, personal communication, 30ᵗʰ October, 2014, p.9).

An aspect regarding the asymmetrical nature of trust emerged during the interviews. Whilst trust in the Executive, Coach and Core-Coaching Agencies is important between the stakeholders in those agencies, there is a different situation in respect of the Technical Support Agency. Some support-providers to HPSCs may be external to the swimming organisation, and trust does not apply in the same way in relationships between them and the HPSC. Coach #10, for instance, discussed a contracted, external physiotherapist in her Technical Support Agency and identified the asymmetrical nature of their relationship when she said: "It's just a customer–supplier thing, really" (Coach #10, personal communication, 25th August, 2015, p.9). She elaborated stating:

> It doesn't really matter whether she trusts me. I pay for her expertise so I have to trust what she is doing is current best practice. She is very professional and what she has done for me so far is great. I can't afford to use anyone that is not world-class - I can't put my athletes at risk (ibid).

Such responses to external suppliers stand in contrast to a number of negative examples some HPSCs gave in relation to their own internal suppliers within the Technical Support Agency. One example was given by Coach #18 who stated:

> He used to ignore my programme and do his own stuff in the gym. I never knew from one day to the fucking next how my swimmer would react to my training sessions. All I could do was ask him [the swimmer] what the strength and conditioning coach had given him to do on that day... I couldn't trust him... had to get rid of him in the end (Coach #18, personal communication, 30th October, 2014, p.7).

It appears that where members of the Technical Support Agency are experts in their field and conform to an HPSC's requirements, a personal level of trust holds less importance. A number of HPSCs added the caveat that support-professionals should conduct their activities in an ethical manner. It seems that the relationships the HPSCs have with the Technical Support Agency are similar to those they have with the Coach Agency.

Actors within the Coach Agency have delegated authority from the HPSC or Executive Agency to coach athletes in the value chain. From the interviews it appeared that assistant swimming coaches fell into two distinct categories. Each of the HPSCs in the research sample spoke about having either a single highly supportive assistant, or a small number of trusted assistants. Speaking about the former type Coach #19 stated:

> I would trust my assistant with my life. I can be totally honest with him and I know it will go no further. At times [named assistant] covers the squad for me while I am at competition. I know he will follow my programme to the letter (Coach #19, personal communication, 15th December, 2012, p.9).

Whilst all of the HPSCs talked of trusting others – namely, the enabling actors in the Executive, Technical Support and Coach Agencies – they showed greater concern over whether athletes in the Core-Coaching Agency trusted them.

> I can see if an athlete is with me or not. I can see it in their eyes. I know when they trust me. I had a senior boy last year and whatever I said to him made little difference. I could see it was never going to work. I eventually said to him: "Go find yourself another coach, I can't work with you." He got the message (Coach #17, personal communication, 2nd March, 2013, p.4).

It emerged from the interviews that HPSCs had a high level of awareness regarding the trust in the relationships they hold with their direct followers. They also seemed to be aware of its reciprocal, dynamic and asymmetrical nature.

> It was OK at the beginning, but he was never my swimmer. I never trusted him. I know he had been sneaking off at weekends to another coach for some private work on his skills. What made it worse was that he was a coach I disliked intensely. Our relationship was very frosty so it helped the team when he left. Good riddance (ibid).

The term 'my swimmer' featured very highly in both formal and informal poolside coach discussions. I challenged a number of HPSCs with the suggestion that it sounded like an ownership issue related to control. Coach #10 gave a common response:

> It's not an ownership thing. It is more of a family thing and closeness in my experience. It shows a close relationship between the coach and the swimmer and it allows them to share in success as well as grow from failure (Coach #10, personal communication, 25th August, 2015, p.5).

The research findings demonstrated that the term 'trust' could be used in two different ways. Trust can be held with regard to a personal relationship: 'I trust her on a personal level but not as an athlete in my programme' (Coach #31, personal communication, 11th June, 2013, p.9). Trust can also be held with regard to a working relationship: 'He buys into my programme but I know he doesn't trust me as a person' (ibid). A lack of trust, it seems, can emerge out of a sense of betrayal. These considerations identify loyalty as crucial to HPSCs' relationships.

Loyalty

Loyalty emerged as a common theme in the research. Each of the HPSCs in the selected sample had experienced athletes in the Core-Coaching Agency who were loyal to them in their capacity as a coach.

Every now and then you get a swimmer who is very loyal. I've got one at the moment who's one of the successful ones. She does all that I ask her to do without argument. She always turns out for the club and enters any open meets I want her to swim. We have such a strong relationship (Coach #8, personal communication, 26th February, 2015, p.4).

Speaking at the 2012 BSCA Conference, in response to questions from the attendees, British HPSC Bob Pay made a comment about one of his elite athletes. Pay lauded the responsiveness of one of his international freestyle athletes stating:

Simon (Burnett) had an amazing feel. He was amazingly coachable. If you said to him move your index finger over a little bit or turn your hand slightly, he could do that... I don't know how many swimmers there are in the world who can actually feel water... They are amazingly coachable (Pay, personal communication, 21st September, 2012, p.3).

However, each of the HPSCs also recalled examples of betrayal, stressing the emotional impact they made. In extreme cases, a single act of betrayal can be a major alienating force, having devastating consequences as Coach #26 highlighted:

She had only just won gold at the European Juniors when she comes up and tells me she is moving to [named rival club]. I couldn't bloody believe it (long pause)... it was her old man, the bastard. I thought (pause)... I can't do this anymore... I did go back but not back to [named club]... that was nearly it for me (Coach #26, personal communication, 13th September, 2015, p.7).

I could sense the emotion in Coach #26's voice as he told his story. It seems that the father had spoken to an HPSC from a rival club behind his back. A similar experience was relayed by Coach #2:

This parent decided he didn't want his boy to swim with us... I perceived [that] we could take him to where his dad thought he should be, in our own programme. I found out that they had organised for him to swim over at [named rival local club], without coming through me. I went and confronted dad and said: "If you want to do that, it's fine, go, and don't bother coming back either"... he had overstepped the boundary as far as I am concerned, and he's gone behind my back (Coach #2, personal communication, 4th November, 2014, p.37).

It seems that there are several important components to the boundary in the relationship to which Coach #2 referred. Although he discussed his programme as being suitable for where 'his dad thought he should be', his hurt feelings seemed to be more closely associated with the boy's father not consulting him about it, as he put it: 'without coming through me'.

When an HPSC is involved in an athlete's move to another programme, the loss, although still hurtful, can have a positive aspect. The emotional impact appears to be somewhat lesser if the HPSC has been involved in the decision making process with the athlete.

> I didn't like her leaving but at least she came and talked to me about it. She told me she just needed a change; it wasn't working for her. I had a word with the other coach and we talked it through. We are still friends (Coach #28, personal communication, 5th May, 2014, p.10).

A number of the interviewees relayed stories where an amicable outcome had been achieved – although they still found the loss of an athlete emotionally upsetting. HPSCs can also experience betrayal from their interactions with other agencies. Coach #31, for instance, described an incident when a member of the Coach Agency had betrayed him, making a lasting impression.

> I remember attending the British Nationals. I was delayed but when I did arrive I found my assistant in conversation with one of my swimmers. [The assistant] wasn't invited to attend, so I was very surprised to see him there. As soon as my swimmer had finished his race this assistant was quickly onto poolside giving feedback. This was my first experience of feeling betrayed by a coach (Coach #31, personal communication, 11th June, 2013, p.5).

Coach #31 explained how, in the early period of his career, he hated other coaches advising his athletes without consulting him. 'It is very disrespectful when a coach does that. I never forgot that and it was one of the reasons I left the club' (ibid).

These stories of betrayal and competing assistants resonated with my own experience. The feelings such experiences evoke can be very strong and can seriously affect relationships. Where there is a strong personal relationship with an athlete, however, it is difficult for other coaches to intrude on the coaching relationship.

> I never worry about [named athlete] she tells me when other coaches try to give her advice. A couple of months ago she told me the coach from one of our rival clubs had tried to tell her what she needed to work on. She told him to speak to me if he had anything to say (smiles)... of course, he didn't (ibid, p.9).

Being very competitive and in search of influence, it seems that all coaches will at times intrude and overstep other coaches' boundaries. Such incidents of betrayal in the Core-Coaching Agency have an impact on coach–athlete relationships. Nevertheless, there were also incidents where HPSCs felt betrayed by their Executive Agency.

Coach #20 became emotionally upset while describing how he had been treated by his swimming organisation. He talked about the investment he had made to develop a successful club only to be betrayed by his committee.

> I still cannot believe what they did to me even now. I was reading Swimming Times when I noticed an advert. It was for my bloody job (wry laugh)... those bastards had only gone behind my back and decided to find a new coach (long pause)... I had no idea, I was only speaking to the chairman the night before and he never said a word. You couldn't make it up (Coach #20, personal communication, 4th November, 2015, p.13).

Coach #20 resigned and moved to another club, which was a more extreme example of an HPSC's perception of betrayal. Other interviewees gave examples, of what they perceived as betrayal. Coach #22 commented:

> I began to get a bit of resentment from the committee...I had rules for squad membership agreed when I took over...the chairman and secretary challenged them...they said I couldn't dictate (Coach #22, personal communication, 10th June, 2015, p.5).

Coach #22 explained that his committee decided to change the squad entry rules on the grounds of equity. He went on to say how he challenged their decision: 'I rebelled against it but once they had decided that's what they would do, there was not much I could do about it' (ibid). He believed that the reason for his loss of leadership was originally caused by dissent in the Coach Agency.

> They resented me telling them off for ignoring their swimmers. One of them slapped his own wrist (he gestures in a theatrical way) saying "Oh have I been a naughty boy again?" whilst looking at the other coaches. I am certain they influenced the committee. The squad rules were just an excuse to push me out (ibid).

All of the interviewees gave examples of varying degrees of where they felt they had been betrayed. The research revealed the dynamic nature of the contexts in which HPSCs operate and the emotional impact that perceived betrayal has upon them. This seemed one of the main alienating factors affecting HPSCs. What became apparent was the degree to which HPSCs care about their athletes and the organisations they have helped create.

Care

There was an unexpected depth and richness to the bonds that HPSCs formed with athletes in the Core-Coaching Agency - that is with those who were willing to engage. With reference to the collective team of athletes in her agency, Coach #10 commented:

> If your swimmers know you actually care about them as individuals and not just as swimmers, they will follow you anywhere. They know they can trust me when they tell

me something. They know I expect their best (Coach #10, personal communication, 25th August, 2015, p.11).

While differentiating the personal components of coach–athlete relationships from the professional working components, Coach 10# voiced what appeared to be a common sentiment across the cohort of interviewees.

> The coach should care for swimmers, and the most important thing is to joke and be on the same wavelength with swimmers. [That] shows that you are cool, not only as a coach but also as a person (ibid).

Clarifying the term 'same wavelength', the coach explained that she was referring to matching thought processes with athletes they like. She elaborated stating: 'I have to know what they are thinking so I can be what they need me to be on that day' (ibid). This athlete centeredness and humour, characteristics that pervaded the interviews, was also seen in the comment '[That] shows that you are cool.' This reflected the importance, together with emotional intelligence, that HPSCs place on affection in a relationship.

Care or degree of affection that the HPSC had with the majority of their athletes was seen in their behaviour and body language, especially at competition. During observations on poolside it became evident, through body language and proximity of athletes to the HPSC, the level of affection they held for each other. In my personal notes, I detailed an observation made at a major swimming championship to triangulate the research data:

> Looking at [named HPSC] he is wearing well-worn jeans, a blue long-sleeved cotton shirt, and a pair of well-worn trainers. He is overweight, unshaven, and his shirt is hanging out at the back. He is with a large team of athletes. What is it about this coach? He looks totally at home and he seems to be constantly surrounded by his swimmers. They are laughing and joking. Is this linked to the outstanding results he is getting? He looks very confident and is now talking to another high profile coach (PN04, personal communication, 10th March, 2012, p.41).

Observing from a distance, the coach's athletes, the peer coaches, officials and competition administrators all appeared to like him, to varying degrees, and wanted to talk to him. He presented a very confident image and he seemed extremely popular with his athletes. It is evident, that together with the ability to read athletes' emotions and intervene where necessary, the level of affection is an important ingredient in the coach-athlete relationship.

It became evident in the interviews, however, that a coach's results are the most important factor at play in such social settings. As Coach #28 summarised:

From an athletic perspective, the coach as a leader provides results fast and continuously, is innovative and engaging, creates an environment where equality of participation and importance is extremely high, is honest, caring and knowledgeable (Coach #28, personal communication, 5th May, 2014, p.13).

Some of the HPSCs interviewed recognised the importance of gaining feedback from the athlete in the context. One HPSC, Coach #25, recognised the importance of feedback but he said he finds difficulty in hiding his emotions:

For me, having good feedback from the athlete is always great, but I would say I'm too holistic as an individual; I wear my heart on my sleeve, as it were. But that's probably because I care probably a bit too much (Coach #25, personal communication, 25th October, 2014, p.16).

He highlighted the need to show athletes that he cares about them, but also cautioned about the importance of respecting boundaries between coach and athlete.

Know your athletes and let them know you care. It is hard to push and train an athlete, and at times coaches have to be careful not to cross that line between coach and friend as that is not where coaches should ever go. When one of my swimmers finishes a race or a good set or practice, they can see emotion in me which reflects how I am feeling. They know that I truly care and this can be rejoicing in success or picking them up when they fall short (ibid).

Where HPSCs had taken small development-level swimming organisations and transformed them into successful performance-level clubs, their care extended beyond the Core-Coaching Agency and into the wider context involving the Executive, Coach, Athlete and Technical Support Agencies.

It's not just the swimmers; it's also the club, everyone in the club. Everyone is important, and I do care about the club. I am the club and to me we are one big family. All of the swimmers, the coaches, and members of the committee are all important. I like to think we care about each other (Coach #31, personal communication, 11th June, 2013, p.7).

He stressed the importance of making stakeholders aware that a coach is not in the role for purely selfish reasons stating:

From a business perspective, the coach as a leader needs a bit of vulnerability - they cannot be seen as selling an agenda that is personal. It must be seen that he or she provides accurate and timely information, anticipates needs, invites open and honest dialogue and honestly cares. Swimmers have to know you care about their goals, are

working just as hard for them as they are for you and that you are just as excited when they meet or exceed their goals (ibid).

There were examples, however, where HPSCs revealed a contrary, or less caring, attitude towards some athletes. Coach #8 revealed his perception of the coach–athlete relationship, describing it in terms of being transactional in nature:

I think that's what some swimmers do - they use people. They take from you and if what you do isn't good enough they just bugger off somewhere else. I don't like that feeling of being used by swimmers. Mind you I have always said that at the end of the day you are going to be mugged by someone (Coach #8, personal communication, 26th February, 2015, p.3).

Coach #8's relationship differed, however, for athletes who were a part of his in-group whom he liked and perceived as loyal. He described how he indwells in the athlete when they are competing:

Watching the race you sort of get involved... come on, come on, you can do it... come on. I think, in a way I'm kind of in there with them... I'm thinking, go over, turn, come on, get off, do three fly kicks... you've got to do this... don't take a breath... I know you can do this. I'm just in there. I'm totally wrapped up in it. And they get to the end of that 50 and I look at it and go... fucking hallelujah (ibid, p.20).

This being 'in there with them' appeared in a significant number of interviews. It resonated with my own experiences of watching one of my athletes that I liked winning a race. Often, however, it seems that the feelings are hidden.

When she's (named athlete) swimming and then she's hit the wall and she's won it and I think... thank God for that and I don't know exactly what to do... so I'm just going up and say well done, swim down, do so and so and then I'm going to walk away. And I generally go out to the loo quite honestly. I sit in one of the cubicles and I just think shit! And if I don't do that, I will actually get emotional (ibid).

After observing Coach #8 at poolside at competitions over the period 2012 to 2016, there was no indication of the emotions he referred to in the interview. The comments made by Coach #8 revealed an awareness of his own emotions and the affection he held for the athlete. It also revealed the nature of his leadership – part transformational and part transactional. Leadership, however, as a number of HPSCs expressed, is a results driven enterprise. The number of champions Coach #8 has developed bear witness to his influence as a leader.

Influence

It is axiomatic that HPSCs hold positions of influence. They perform leadership roles for the elite athletes they coach, whilst also performing further, multiple leadership roles in other contexts. In total, HPSCs may act as leaders in all of the five contextual fields in which they are immersed.

> Influence is a very important concept to understanding and practising leadership. Why? Simply stated, leadership cannot be understood without knowing what influence is, and leadership cannot be practised without using influence (Rost, 2008, p.86).

The five emergent themes that become apparent from the analysis under the label influence are: attraction, authority, control, coaching style and mediating forces. The headings for each of these themes are shown in italics. These influences, from multiple sources, can be both positive and negative, and can either attract or alienate the HPSC regarding their contextual fit.

Attraction

It became evident during the research that HPSCs are attracted to the role by virtue of their own need to coach the best athletes, especially those with a desire or ambition that matches their own. Coach #3 revealed this motivation in the following statement:

> I suddenly realised we have something here because [of] that trainability and that ridiculous self-confidence... it was just like magnets attracting to each other... It was almost like he had the passion and desire that I had... we just pushed and pushed... So he would challenge me and I'd come up with something tougher, and something tougher, and because he was so driven the rest of the squad would gravitate to that... within the space of six months they were just fire-breathing sons of bitches (Coach #3, personal communication, 4th February, 2016, p.3).

Coach #13 reiterated an HPSC's need to work with the best athletes. However, he also explained that that motivation went beyond honing or training mere athlete performance, it concerned also an attraction to the aesthetic nature of swimming technique and to the correction of perceived flaws that required coaching intervention.

> And normally it's the best athlete that attracts our attention. The guy who is doing exceptional technique attracts your attention. The guy who is doing piss-poor technique also attracts your attention. You have to correct that (Coach #13a, personal communication, 23rd September, 2012, p.9).

Coach #13 also discussed the attraction of watching world-class athletes at major competitions. This featured in a number of interviews, so too did HPSCs' analysis of the

context to find new coaching drills and ways of preparing athletes for major competition. Coach #13 talked of watching two American international swimmers Ryan Lochte and Michael Phelps, the latter who is seen in the sport of competitive swimming as the Greatest of All Time (GOAT) – he stated:

> I use the Olympics Games as a learning experience. At the last games I watched swimmers warm up, I watch Ryan Lochte warm up, Michael Phelps warm up. I just watch to see the things they are doing with body position and the drills they are doing so I can apply it to my guys (ibid).

HPSCs' attraction to watching their own and other coaches' athletes are, evidently, a major source of learning. In addition to watching elite athletes competing on the world stage, the HPSCs disclosed how they watch other HPSCs.

> I always watch other international coaches with their athletes when I am at international competition. I look at the most successful ones to see what I can use. I sometimes send my athletes to meet them and pick up tips (Coach #26, personal communication, 13th September, 2015, p.7).

HPSCs are attracted to sources of knowledge from a range of stakeholders in the Swimming Competition Arena (Field #3). Along with coaching conferences, this context appeared to be a rich source of information that enhanced HPSCs' technical knowledge and supplied valuable performance data for the Technical Support Agency.

When HPSCs become contextually aware of the wider international scene, they are naturally drawn to a range of world-class experts in their field. The most sought-after experts work in the areas of biomechanics, physical fitness, psychology and physiotherapy. Coach #31 revealed how a world leading sports scientist helped him stating:

> Jan Olbrecht has had a major influence on me. He visits my club on a semi-regular basis, does lactate testing and advises me on my programmes. You know what sort of work to do and when (Coach #31, personal communication, 11th June, 2013, p.23).

With reference to marginal gains, as discussed in Chapter 2 – Management Perspectives, Coach #21 added:

> The performance analyst and the bio-mechanist are invaluable for giving me feedback on athlete performance. The margins on winning and losing are tiny. I have learnt a lot from these guys on how to improve strokes, turns and all that (Coach #21, personal communication, 23rd June, 2015, p.8).

At the 2012 BSCA Conference, retired British HPSC Terry Dennison, reflected on what he felt was missing from his technical knowledge (economic capital) when he was coaching:

I've just read some of Jan's (Olbrecht) work and I feel that was what I was missing as a coach at the time. I did not understand the difference between capacity and power and all my work was capacity. There's no question in my mind when I look back on my old training sessions... (Dennison, personal communication, 21st September, 2012, p.2).

With closer margins at the world-class level, it seems that actors in the Technical Support Agency are a critical success-factor and an attractive force for HPSCs. Observing HPSCs at the 2012 BSCA Conference, I noted:

Jan is like a magnet to these coaches; they are around him like bees around a honey pot. As soon as he left the stage he was surrounded by coaches. Attendance at his session was very high. They must believe he has crucial insights that they need. One coach asks him how they should go about measuring VO^2 for their own athlete (PN03, personal communication, 21st September, 2012, p.78).

Scientific aspects of competitive swimming attract the attention of HPSCs. Most of the HPSCs interviewed appeared to be intoxicated with discussions concerning lactate and heart-rate measurements. There were a few, however, who preferred the 'artistic' side of coaching.

In the period between 2012 and 2016, there was a shift in coaching discourses at BSCA conferences towards swimming-coaching as an art rather than exclusively as a science. The same period also saw the emergence of discourses relating to process as opposed to product. The importance of moving the athlete and HPSC focus away from performance outcomes to developing skills and fitness has become a modern-day mantra for HPSCs.

Responding to questions at the 2015 BSCA Conference, Australian expert on competitive sport, Wayne Goldsmith referred to the art of coaching as a creative process.

I believe greatness is uniqueness, and is different and doing different things, and doing things differently, and thinking about and challenging ideas that are existing, and carving a new path (Goldsmith, personal communication, 25th September, 2015, p.7).

At the 2016 BSCA Conference, the GB Head Coach, Bill Furniss revealed new systemic approaches to coaching stating:

We don't talk about outcome we talk about process. We don't talk about let's go and win this many medals. We talk about doing the job properly, making sure we get our best performance in the summer at the main meet (Furniss, personal communication, 23rd September, 2016, p.1).

A number of interviewees referred to their coaching activities as a creative process, describing it as a form of art. Coach #8 described his attraction to the role as 'creative motivation' stating:

> I think it was a sort of creative motivation. You look at the swimmers and you think about what you can do with them, and I'm still like that today... I keep going back to creativity. I don't know whether that's the right term, but it's knowing that when you drive away you think that went well (Coach #8, personal communication, 26th February, 2015, p.2).

This creative process appeared to operate in two areas: first, in the Core-Coaching Agency, where the HPSC seeks to 'create the athlete'; and second, in the organisational context, where HPSCs seek to leave a legacy. Coach #1 discussing legacy remarked:

> So the last bastion, if you like, of achievement, is: how will I be remembered? How will this that I've created be remembered? I will have created a unique and exemplary system I believe that somebody could walk into and either make better or completely fuck up equally as easily (Coach #1, personal communication, 3rd July, 2015, p.7).

It seems that in addition to improving athlete performance in the present, the Coaching-Eye is also attracted to future potential in the value chain and to the prospect of creating a legacy. Coach #23 commented on watching his athletes:

> My eyes are automatically drawn to the best swimmers. When I am watching the Junior Squad I always seek out those with the best feel for the water. I seem to see things my assistant coaches miss. They seem to think the best are the fastest ones (Coach #23, personal communication, 3rd June, 2015, p.13).

Watching excellence in technique, it seems, is a strong primeval attracting force. The HPSC tends to visualise a future-self in a context that they have created and one that has satisfied their need for recognition. However, to achieve such a vision an HPSC must also gain authority within their choice of swimming organisation.

Authority

It became apparent through observation and interview that HPSCs seek the authority they believe they need to create a context that matches their philosophy. Although not explicit in their discussions, each of the HPSCs described how their respective organisational authorities affected them, either lauding them or giving examples where they acted as barriers to their personal ambitions. Coach #1's comments exemplified the situation of where an enabling authority is in place.

But I do remember thinking this is mine; I'm in charge of this. These people look at me and there is this expectation that I'm going to provide them with a service that gives them what it is that they are looking for. And that gave me a buzz. It gave me a real buzz (Coach #1, personal communication, 3rd July, 2015, p.2).

I could sense in his tone and volume that the organisational authority given to him by a new committee was important. In seeking success, actors in the Executive Agency resonated with the nominated leader, holding a matching philosophy.

Of key importance is the ability to direct the scarce resources in the internal agencies. In expressing how he gained that authority in his agency, Coach #31 reflected on a committee meeting he had with his Executive Agency.

I was doing all the work but I was not listed as Head Coach. I gave them (the committee) an ultimatum. I said: "If you want me to lead this club, I will but on my own terms. I will decide who coaches. I will decide which swimmers are in which squads, and I will decide on competitions and who swims them. If you can't agree on this then I'm off." They agreed, and the moment they did I felt such a surge of power. I thought, yes, now I'm free to do what I want (Coach #31, personal communication, 11th June, 2013, p.3).

A significant number of the interviewees recalled issues they had experienced with the Executive Agency. Coach #8 talked about one issue that occurred when, after taking over as Head Coach, the previous incumbent was retained as an assistant.

I also had an assistant coach... who was much, much older than me, very experienced, and the committee members tended to lean more towards what he wanted to do... It was a power struggle... There wasn't a power struggle going on between me and [named HPSC] but what these committee members were doing was saying to themselves, that if I go they can reinstate him (Coach #8, personal communication, 26th February, 2015, p.2).

Other interviewees intimated the same need for authority regarding the Core-Coaching Agency. A lack of authority tends to have alienating effects on HPSCs. Where NPDs or Head Coaches in British Swimming or the larger swimming organisations have ultimate authority, the impact on their reporting HPSCs can be significant. Talking of an NGB Intensive Training Centre (ITC), Coach #4 commented:

The problem with the ITC was that I couldn't do what I wanted. I couldn't just say to a swimmer you're out, see you later. There was none of that. The swimmers had rights and they knew they had rights... I would give out the way it was going to be and if they didn't like it they would just go to [named peer HPSC] and train with them (Coach #4, personal communication, 13th November, 2014, p.5).

Coach #4 was disillusioned by his perceived lack of authority, saying: 'I never felt at home with it. I've never liked it' (ibid). Continuing his discussion, he shared an experience he had had with one of his athletes in the Core-Coaching Agency who had undermined him:

> I said he had to swim on a Saturday and Sunday and found he went out on Saturday and got pissed... he didn't turn up on Sunday. I said he's suspended for a week. He didn't like it and phoned the NPD [who] phoned me back and said you can't suspend any athlete from the ITC. You've got to let him back in (ibid).

Where the Executive Agency denies authority to the HPSC this may impact both the Coach Agency and Technical Support Agency. Coach #10 commented on the effects of her lack of authority over assistant coaches in one of the clubs she had worked for.

> They were male chauvinists at the best of times, always challenging what I was trying to do. Without the authority over the other coaches there was nothing I could do, I just had to bite my lip until I found a club that would back me as their coach - a club where I felt more at home (Coach #10, personal communication, 25th August, 2015, p.16).

Issues of authority seemed more prevalent in the smaller, more parochial swimming organisations than the larger ones, where the centre of power resided in the Executive Agency. One HPSC, in British Swimming, described his feelings when his strength and conditioning coach was seconded to another ITC.

> I was furious (pauses)... we were only six months away from the Olympics for Christ sake... He was the best S and C (Strength and Conditioning) coach we had. We had been working on core strength and I was beginning to see improvements when bang... they stuffed me. That's the problem of working with people like that (Coach #16, personal communication, 20th April, 2015, p.8).

He went on to talk of another of his allocated technical support staff who had suddenly been made redundant stating:

> It's bloody amazing, you wouldn't credit it. I am sitting there with [named psychologist] planning for the next season and all of a sudden he gets this text. He turned to me and said: "They've just sent me a text saying I'm redundant." I thought: you bastards (ibid).

Authority in all agencies is a major factor in HPSCs' feelings of fit. Regardless of size, they appear to see authority over scarce resources, and the freedom to create a philosophically matched context as critical features of their role. HPSCs seem to have a need to feel that they are in full control of the swimming organisation and of their own destiny in the creation of a legacy.

Control

Although there are negative connotations associated with control in the leadership literature, the topic featured heavily in interview conversation. In response to questions concerning control over the process of developing athletes, all HPSCs described both positive and negative experiences. A common feature in the interviewees was that the HPSCs set very high standards in terms of athlete behaviour, performance, responses to training, and direction.

> I work on the behaviour of the athlete. If they don't do their hours, if they don't do their core work, if they don't do their stretching, then they are held accountable and I will inflict rules... I watch it... It will be a cycle. One or two of them will start to come in late. Then three or four of them will come in late... If you're not there five minutes before you get an extra session in the week... it's simple... I take away your free time, which is the worst thing for any swimmer (Coach #13a, personal communication, 23rd September, 2012).

Coach #24 demonstrated similar characteristics, saying:

> I suppose some would refer to me as a disciplinarian. I can't stand bad behaviour in my sessions or at competition. They know the rules and they know I won't take any shit from them. I had to kick one of my best senior swimmers out at a training camp last year for throwing a water bottle (Coach #24, personal communication, 25th February, 2013, p.15).

The need to be able to instil discipline appears to be a primary consideration in becoming an HPSC. This can be difficult when new to the role. Coach #18 described his first move into coaching elite athletes, when starting as an assistant:

> As an athlete training in a group, I was part of a team. I was captain of a group, and then suddenly to be an assistant coach – the athletes were a little bit lost, I was a little bit lost. Our interaction changed over time, but at the start it was very tough for me to be disciplining guys that were my friends (Coach #18, personal communication, 30th October, 2014, p.1).

At times, athlete behaviours can place HPSCs into a state of stress, where they can overstep ethical boundaries.

> He was very difficult...and I was constantly throwing him out because he was a little shit and again I'm not proud of it, but he was a grown man... in one session I grabbed him out of the pool and had him against a wall... when I met him after he had retired from competition, he said: "I never doubted for a minute that you did what was best for

me. So even though you were like that I still respected you as the coach, and I still liked you" (Coach #16, personal communication, 20th April, 2015, p.14).

In acknowledging 'I am not proud of it' Coach #16 recognised that he had overstepped an ethical boundary in coaching conduct. However, a surprising outcome here is that, while recognising he had contravened the standards of acceptable behaviour, the athlete still held the HPSC in high regard.

Whilst the topics of discipline and order featured in a large number of the interviews, the range of control exercised in the context of the Core-Coaching Agency also extended to the activities taking place.

> I was cranky, so I could force swimmers...I would just say you're not getting out until you've done it – you are not getting out! In [named training camp] once, we started at 8 o'clock and they were still swimming at 12.30. Until they did it they were not getting out. So they knew I was pig-headed – that was my style (Coach #4, personal communication, 13th November, 2014, p.5).

This kind of tough, no-nonsense approach was another common characteristic of the HPSC cohort of interviewees. At the 2013 BSCA Conference, British HPSC Melanie Marshall revealed, in open forum, her character by describing demands she placed on international swimmer and Olympian Adam Peaty stating:

> I remember a specific set...we were doing a set of 50s (50 metres)... it was, he had to hit 33 (seconds) pace and the rests were reducing each time. So it was like - one (set of 33 seconds) on 1:15 (minutes and seconds); one on 1:10; and one on 1:05, 60, 50...and I think we had done 16 of them and he started to hit 34...and I said to him: "It doesn't count if you're hitting 34, it's got to be 33" (Marshall, personal communication, 27th September, 2013, p.17).

An interesting aspect of the HPSC-athlete relationship emerged at this point. Marshall described how Adam Peaty, despite being highly stressed, continued to respond to her demands, whilst also taking ownership of the challenge and retaining a subordinated role to his leader.

> And the guy is knackered, he's nearly crying. He said: "I don't think I can do it"... I said: "I don't care... You find it in there somewhere"... and then he got really angry with himself and he went 33, 33, 33, 33 and I said: 'that's where you need to go to. Every single time the sets hit you and they're hard, go to that place because that's the place you need down the last 10m in an Olympic final (ibid).

In the question and answer session one of the attendees asked: what would have happened if he had failed to make the target time, to which she responded: 'I just knew he could do it, otherwise I would have just found another way to maintain his self-esteem' (ibid).

In preparing for major championships a common phrase appeared in coaching discourse. As Coach #13 stated:

> I'm a firm believer in control of controllables. Whatever environment, whether it's competition, junior, senior, international level, and the things you can't control are [what] you can't get stressed about (Coach #13a, personal communication, 23rd September, 2012, p.6).

In the Swimming Competition Arena (Field #3), a number of the HPSCs felt they had little to no control over athletes, other than through control of their behaviours.

> I can't say that I enjoy major competitions; I have no control over the [context] like I do at training. I have no control over other athletes or their coaches who can interfere with mine. And I have no control over some of the unfair decisions that officials make – I just don't enjoy it (Coach #31, personal communication, 11th June, 2013, p.17).

Comments regarding lack of control also emerged at interview from HPSCs in large organisations with satellite-feeder clubs. HPSCs in these extended Coach and Athlete Agencies described feelings of frustration caused by a lack of control. Coach #2 complained about infrequent access to potential elite athletes. Asked about how he would like these matters to be handled, he responded:

> Just seeing them on a more regular basis in terms of being able to coach them and correct them. They would go back to their club for three or four sessions and come back, and I'd think nothing has actually changed, nothing is getting better. I was struggling with being in control of my own destiny, if you want to call it that (Coach #2, personal communication, 4th November, 2014, p.10).

This coach's reference, to having 'control of my own destiny', revealed how insufficient control over coaching activities in the satellite clubs impacted on his future self. He continued, saying that having access to future elites 'allows me to give them direction in doing the right things' (ibid). The importance of control to HPSCs was encapsulated in a comment from Coach #31 who stated:

> I sometimes have swimmers that challenge the programme. I think that is normal with elite athletes. They demand answers and some even want to set the agenda. I had a heated argument at the beginning of the season with [named athlete] but, at the end of

the day, I am in control of direction – I have the final say (Coach #31, personal communication, 11ᵗʰ June, 2013, p.17).

Having the final say appeared to be the boundary mark of the relationship between an HPSC as leader and their direct follower athletes. However, the more mature elite athletes seem to require a different leadership style to others in the Athlete Agency, one that resembles more of a consultative relationship. The findings indicated that HPSCs adopt leadership styles between transformational and transactional with the final decision as the boundary marker.

Coaching Style

It became evident throughout the interviews, conferences and observations at competition that an HPSC's coaching style was markedly different with elite high-performing athletes in comparison to the styles they used with the younger members in the Athlete Agency.

> I think it starts off as a...not dictatorial but very much an instructive: "Do this; do this; do this." And then it becomes (pause)... "I think we should do this." And then it becomes a: "Let's discuss if we should do this." I still reflect on the Brian Clough thing: "If I had an argument with a player we would sit down for twenty minutes, talk about it and then decide I was right" (laughs out loud) (Coach #1, personal communication, 3ʳᵈ July, 2015, p.16).

Coach #1 captured in overview his changing style over time. What emerged from our interview was that, in a highly contextualised learning process at the micro-foundational level, the roles of the athlete as follower and the HPSC as a leader can switch. The athlete can become the source of learning when they enter the international arena to compete.

Coach #1 talked of the 'follower challenge' stating:

> Now, I've got a different person who's a little bit more: "Why are we doing that? Is there any other way we can do it?" Because suddenly she is exposed to a lot of other world class athletes that have achieved similar things to her but do it in different ways. So now she is like: "There is more than one way to skin a cat here." And human instinct will say I wonder if there is an easier way (laughter) (Coach #1, personal communication, 3ʳᵈ July, 2015, p.14).

This continual search for contextualised knowledge, to gain competitive advantage, was a common feature of all the interviews. This tendency to look for an easier way, which is often referred to by HPSCs as a 'smarter way', revealed a resistive element in the coach–athlete relationship. The two sovereign masters of Kant's pain and pleasure, it seems, mediates HPSCs' influence. Coach #1 revealed his awareness of his athlete's tactics by

using two Olympic swimmers, British distance athlete Rebecca Adlington and French sprint athlete Florent Manaudou, to make the point he stated:

> Yeah and the interesting thing is the selective information they bring you back. So [named athlete] wouldn't bring me back information on how Rebecca Adlington was training because that would make her programme much harder. But she would bring me back information on how Manaudou was training because that would make her programme much easier (laughter) (ibid).

The coach described how in some cases he delegated decision-making to the athlete and allowed a degree of experimentation. He made it clear, however, that he would remind her of his advice should she happen to fail.

> I'll allow her to make mistakes. I will say: "OK if that's what you want to do. Now my best advice is." My classic statement... "My best advice that I'm giving you"... And I'll then embellish that: "With 25 years of coaching experience – and bla, bla, bla – is that you should do this. But if you're telling me you actually want to do that instead then you can do that because it's your swimming career at the end of the day"(ibid).

He concluded by making it clear that the responsibility for performance is the athletes, of which, he pointed out, she doesn't like being reminded, stating:

> I've always said: "Now if it so happens that you actually get greater success in doing it your way, I am quite happy to hold up my hands and say, hey [named athlete], you did a great job mate. I've learned something there and I'm happy that you made that decision because we've got a better athlete out of you. But if it goes wrong, I *will* remind you of this conversation" (ibid).

He did come to admit, after probing questions, that he would only give the athlete this kind of freedom during non-critical periods. During important phases of training, the style became more autocratic.

Coaching styles also seem to change between contexts and at critical periods in the training programme. A new term in coaching discourse that emerged in 2016, 'arena skills', differentiates the style used in the Core-Coaching Agency Internal (Field #1a) component from that of the Core-Coaching Agency External (Field #1b) component located in the Swimming Competition Arena. Speaking at the 2016 BSCA Conference, British HPSC James Gibson talked about adjusting his coaching style at competition stating:

> One of my things is to continually reset... I now have a saying that each day is Day 1... It's a process I go through in the mornings – who do I need to be today? You need to be

a chameleon, so I think I need to be this person for that athlete (Gibson, personal communication, 23rd September, 2016, p.3).

The same type of comments, regarding coaching style and arena skills, emerged in a number of the formal interviews. Coach #31 described how his coaching style changes depending upon the context.

> In the training environment, the programme of work sometimes forces a style of...
> "Just fucking do it"... to be perfectly blunt. Not all of the time but some of it. The
> swimmers have no real choice in the matter when it's important. At competition
> though it is different, you have to treat each swimmer individually, they need to be
> listened to much more (Coach #31, personal communication, 11th June, 2013, p.19).

During the interviews, there was a tendency for HPSCs to talk about a collaborative style of leadership. There were, however, some contradictory examples, where they talked of collaboration whilst giving the athlete little real choice – an illusion of an involving style of coaching. For instance, after asking about his style, Coach #16 first commented:

> I involve my senior swimmers in the sessions. I let them have their say and if I can
> modify the programme I will. They are mature adults and are capable of having an
> input to what we do (Coach #16, personal communication, 20th April, 2015, p.5).

However, at a later point in the interview, when discussing HPSC–athlete relationships and resistance to an HPSC's programme of work, this coach appears to contradict his earlier statement stating:

> They either buy into my programme or they don't. If they don't buy into what I have
> planned then I will ask them to leave. A lot of the time we just have to do the work.
> They may not like it but it has to be done. There is no other way' (ibid, p.15).

Although the coaching style in the Core-Coaching Agency Internal (Field 1a) appeared to be autocratic in the main, in the Core-Coaching Agency External (Field #1b) it seemed more consultative in nature. Responding to questions at the 2012 BSCA Conference, Australian National Performance Director for swimming Jacco Verhaeren describes this more flexible approach to athletes at competition. Speaking about his swimmer the Olympian Ranomi Kromowidjojo he stated:

> Warming up is to me very individual. Some swimmers do 1200m or even 1500m, but
> that would be too much for Ranomi. She made a choice two years ago to warm up only
> for 300m or 400m. She also races when she doesn't warm up at all (Verhaeren, personal
> communication, 21st September, 2012, p.5).

It became apparent at interview that leadership in the Core-Coaching Agency relates to providing direction on skills, fitness and lifestyle for competitive athlete performance. However, the research also revealed that directional influence in the other agencies differed.

In the Coach Agency, the HPSC is a leader of leaders. Normally, assistant coaches in this agency are delegated authority from the HPSC, and the extent that they have such authority varies according to assistant coaches' competence.

> I can just let my two assistants get on with it. They have my programme and they are fully qualified coaches. I also have a new assistant, who is a parent. I have to be a bit more prescriptive with her (Coach #9, personal communication, 21st July, 2015, p.12).

Coach #9 explained how she writes the session schedules and gives technical guidance on skills. The directional influence in this agency is related to developing coaching skills. Most of the interviewees expressed their enjoyment of mentoring other coaches, who then develop athletes in the value chain of the Athlete Agency. Some assistant coaches can be specialists in other areas.

The Technical Support Agency provides additional source of competence to the HPSC. In this agency, the leadership style appears to operate predominantly by way of delegation, with the HPSC acting more like a project manager. At the 2013 BSCA Conference, Swiss international swimming coach Stefan Widmark commented on the importance of learning from the experts in order that he can provide leadership to the athletes – a vicarious competence stating:

> I feel you have to be the psychologist – you, the coach. That is one thing you have to be damned good at. Because you are there every day in the corner with them, you are there. You have to be good at it. What I did early on, I had a psychologist with me on pool deck. When I had that person with me I wanted to learn those tools. I needed to know how I can get into the heads of the athletes (Widmark, personal communication, 27th September, 2013, p.9).

The HPSC can, then, become the follower of key experts but as a leader of the team they also need an ability to synthesise technical knowledge. Experts in the Technical Support Agency can be positive or negative sources of mediating influence, that is, they can attract or alienate.

Mediating Forces

A key finding in the research related to the degree of contextual awareness developed by HPSCs. From an awareness of self and own abilities, regarding swimming related technical

knowledge, to an ability to manage multiple sources of mediating influences, there is a pressing need for world-class expertise – a will to knowledge.

Responding to questions from the audience at the 2012 BSCA Conference former British HPSC Terry Dennison commented: 'These guys are like sponges, they just soak up knowledge' (Dennison, personal communication, 21st September, 2012, p.3). He went on to recount an experience at his own club with Australian sports scientist Bob Travene stating:

> I can tell you about Bob Travene, the Australian physiologist, I got him to come to Leeds to look at my programme and straight away he said to me you do too much work in the middle. You don't do enough work at very low level and work at very high-speed level and that's why you don't get sprinters, because you kill them by all the work you do in the middle (ibid).

A self-deprecating honesty pervaded the interviews. It was apparent from most HPSCs that actors within the Technical Support Agency provided positive mediating influences on an HPSC's self-awareness, especially in terms of their understanding of sports science.

> Yesterday I sat down with Jan Olbrecht and we chatted. There are holes in my coach education I need to fill. I have knowledge of sports science, yes, because I swam in the system. I understand threshold, heart rates, why I do this anaerobic capacity, but in terms of a direct physiological effect on training, I need to fill those gaps and I am aware of that (Coach #14, personal communication, 29th July, 2015, p.7).

There were, however, some experts who had an alienating impact on the HPSC. Most of the negative examples given in interview involved psychologists and physiotherapists.

> She was listening more to him than she was to me. He was inside her head, and to be honest I think he fucked her up. She never put in a good performance after that, she was scared of all the other athletes. It was fear of failure with her. The psychologist couldn't get her out of that one (Coach #16, personal communication, 20th April, 2015, p.8).

Such alienating influences seem to intensify in situations where the HPSC has a limited control over technical support human resources. Recalling a situation with the NGB, Coach #13 described the negative effect of using physiotherapists and other medical staff.

> Having a physiotherapist who works full-time and a doctor on call 24 hours a day is the worst thing I think I can do for my group. I have no control over that, but I have a full-time physiotherapist, [and] full-time doctors available. I had four athletes last year. I have never seen so many sick or injured people in my life. "I need a stretch"... "My wrist hurts"... "My elbow hurts"... You know what I mean (Coach #13b, personal communication, 28th September, 2013, p3).

Although the Technical Support Agency can be a source of negative mediating influences, actors from that agency only have a limited contact with the athletes, leading to minimal negative consequences. Relationships in the Coach Agency are, however, more thoroughgoing and hence there is a greater potential for alienating influences in that context.

> My assistant coach wanted to find her own sort of niche in the market of which swimmers were hers and who was going to have a stronger relationship with her than with me. She went down a route of almost... well - it was like grooming swimmers to be hers, and not mine. And all it did was... almost like make two clubs (Coach #18, personal communication, 30th October, 2014, p. 8).

The emotional impact on the HPSC was evident in his voice. He commented: 'At that point I wanted to pack it in and do something else' (ibid). He said he also felt betrayed by some of the athletes. Talking of his two assistants, he explained:

> Because they were independent, strong willed, highly qualified, and two very experienced coaches, what on paper looked like a dream team was actually hell on earth. You couldn't lead it. You could manage it but you couldn't lead it. It was fire-fighting and putting your fingers in holes all the time to stop the dyke from bursting over (ibid, p.9).

Similar issues can be present where strength and conditioning coaches are involved. As with assistant swimming coaches, they too can diminish an HPSC's influence.

> He used to ignore my programme and do his own stuff in the gym. I never knew from one day to the next how my swimmer would react to my training sessions. The swimmer unfortunately listened to him more than me (Coach #18, personal communication, 30th October, 2014, p.12).

Most of the HPSCs interviewed had experienced issues with coaching staff. There were, however, more positive examples than negative, with most HPSCs extolling the benefits of land-based conditioning.

> To be honest I don't think I would have been so successful without my S and C (strength and conditioning) Coach. He is absolutely superb. I think what I like is that he does exactly what I ask of him. I set the water-based programme and I just tell him what I want in terms of conditioning. He does the rest and the results have been outstanding (Coach #31, personal communication, 11th June, 2013, p.5).

Apart from the actors who work directly with the athletes in the Core-Coaching Agency on skills, fitness and lifestyle, relatives and parents are significant sources of mediating influence.

At competition, conferences and at educational events, a common subject of conversation is parents. 'I find dealing with parents the most difficult part of the job. I sometimes wonder why I do it' (Coach #31, personal communication, 11th June, 2013, p.7).

It seems that all HPSCs at times experience a difficult parent or relative. A comment from Coach #31 encapsulated an HPSC's feelings towards these stakeholders: 'We have all had experiences of the parent from hell' (Coach #31, personal communication, 11th June, 2013, p.7). Some, it seems, go beyond criticism and step into the coaching domain.

> You get those parents who think they could do better than the coach. They act as if they are the coach sometimes and bully their own children; especially after competition these parents can have a serious effect on their child's confidence (Coach #18, personal communication, 30th October, 2014, p.13).

It appears that the HPSCs perceive the parent or guardian who tries to give technical advice as threatening to their authority. The triadic relationship between HPSC, athlete and parent can leave the HPSC isolated.

> She listens a lot more to her mother than me. I can see and feel the lack of attention. I don't think it's me; my assistant experiences the same thing. Her mother is in the driving seat, she is in control (Coach #16, personal communication, 20th April, 2015, p.5).

Although the HPSCs spoke of most parents and guardians as supportive, the more difficult ones can cause high levels of stress. It is also these types of parent that can be members of the Executive Agency.

Whilst the actors in the Core-Coaching Agency, Technical Support Agency and Coach Agency bear a direct influence on the HPSC in their core role, it is the Executive Agency which appears to hold the main influence on an HPSC's feelings of fit.

> As I said before the best thing I had going for me was the Chairman. He was very supportive and tried to give me all the resources I needed like pool time or training equipment. He wasn't a parent and so he didn't have any conflicts of interest. We worked together extremely well and I don't think I could have achieved what we did without him (Coach #2, personal communication, 4th November, 2014, p.13).

Sports organisations, by nature, appear to be in a continual state of flux with a regular staff turnover. These changes can be a source of internal conflict. Coach #8 articulated his experiences of the Executive Agency over time.

> These are little battles you have to fight within a swimming club and you get over them, then you carry on. And then, three or four years later, the same battle comes up with new committee members... A chairman I had, who asked me to come to the club, was a

local politician. I had a secretary who was an ex-Welsh international swimmer. They were both very, very strong personalities. [They] thought they knew exactly where they wanted the club to go, which I found out afterwards was not the way I wanted the club to go (Coach #8, personal communication, 26th February, 2015, p.2).

The comments, 'A chairman I had, who asked me to come to the club' and 'I had a secretary' were revealing. In a significant number of the interviews, it appeared that HPSCs can be political and manipulative regarding the Executive Agency. The HPSC, it seems, needs to maintain the most influence, not just on athletes but also on the swimming organisation itself.

Conclusion

Findings show that the relationship the HPSC has with their athletes is a major factor regarding contextual fit. They all had experiences of both positive and negative psychological contracts in their symbiotic relationships with athletes. What the research revealed, however, was that there are two separate components in their relationships – namely working and personal. The findings also revealed significant weaknesses in the emotional contracting between HPSCs and their athletes.

Findings also showed that where the personal and working relationships are positive, that the HPSC experiences high levels of emotion – they care deeply about the athlete. There were examples, however, where only a working relationship existed, and despite high performance, the HPSCs were more ambivalent about the outcomes. All of the HPSCs had also experienced strong negative emotions when they perceive they have been betrayed.

 It appears from the findings that trusting, personal, long term relationships together with the challenge of coaching athletes to world class performance, is a greater attracting influence than the sport itself. It is these contextual factors, where the needs of the HPSC are met by the athlete and the needs of the athlete are met by the HPSC. Both sets of needs emerge from the context and are met by the context in an influence relationship.

It seems that where the HPSC-athlete relationship is weak the influence likewise is weak – consequently no relationship, no influence. Two considerations regarding influence emerged out of the analysis. First, the HPSC is a source of influence that affects athletes and other stakeholders, and secondly influence that acts on the HPSC. These influences emerge from the context and the context is affected by them. What became apparent from the research was that the HPSC was operating in a milieu of mediating influences.

The HPSCs' sources of influence are seen to be diverse and complex. It seems their power derives from who they are, what they can do, what they have done, what they do, and how they do it. What did emerge from the findings was the importance of authority, control,

credibility, coaching style, and ability to see what is happening in the context. The Coaching-Eye, it seems, is a major differentiator and the culmination of cognitive ability and contextualised learning.

The two second order themes of relationships and influence merge in the third order theme of contextualised leadership. Relationships, however, only exist in purposeful social contexts and without influence within that context there is no influence. The next chapter moves to consolidate contextualised identity and contextualised leadership into the final theme of contextual fit.

Chapter 7: Integrated Findings and Analysis: Contextual Fit

> [L]eadership is intensely contextual, and always dependent upon particular circumstances... Productive leadership requires that followers find a sense of purpose and meaning in what their leaders represent, such as social identity or some future opportunity (McChrystal, Eggers, and Mangone, 2018, p.7).

Introduction

I begin this chapter with a quote from McChrystal, Eggers and Mangone who point out that leadership always takes place in a particular social setting and is highly contextualised. This chapter provides an integrated analysis of the research findings taken from Chapters 4, 5 and 6 to reveal how High Performance Swimming Coaches develop a strong contextual fit into their role as leader. Four main sub-themes emerged from HPSCs' personal reflections on their lived experiences relating to the idea of being at *home* in context: those of self identity and social identity, as discussed in Chapter 5 – Research Findings 1, and of relationships and influence, as discussed in Chapter 6 – Research Findings 2.

During interview it became evident that HPSCs conduct their operational roles within five unique, diverse and complex contextual fields as described in Chapter 4. Each of these fields contains a unique set of actors who are differentiated by role. A sub-culture exists within each field, each having its own set of explicit and implicit rules. Each field may also be defined from a functionalist perspective, making it possible, and relatively easy, to identity actors' purposes, roles, positions, levels of authority, and the activities that they are involved in to achieve their purposes (Durkheim, 1951; Parsons, 1937).

These fields also have further attributes that are less obvious than those just mentioned, including the relationships contained within them, and the range of conflicts that arise through those relationships. The purpose of this chapter is to analyse and integrate the findings from Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 in relation to the five contextual fields: namely, British Society (Field #5), UK Sport (Field #4), Swimming Competition Arena (Field #3), Swimming Organisation (Field #2) and the Core-Coaching Agency (Field #1).

Contextualised Identity

The two second-order themes of self identity and social identity come together in the third-order theme of contextualised identity to produce a fusion of identities (Gomez et al., 2011). When it comes to personal identity, the HPSC chooses the context and discovers a purpose in life through contextual feedback. This meaningful activity, however, cannot take place in isolation. 'The production of self is never done in isolation and is an ongoing negotiation, not a once and for all achievement' (Sinclair, 2011, p.509).

It seems that the self, role and social identity are inextricably linked and located in an integrated, contextualised identity as Coach #31 stated: 'I am the club and to me we are one big family' (Coach #31, personal communication, 11th June, 2013, p.7). This type of statement emerged on a number of occasions in the interviews. Coach #1 suggested that if you cut his arm off the club's name would be 'running through it...' (Coach #1, personal communication, 3rd July, 2015, p.4). The HPSC, their personal social identity and their club's social identity appear, it seems, to be one and the same.

Role identity, in a relational sense, involves interacting with other agents embedded in a social setting. The two aspects of personal and role identity serve to address self-concept questions such as: 'Is this me?' (Jenkins, 2008) and 'Am I suited to this role?' It seems, however, that HPSCs also have a need for recognition - a social identity of significance. The findings in Chapter 5 show that, to satisfy their need to differentiate themselves, HPSCs either join an existing performance swimming organisation or create one.

According to Bourdieu (1977), as detailed in Chapter 2 - Sociological Perspectives of Leadership, the accumulation of being in a particular social field is brought about by finding a purpose, becoming efficient and gaining recognition. The integration of self and social identity is therefore conducted under the three headings – Finding Purpose, Efficiency and Recognition each shown in italics.

Finding Purpose

Although not explicitly stated, it was evident from their stories that HPSCs wanted recognition, as leaders, for creating teams of successful athletes. Although they talked of being athlete-centred, the findings indicate a contradiction. HPSCs' drive seems to be mostly focussed on their ambitions for self-actualisation (Maslow, 2011; Rogers, 1998). The teaching of swimming and age-group competitive swimming, it seems, are insufficient to satisfy their competitive nature. They therefore seek to work with athletes who are at the top in their discipline – the elite performer. They seek to invest themselves in a context of their personal choice to find fulfilment in life – to *accumulate being* (Bourdieu, 1977).

The journey towards a contextual fit begins with a life-changing turning point, when the HPSC chooses to become a new entrant into the world of high-performance coaching. All of the HPSCs recalled fleeting or 'whooshing' moments (Dreyfus and Kelly, 2011) that had inspired them. Feedback from the context in the form of positive experiences gives HPSCs this 'feel for the game' (Bourdieu, 1998) and draws them into the 'field of play' – a context that brings them a sense of calling.

However, the concept that life has an intrinsic purpose is contested (Sartre, 1958; Nietzsche, 2016). It might be argued that there is no inherent purpose and that, therefore, although this

sense of calling manifests itself through self-discovery and the feeling that 'I'm good at this' (Coach #4, personal communication, 13th November, 2014, p.2) - this might be considered to be a form of self-deception and thus illusory. Illusory or not, the context signals to the HPSC that they have helped to facilitate an athletic performance. The tangible result registered, possibly on a scoreboard, with feedback from others, indicates to them that they have been of value in the coaching process.

Once established as an HPSC insecurities can be a source of anxiety. A significant number of HPSCs talked of 'blagging' or 'winging it' following their initial entry into the role. This 'dramaturgical' activity, it seems, is intended to create an impression of coaching competence and to gain acceptance (Goffman, 1959). As Collinson states:

> Goffman focused on individuals' tendency to present self in a favourable light, using information politically to conceal, mystify, overstate and/or understate. In the workplace, dramaturgical selves are more likely to emerge where employees feel highly visible, threatened, defensive, subordinated and/or insecure (Collinson, 2003, p.527).

This need to 'act the part' masked the internal feelings of insecurity experienced by a significant number of the HPSCs. From my poolside observations it also became evident that 'acting the part' in this way can give the impression of confidence where, in reality, little of it really exists - 'He looks very confident and is now talking to another high profile coach' (PN04, personal communication, 10th March, 2012, p.41).

These early experiences in the Core-Coaching Agency, both internally and in the external competition arena, coupled with their competitive nature, seem to trigger a desire for greater efficiency with a necessary level of requisite variety (Ashby, 1957). Although not explicitly stated, it became evident that, after their initial inspiration, the HPSCs become acutely aware of the need for expert technical knowledge commensurate with preparing athletes for international competition.

Efficiency

This investment of self and exploration of identity has two components: contextual mastery and personal growth (Ryle, 2000). Contextualised fit comprises contextual mastery and the ability to manage the context. Personal growth can be viewed as building and expanding self-awareness and personal effectiveness. In a Bourdieusian sense, a well formed HPSC habitus is gained through a full investment in the role – that is taking it beyond a mere occupation to becoming pre-occupied.

In their exploration of identity, the findings show that the HPSCs seek to create a context that enables them to gain recognition, primarily from athletes and their peer coaches. They seek to validate themselves as coaches on the international stage. Identity, in this sense,

goes beyond what we think of ourselves; it involves others whom we hold in high esteem. Our self-concept is thus shaped by what others think of us, or how we interpret their feedback (Schwartz, Luyckx and Vignoles, 2012; Jenkins, 2008).

From the findings it is evident that a high proportion of HPSCs suffered from 'status anxiety' in their early encounters at competition (Berger and Luckman, 1979). This was experienced as a threat to their identity. Comments such as: 'I'm conscious of my status' (Coach #8, personal communication, 26th February, 2015, p.17), and 'I still didn't think that I was good enough to be there' (Coach #6, personal communication, 6th November, 2014, p.9) were common responses – the imposter syndrome (Clance and Imes, 1978). The magnitude of the challenge suddenly becomes apparent to them.

It appears that becoming aware of a limited self, in an initially alien context, triggers an insatiable hunger for swimming-related technical knowledge. 'These coaches are like sponges, they just soak up knowledge' (Dennison, personal communication, 21st September, 2012, p.4). Regardless of whether the drive is due to their competitive nature or feelings of insecurity, the evidence suggests that HPSCs develop a high level of awareness regarding the contextual demands and conceptual skills needed for the role:

> Conceptual skill... becomes increasingly critical in more responsible executive positions where its effects are maximised and most easily observed... this conceptual skill becomes the most important of all (Katz, 2009, p.33).

It seems that HPSCs need to craft a self beyond their current ability in this extremely competitive context. To be successful and accumulate being, they need efficiency. They need what Ashby (1957) refers to as 'requisite variety' – that is, where the complexity of their habitus matches the complexities of the context. The HPSCs seem to desire the acquisition of behaviours and actions that reflect mastery of their role-in-context and the possession of essential swimming related technical knowledge.

What the research revealed, however, is that there are still significant self-confessed gaps in an HPSC's technical knowledge. 'I must admit I am not overly clear as to why anaerobic lactate work can adversely affect the aerobic capacity' (Coach #31, personal communication, 11th June, 2013, p.23). It appears from the findings that some HPSCs rely more on an external source of knowledge from actors in the Technical Support Agency.

The requirements at this level of coaching are diverse and extensive across a range of scientific disciplines. To produce world class performance, where the margins of success and failure are extremely small, multiple sources of leadership are needed (Bolden, 2008). Whilst the HPSC may be perceived as the leader, inevitably the leadership role becomes highly distributed. The HPSC, however, is one of those important sources of leadership.

Although there are multiple sources of leadership influencing an athlete, the HPSC works with the athlete in the swimming pool on a day-to-day basis. This longer term relationship is one of the main attractive forces for the HPSCs, together with the competitive challenge. They create the context, formulate the training programme, and control the water-based activity. They also appear to become rapidly aware of the context.

They observe, analyse and give feedback to athletes on swimming skills and their responses to training programmes. Findings show that most of their time is spent watching. They, in essence, become the athlete's vicarious sight: a Coaching-Eye. As Jon Rudd commented at the BSCA Conference in 2012: 'We can see but can't feel and they can feel but can't see' (Rudd, personal communication, 21st September, 2012, p.5).

This Coaching-Eye is an HPSC's window on the swimmers' world and it appears essential to the development of the coaching habitus. Watching athletes on a day-to-day basis in training and at competition seems to invoke high levels of tacit learning at a micro-foundational level. Unready-to-hand (Heidegger, 1962) observations spot weaknesses in the athletes' skills. As Coach #10 articulated: 'I had watched her stroke a hundred times and never saw it. Then it suddenly struck me. On the upsweep the pitch of her right hand seems to flatten' (Coach #10, personal communication, 25th August, 2015, p.19).

At times the HPSC learns without conscious thought in the tacit dimension. Referring to his concept of 'System 1' unconscious thinking and the inner-eye, Kahneman posits:

> It continuously monitors what is going on outside and inside the mind, and continuously generates assessments of various aspects of the situation without specific intention and with little or no effort (Kahneman, 2011, p.89).

HPSCs' learning is highly contextually dependent and adaptive (Bruner, 1991). This tacit knowledge, it seems, is built on early cognitive scaffolding gleaned from social capital at a macro-level of context.

Part of facilitating athlete performance derives from watching athletes perform, enabling the early spotting of latent talent – the Coaching-Eye 'lost in focussed attention' (Gumbrecht, 2006, p.51). The developed ability to see what other coaches cannot see, especially in swimming related skills, featured highly in interviews. Through this, HPSCs seem to find both meaning and beauty in athletic skill within their role. Gumbrecht describes the mystical dimension of sport and moments spent catching glimpses of aesthetic beauty:

> Such epiphanies are, I believe, the source of joy we feel when we watch an athletic event, and they mark the height of our aesthetic response. They throw us into an oscillation between our perceptions of the sheer beauty of the physical form and our obligation to interpret that form (ibid, p.54).

This intimate knowledge of the athlete's skills and their responses to training becomes a valuable resource to both the HPSC and the athlete. This knowledge, however, is subjective in nature and ambiguous. In contradiction to their perceived competence, a large number of the HPSCs talked of using 'trial and error' in all areas of athlete development, trying to find a competitive advantage. This reflects a level of uncertainty in the pursuit of success.

This uncertainty of outcomes also appears to be a source of anxiety for HPSCs. Threats to their identity are ever present, as they are unable to control outcomes. Athletes deliver organisational performance at competition, but not always to expected standards. HPSCs talked of feeling helpless in the competition arena, aware that they could not control rival athletes' performances or even fully control those of their own athletes. The more intense the competition, the more stressful an HPSC's role seems to become.

A small number of HPSCs talked about the potential adverse consequences of attending high level competition on a regular basis. Some spoke of resorting to alcohol or drugs, and suffering depression due to these intense pressures. Success, it seems, is constantly needed to maintain their credibility and status, but this comes at a potential cost to the HPSCs' well-being. This pressure may account for an HPSC's need for the development of an inner third eye - a Coaching-Eye. This is an eye that sees, not just at a macro-level, but also at a micro-level. It seems the will to win (Nietzsche, 2016) and gain recognition is a powerful force.

Recognition

Whilst all HPSCs sought trust and respect from their athletes, they also placed great value on gaining respect from peers in the competition arena. The word 'respect' emerged on numerous occasions during the interviews. Findings indicate that the need for recognition from peers, and for self-efficacy, is as important as recognition from the athlete:

> It was a combination of real pride in him [the athlete] because he'd done so well this lad, and then a real pride in myself with everyone coming up and saying: "you've done a great job" (Coach #3, personal communication, 4th February, 2016, p.5).

In an attempt to achieve, HPSCs seek to create an organisational context, 'where the output of top international athletes becomes inevitable' (Dennison, personal communication, 21st September, 2102, p.2). A performance swimming organisation, however, is reliant on other actors in the five internal agencies: Core-Coaching, Executive, Coach, Athlete and Technical Support. In this, it seems from the findings that HPSCs form multiple identities (Schwartz, Luyckx and Vignoles, 2012; Jenkins, 2008), with an identity for each agency.

It seems they need to understand the context and gain knowledge in order to acquire credibility and influence with others in the organisation. As Collinson comments:

> Individuals are knowledgeable and creative agents who, in forging relationships and constructing various selves, significantly shape the societies and organizations they inhabit (Collinson, 2003, p.542).

HPSCs require a large collective of 'significant others' (Berger and Luckman, 1979) to achieve results. To enable their leadership, they need essential resources and a viable performance based organisation. Interlocutors in each of the internal agencies are, therefore, needed to help create a context that is conducive to producing world class performance.

Whilst athletes and other stakeholders may perceive the HPSC as all seeing and all knowing, the observations and discussions at poolside indicated otherwise. HPSCs' intense will to seek knowledge from others suggests the possible insecurities created by the awareness that they have significant gaps in their own understanding.

Actors with the type of knowledge needed to facilitate world class performance, however, tend to reside outside the swimming organisation. These sources of social capital include peer international HPSCs, international athletes, world-class sports scientists in a range of disciplines and other actors in sports-related professional organisations, providing a body of swimming related technical knowledge. The opportunity to engage with such actors depends upon performance. In this sense the HPSC becomes a synthesiser of knowledge from multiple sources.

It is axiomatic that HPSCs seek distinction for their efforts as a source of symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1977). The tacit learning and vicarious competence gained over long periods are an important resource to the athlete. HPSCs' vicarious competence derives from athletic performance – competence by association. Vicarious knowledge comes from a range of experts in the Technical Support Agency. The ability to see what is needed derives from the Coaching-Eye – what Dr James Counsilman referred to as the X factor: 'The great coach recognises what is needed to do the job and then does it' (Counsilman, 1977, p.265).

In summary, HPSCs need a Coaching-Eye that can see what needs to be done at a micro-level relating to the athlete, and at a macro-level regarding the swimming organisation and international competition arena. These appear to be an important source of competitive advantage. It seems that the pressures created in attempting to satisfy esteem and achievement needs to create a focussed attention resulting in a highly developed sense of awareness. What was unfamiliar in each context subsequently grows in familiarity (Kondo, 1990).

In Bourdieusian terms, the HPSC accumulates being by finding a purpose in the role, developing efficiency, and seeking recognition. The Core-Coaching Agency is where they find their primary purpose. However, they need the help of significant others across five

contextual fields. They supplement their economic and social capital through gaining vicarious competence in the Technical Support Agency and scarce resources from the Executive Agency. Without a viable and effective swimming organisation they would be unable to achieve the success they desire.

The continued success of athletes at the international level is an HPSC's source of credibility, through vicarious competence. It seems that recognition from peers and athletes is their main driving force. The context in which they fulfil their role, however, is complex, ambiguous and uncertain. It brings considerable pressure, often not visible to others, sometimes resulting in serious negative consequences.

An HPSC's perceived ability may be illusory. To achieve, they need to form strong relationships and influence a large body of significant others. They are lent credibility by their continued success as a valuable resource to the athlete. Their Coaching-Eye can see what needs to be done to facilitate an athlete's performance. The role is more of a project manager than the often romantic view (Meindl, 1995) of the competent leader. Findings support a constitutive view of leadership (Grint, 1997), where context plays a much more significant part in outcomes than current literature depicts.

Contextualised Leadership

The two second order themes of relationships and influence merge in the third-order theme of contextualised leadership. Without influence there is no relationship and without a relationship there is no influence, so the two are inextricably linked. Fusing the two concepts, Joseph Rost defines leadership as: 'an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes' (Rost, 1993, p.60).

Leadership concepts as detailed in Chapter 2 - Leadership Perspectives together with sociological concepts are used in the analysis of contextualised leadership. Leadership can only exist in a social setting within stakeholder relationships and an HPSC's ability to lead in a milieu of mediating influences affects these relationships. This part of the analysis is therefore conducted under the headings – Relationships in Context, Influence in Context, Attracting Social Influences and Alienating Social Influences all shown in italics.

Whilst post-modern thinking has moved beyond the romantic views of leadership there still appears to be a tendency in the literature to privilege the leader and render the follower's voice silent. There is also a tendency to view all actors in an organisation as a collective of followers. Human needs, including those of the leader, that emerge from context are ignored. The banal reality is that athletes need to achieve as athletes and HPSCs need to achieve as coaches.

What the research reveals is that the HPSC is a leader in multiple social fields of power. Each of these fields, whilst they may attract and hold the HPSC to their role, is also a potential source of negative mediating influences that could alienate them. An HPSC's desire for achievement is met vicariously through athlete performance and by their swimming organisation meeting their need for essential resources. Contextual fit, it seems, is to be found within the relationships in each of the fields.

Relationships in Context

The Core-Coaching Agency Internal (Field #1a) is the field where HPSCs' high-performance coaching identity is initially formed. This micro-foundational field is concerned with the preparation of athletes for competition. In this field of power, the HPSC is in a leadership role, facilitating athlete performance with both individuals and the collective team (Adair, 1979). They have the organisational rational/legal authority (Weber, 1947) to establish and control the context.

Findings reveal that a separation of personal relationships from working relations in HPSC-athlete relationships was needed to fully understand the *de jure* and *de facto* components as related to emotional contracts. It appears that the underlying primary need of the HPSC in this is the subordination of the athlete to their leadership. Outstanding athlete performance can, however, be realised without the need for a positive personal relationship with their coach. Australian Olympic swimming champion Ian Thorpe, writing in his autobiography, compared his Australian HPSC Doug Frost, to his newly appointed Russian HPSC Gennadi Touretski, stating:

> Doug and I clashed frequently. I suppose, given that we were very different people. As much as Gennadi understands me, Doug did not. He had his way of doing things and I was his pupil. There was simply no room for discussion... But for all his problems I have to give credit to Doug... I would always know what was expected of me (Thorpe, 2012, p.85).

This example of achievement without a personal relationship, and an athlete's need for understanding from the swimming coach also highlights what the athlete expects from the HPSC. American Olympic swimmer Michael Phelps, writing about his experience of being coached by American HPSC Bob Bowman, stated:

> For nearly twenty years, my days have begun with an early-morning swim practice... And it's a rare day when Bob Bowman hasn't been there to meet me on the pool deck and to watch my every stroke and to call out my next practice set... He was always prepared, constantly planning... and extremely devoted to achieving excellence in even the smallest of tasks (Phelps, 2016, p.51).

The presence of a personal and working relationship, it appears, can endure over longer periods of time. It seems to set a benchmark for the ideal contextual fit. The comments regarding the coach's watching, control of activities, and attention to detail appear to express the essence of an effective, symbiotic HPSC-athlete relationship. Where an athlete shows resistance or dissent, however, tension and frustration can emerge.

Whilst, metaphorically speaking, the HPSC is constantly looking for the 'big catch'- it seems that there are few athletes, apart from younger age group swimmers, who fully subordinate themselves to an HPSC's leadership. There is always a level of resistance. A large percentage of HPSCs talked of their frustration with some of their athletes, exacerbated by weak emotional contracting. A mismatch in philosophies or a lack of trust in the HPSC can be a considerable source of frustration. The findings showed a wide variance in emotional contracts and the possibility of forming 'in-groups' and 'out-groups' (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995).

There is a danger that athletes who fully subordinate themselves to HPSCs' leadership and form special relationships are awarded additional privileges, thus forming an in-group. Out-group members, however, who merely comply with HPSCs' requirements, may be denied these same privileges. This can be seen as unfair and hence become a potential source of conflict. HPSCs, however, did talk of athletes who had changed the state of their emotional contract from either coercive or calculative to cooperative (Etzioni, 1964). A number of factors can cause an athlete to change the state of their contract. One common example is when an athlete achieves at a major competition.

All HPSCs could give examples where athletes, having found success, entered a prima donna state, leading to a temporary loss of engagement in the relationship. Engagement, it seems, is the life-blood of the HPSC-athlete relationship. HPSCs talked of this as being 'the greatest feeling in the world' (Coach #9, personal communication, 21st July, 2015). A lack of engagement leads to insecurity and frustration in the role. Conversely, being approached by an athlete who asks for leadership meets an HPSC's need to feel valued.

Likewise all HPSCs gave examples of athletes who did not engage with and subordinate themselves to their leadership. Being aware of their lack of influence, in some cases HPSCs asked such athletes to leave their programmes. A fully effective HPSC-athlete relationship only appears to work when the athlete subordinates to their HPSC's leadership and the HPSC is selfless in meeting the athlete's needs. Whilst HPSCs are faced with the challenge of trying to fully engage with all their athletes there will always be variations in the emotional contracts.

The research showed that, where an HPSC had a dysfunctional emotional contract with their athlete, they were less inclined to become emotional when the athlete had a major success. A common response to the question: 'Why no emotion?' was: 'The athlete doesn't trust me and I don't like them' (Coach #31, personal communication, 11th June, 2013, p.15). Trust and loyalty featured extremely highly during all interviews and a lack of these appeared to be a significant source of frustration. The role of HPSCs, however, extends beyond the athletes they coach. Other stakeholders in their swimming organisation need to be considered.

Engagement between the HPSC and multiple actors within their swimming organisation appeared to be a crucial enabler of HPSCs' leadership. Being able to gain the support of these actors, each with their own personality and needs, is an essential part of the HPSC role.

> It is impossible to ignore our personal life histories, daily experiences, relationships and interrelationships with others, as leadership, indeed work in general, involves engagement with the multifarious identities of individuals in relation to others. We bring ourselves, our psyches, our histories, our idiosyncrasies, our ways of talking and thinking and acting, to these workplace relationships (Carroll, Firth and Wilson, 2019, p.157).

Although engagement and trust are essential ingredients in the Core-Coaching Agency, trust was also important in the other agencies, none more so than the Executive Agency. Swimming organisations by their nature are always in a state of flux. Whether the HPSC leads the swimming organisation or is confined to technical, swimming-related activities, they must be able to trust the major influencers presiding in the Executive Agency.

> The importance of trust related to human actions is generally acknowledged. Organizations are confronted by rapid changes that imply uncertainty for people at work. Uncertainty about the future makes trust important (Andersen, 2008, p.173).

Hence, there were HPSCs who had resigned because of a breakdown in trust that had led to their feelings of alienation. The Executive Agency plays an essential role as the provider of scarce resources and as an enabler of HPSCs' leadership. Where the HPSC perceives a threat to security and achievement, it seems that they have the courage to move elsewhere. Athletes, however, can also seek alternatives.

For example, Coach #8 talked about a female swimmer who wanted to leave him and go to a rival club, stating: 'I don't mind swimmers leaving for another club, they are free agents, I wish them well and try to stay positive' (Coach #8, personal communication, 26th February, 2015, p.7). However, later in the interview, while discussing a male swimmer and his father, the coach comments: 'I said to his father - "If he leaves, don't think you can come back. I don't want any more to do with him"...' (ibid, p.23).

An important finding emerged from these statements which resulted in two very different HPSC responses. Where HPSCs had been involved in athletes' movements between clubs, they were able to maintain a positive relationship towards the athlete. In such a case, HPSCs can accept an athlete's desire to move on and can take solace in the fact that they have been consulted and have been treated respectfully. Conversely, where they are not consulted they may see this as a betrayal, a rejection and a threat to their security.

This sense of betrayal can be destructive. French, Gosling and Case in discussing the intensity of emotion envy can invoke in human relationships, also highlight the effects of perceived betrayal:

> In a similar way, betrayal too can be experienced as a destructive attack; it strikes at an individual's deeply held sense of self, leaving them devastated, enraged and bewildered at being treated so unexpectedly and deceitfully or dishonourably (French, Gosling, and Case, 2009, p.146).

In summary, both trust and loyalty is inherent in strong coach-athlete relationships. All HPSCs cited acts of betrayal, as they perceived them, when athletes left them for other swimming organisations. In extreme cases, an athlete's betrayal could result in an HPSC's alienation from their role and, ultimately, their resignation. The investment HPSCs make on behalf of their athletes lead some to expect an athlete's respect and loyalty.

Hurwitz and Hurwitz highlight to leaders the importance of trust in relationships when building effective teams stating:

> When you read up on relationship building guidance, trust comes up again and again. Often trust is cited as the basis or fundamental input into a strong relationship. We propose that trust is actually an outcome of a strong relationship... Trust comes in two flavours: trust in someone's competence and trust in someone's integrity. These two types of trust are quite different (Hurwitz and Hurwitz, 2015, p.134).

A final surprising finding from the research was the degree of care or affection that HPSCs have for their athletes. Where a loyal, trusting, personal relationship existed, high levels of consideration for the athlete could be discerned, even if they were sometimes hidden. These characteristics are reminiscent of the attributes of top executives in the commercial world.

It became evident, however, from the research, that performance can be an illusion when used as an indicator of a strong relationship. This seems to be due to a conflation of personal and working relationships. Despite the presence of a negative personal relationship, it is still possible for an athlete to achieve outstanding results as long as they have a positive working relationship and subordinate themselves to an HPSC's leadership. This does, however, affect HPSCs' emotional responses to the athlete.

HPSCs cited cases where they did not like their athlete and were less emotional when they were successful; they did not seem to care in the way they would have if the personal relationship had been positive. Nevertheless HPSCs were happy to accept the credit for these successes to maintain their social standing and credibility in the context. Whilst a combination of personal and working relationship does deliver results the deep underlying motivation of the HPSC is the will to power – the will to win is secondary.

Influence in Context

The research findings reveal two main themes regarding influence: source and sink (Beer, 1985) – that is where the influence emanates from and its point of application (Foucault, 1977). The first aspect considers the HPSC to be the *source* of influence affecting others in the social context. 'Power is the ability of individuals or groups to make their own interests or concerns count, even when others resist' (Giddens and Sutton, 2013, p.971). The second aspect concerns the effects of mediating influences that either attract and bind the HPSC to the role or alienate them from it – the point of application or *sink.*

Regarding the HPSC as a source of influence there are structural and personal sources of an HPSC's power (Pfeffer, 1994). The structural sources include their formal position and authority within their swimming organisation. HPSCs talked of the importance of having control of their context and the frustrations they felt where the Executive Agency limited their authority. Control seemed to be particularly important to them, and three forms emerged: disciplinary, control related to coaching activities, and control over direction (leadership).

Personal sources that emerged included the degree of drive and stamina, both physical and mental; the ability to see what others cannot see; toughness and the ability to deal with conflicts; the ability to understand 'wicked' (Rittel and Webber, 1973), technical, swimming-related problems; the ability to cultivate allies and supporters amongst the significant others; and the ability to act as a follower within all contextual fields. These multiple sources of power combine for the individual within a specific social milieu (Pfeffer, 1994).

Power, it seems, still tends to elicit negative perceptions of coercion and control, with the idea of power over others for personal benefit. However, as Keith Grint points out:

> [F]ollowers always have the choice not to act, and though they may pay the consequences of not acting the point is that no leader or situation can guarantee followership (Grint, 2005, p.46).

This truism is evidenced by athletes choosing to move to an alternative swimming organisation. Despite the scope and strength of HPSCs' sources of influence, it seems that not all of their followers are convinced by them.

Influence is seen as a softer, positive force that is consensual in nature (Handy, 1990). All HPSCs discussed how they involved their athletes in decision-making and the importance of maintaining effective personal and working relationships. 'I think the coach-athlete relationship is the most important thing... and it beats any facility... it beats anything' (Marshall, personal communication, 27th September, 2013, p.15). Whilst the HPSC is a source of influence they are also a point of application for contextual influences which either attract the HPSC or alienate them from their role.

Attracting Social Influences

The research shows that, aside from performance, longer-term relationships with elite athletes, coupled with the challenge of facilitating world-class performances, created more social gravity for HPSCs than the sport itself. Helping others achieve in a unique social setting, underpinned by their own need for vicarious achievement, creates the raison d'être for investment in the role.

HPSCs who had been former competitive swimmers spoke of their disappointment in not fully realising their ambitions in the sport. Their drive to help others achieve what they had not attained themselves revealed an underlying lack of self-efficacy. It appeared that they were trying to remove the remembered pain of their underachievement. This was accomplished by helping athletes achieve where they had underachieved in their own view. This, it seems, creates in the HPSC a need to work with the best athletes - those they feel can bring them the success they seek. They also watch other athletes and coaches intently to see 'what they can use' (Coach #26, personal communication, 13th September, 2015, p.7).

Once embedded in the role it takes on a sacred mantle. Through this, the HPSC find both meaning in their role and beauty in athletic skill. Gumbrecht describes the mystical dimension of sport and of moments spent catching glimpses of beauty stating: 'Such epiphanies are, I believe, the source of joy' (Gumbrecht, 2006, p.54). Whilst speaking to HPSCs at competitions comments such as: 'She has [swimming] strokes other swimmers would die for' or 'that stroke was made in heaven' (PN06, personal communication, 31st May, 2014, p.7) were commonplace.

HPSCs' eyes are drawn to athletic ability and they catch glimpses of future possibilities (Scharmer, 2009). They become 'lost in focussed attention' (Gumbrecht, 2006, p.51) watching the athletes and analysing their skills. In pursuit of success they also become increasingly contextually aware, exposing gaps in their own knowledge. As one coach remarked: 'I felt naked' (Coach #31, personal communication, 11th June, 2013, p.9).This insecurity, it seems, creates a will to acquire more knowledge, specifically technical knowledge.

HPSCs' competiveness and drive creates a strong desire for scientific and skill-based information to develop their technical knowledge as a form of economic capital. Social capital, in the form of peer HPSCs and technical experts, provides the HPSC with initial insights and cognitive scaffolding on which they can build their body of knowledge. All HPSCs talked of their hunger for swimming related information – the 'will to knowledge' (Nietzsche, 2016).

Although this was not made explicit by the HPSCs, it seems that a powerful drive is the 'will to power' (ibid). For the sources of influence or power, the findings reflect the importance of authority and control as enablers for leadership. It appears that these sources give the HPSCs the autonomy they feel they need in order to fulfil their own achievement needs and validate themselves as effective coaches.

All the HPSCs showed a strong desire for power, with comments such as: 'I do remember thinking this is mine; I'm in charge of this' (Coach #1, personal communication, 3rd July, 2015, p.2). However, it also became clear that there were cases where HPSCs had limited authority and followers in some agencies resisted their power, confirming that: 'Power is not a property but a strategy evident in the relations between people' (Foucault, 1977, p. 26).

It seems that autonomy, or freedom to decide their athletes' direction, through authority, fulfils a deep social need within the HPSCs (Pink, 2009). Where they were denied this authority, HPSCs talked of disillusionment and alienation from the organisation. 'I never felt at home' (Coach #4, personal communication, 13th November, 2014, p.5). It became evident, through statements such as: 'I do remember thinking this is mine' (Coach #1, personal communication, 3rd July, 2015, p.2), that the majority of the HPSCs in the cohort desired full authority, not just over the core coaching context but within the organisation.

Resources in terms of people, equipment, materials, and money are enablers to the HPSC. Using these resources they can create a context that meets their needs. Where the Executive Agency had full control over resources conflicts were revealed in statements such as: 'I was furious... we were only six months away from the Olympics' (Coach #16, personal communication, 20th April, 2015, p.8). This referred to when Coach #16's strength and conditioning coach was removed and it reflected the anger he felt when his authority over key resources was overruled.

In summary, there were three areas of authority that appeared to affect the HPSCs' sense of belonging and identity: the authority to determine the direction for the organisation; the authority to use organisational resources to enable their leadership; and the authority to select or reject followers in the Core-Coaching Agency. Where the Executive Agency had authority over resources, HPSCs talked of their frustration when these were removed or reallocated.

Perceived interference from NPDs and HCs was a significant source of conflict. Threats to identity or status and feelings of insecurity also prompted high emotional outbursts in the interviews, and were evidence of HPSCs' intense drive to achieve. Similar emotions to those felt when authority was undermined emerged when HPSCs were denied full control of the activities in the core coaching context. There are three forms of control, as mentioned earlier, disciplinary control, control of coaching activities, and control over direction.

First, as Drucker quoted by Edersheim states: 'Enlightened management appreciates the need for disciplined controls focused on opportunity, not profitability' (Edersheim 2007, p.108). Hence, HPSCs are by nature self-confessed tough disciplinarians who seek order and conformance to standards, especially in the core coaching context. This first type of control creates an ordered context for the athlete and enables the release of their talent.

Second, on the next level, control of the linked, programme-related activities is essential in the management of athlete performance. The HPSC in essence becomes the project manager of elite athlete performance. They are coordinators of a team of experts, including themselves, who facilitate world-class outcomes.

Third, control within the swimming organisation, and on a more extended level with other agencies, assists all internal stakeholders. From a leadership perspective, control of the direction for individual athletes and the organisation defines the HPSC as a leader:

> [C]ritical leadership writers recognize that leaders' control is very important and can take multiple economic, political, ideological and psychological forms. They show how control is not so much a 'dependent variable' as a deeply embedded and inescapable feature of leadership structures, cultures and practices (Collinson, 2011, p.185).

This comment highlights the complexity of the contextual social structures and their interaction. It seems that, as a leader, the HPSC is in search of requisite variety, enlisting the support of a range of technical experts to gain vicarious competence and facilitate athlete performance.

To understand this complexity, it would seem that a much more systematic approach is needed to understand the nature of high-performance coaching (Bertalanffy, 1951; Boulding, 1956; Ashby, 1957; Simon, 1991; Katz and Kahn, 1978). Each social field, it would appear, is a determinant of an HPSC's leadership or coaching style.

Alienating Social Influences

Within each of the five contextual fields there are potential alienating influences acting on the HPSC. In Chapter 4 - Research Context a number of negative mediating influences that affect

HPSCs was discussed. In Field #4 and Field #5, Sport and the British, a review of politics and the commercialisation of sport raised important moral questions for the HPSC.

In Field #3, toxic cultures that included financial irregularities, cheating through drugs and bullying highlighted areas where the HPSCs had been directly affected. Detailed analysis, however, of the wider context is beyond the scope of this thesis. The focus of the research analysis in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 is confined to Field #1, the Core-Coaching Agency – Internal, Field #2, the Swimming Organisation, and Field #3, the Swimming Competition Arena.

There is competition for influence, and the asymmetrical nature of power relations can be a source of conflict. The strongest influences appear to come from the administration component of the swimming organisation. The Executive Agency, by definition, consists of a number of actors with varying degrees of authority. Powerful actors in this agency may control the agenda through policies and procedures to exclude others, ensuring that only safe questions appear on the agenda (Bacharach and Baratz, 1962).

Lukes (2005) considers three faces of power, which are concerned with the use of power and the degree of visibility that exists to an independent observer. First-order power refers to decision-making that is visible to all. However, it was evident in the research that members of the Executive Agency can make decisions not visible to other stakeholders; they represent a second-order power. The source of a third-order of power is diffused throughout the culture, as a socially constructed power. The insecurity felt by HPSCs, with the authority vested in the Executive Agency, appears to be a potentially significant alienating influence. Some HPSCs had opted for more secure organisations where their authority was assured.

An example of third-order power affected a number of HPSCs in the cohort. One example was highlighted in Chapter 5, where I reflected on Coach #1's comment regarding how the membership of his first club had replaced the committee: 'At one point I was sacked for six months and the committee were thrown out and a new committee came back and I was brought back in' (Coach #1, personal communication, 3rd July, 2015, p.3). This reveals the vulnerability of HPSCs who lack ultimate authority and so can be discarded.

The most commonly cited day-to-day power issue concerned athletes' parents or close relatives. The behaviour of parents is diverse and complex, as revealed by Holt et al.: 'Parents are highly visible in sport, and studies have revealed important information about the positive and negative influences they exert on their children' (2009, p.37).

The research revealed that most parental issues arise in the Athlete Agency, where younger children are involved. Holt explains the diversity of parental types:

Some parents were highly involved without being controlling, were autonomy supportive, and provided appropriate structure. Alternatively, other parents were highly involved but controlling, did little to support their children's autonomy, and provided little appropriate structure (ibid).

However, 'problem' parents are not restricted to the Athlete Agency. HPSCs also experienced issues in the Core-Coaching Agency involving parents of their direct followers. As Coach #18 recalled:

Her dad was pretty angry. Next thing I know he turns up at the pool with a baseball bat telling me to stop shouting at his daughter in training. I managed to calm him down but it did put the shits up me (Coach #18, personal communication, 30th October, 2014, p.6).

In addition to mediating influences from parents, members of the Coach Agency and Technical Support Agency can have a negative impact on HPSC-athlete relationships. All of the HPSCs gave examples where unhelpful relationships with members of other agencies had interfered, especially involving assistant coaches. By nature, members of these two agencies are competitive and also seek vicarious achievement.

The athletes themselves can be either a pleasure to coach or problematic. All HPSCs cited incidents where they had felt betrayed by an athlete. Conversely they also quoted athletes that were a joy to coach. The Core-Coaching Agency appears to be the source of the majority of attracting and alienating influences for the HPSCs. It is in this agency that they find meaning and purpose in their role, which defines them as an HPSC and forges their self and social identities. Finally it is the combined effects of attracting and alienating forces that are two determinants of contextual fit.

Contextual Fit

The final theme of contextual fit combines the two third-order themes of contextualised identity and contextualised leadership and is analysed using the management, leadership and sociological perspectives detailed in Chapter 2. It seems that contextual fit, for an HPSC, can be achieved by finding a purposeful and meaningful leadership role in a social field where self and social identity merge, in a body of influential relationships, which meet collective needs. It follows a process of becoming, from entry into the role, through a process of adaptation to a number of dynamic and continually changing fields.

These findings show that these multiple fields are all sources of cultural and other mediating influences that affect HPSCs' feelings of being at home. These fields are also sources of need. At the centre of the Core-Coaching Agency, the athlete's need is for achievement in swimming performance, whilst an HPSC's need is for achievement as a swimming coach. In fulfilling their needs, in this symbiotic relationship, the organisational needs are also met.

The organisational needs, emerging from the Executive Agency, are to maximise performances from all athletes at all levels. Success at national and international competitions enhances the organisation's social identity and justifies the investments made on behalf of their membership. The needs of the sporting bodies and government in the UK are the same as those of the swimming organisation. They also need a return on their investment, sourced from external funding. These collective needs place significant pressures on the HPSCs.

In addition to the collective pressure and expectation at a macro-level, the HPSCs have competition from other coaches. Swimming coaches at all levels are, by nature, very competitive. Whilst other international peer coaches are an external source of pressure, coaches within swimming organisations can also compete against the HPSCs. Whatever the source, interference from other coaches can invoke angry responses from the HPSCs: 'I saw him go down there put his arm around her (pause)... you know that initial first chat... I was seething... I was down there like a rocket' (Coach #21, personal communication, 23rd June, 2015, p.5).

In the findings HPSCs referred to athletes as my swimmers; any threat to the HPSC-athlete relationship, especially where there is a positive, personal and working relationship, is a constant source of concern. It is evident from the research that, in order to achieve a strong contextual fit, the HPSCs need the character and ability to see what needs to be done and to do it.

The findings revealed a number of characteristics that were common to all of the interviewees. The first was their level of honesty evidenced by their willingness to reveal intimate personal secrets when promised anonymity. Their revelations, if made public, could be considered a potential threat to their careers. This gave me confidence in the research data and signalled that they trusted my integrity as a researcher in protecting their identity. A number of HPSCs told of how they had experienced serious personal problems as a result of stress associated with their role.

The high stress levels encountered whilst attending training and international competition with their athletes had become detrimental to their personal wellbeing. Alcohol, drugs, or partnership issues were cited as a consequence of being too absorbed in their work. The stories they told, however, did reveal two additional characteristics. One, evident in all of the HPSCs, was the degree to which they had invested in the role. A number of them had selected coaching in preference to secure well paid careers outside of sport.

As those experiencing severe personal problems had eventually recovered and continued to coach it was also evident that resilience is another characteristic common to HPSCs. The desire to invest fully in the role, coupled with such a significant level of resilience,

reflected a high personal drive. HPSCs' self confessed extreme levels of competitiveness and desire to work with elite athletes accounted for this drive. Whilst not all were former high performance athletes, they displayed the same characteristics as their athletes – namely hating to lose.

As Jon Rudd, at the 2012 BSCA Conference, explained: 'It's not the desire to win, it's just that we just hate to lose, we can't stand losing' (Rudd, personal communication, 21st September, 2012, p.3). This fear of losing, they said, can be caused by expectations other people place upon them. National Performance Directors, Head Coaches, peers, partners, or relatives can all place significant levels of stress on athletes and HPSCs. It is axiomatic, therefore, that these coaches need the characteristics of a strong effective leader.

Business leader Sir John Harvey Jones, speaking about the common characteristics found in effective business leaders, stated:

> The only common ground I can find is, that without exception, they are all as strong as horses... they have tremendous mental resilience... [are] able to work very long hours... be absolutely dedicated... and be able to take a hell of a lot of mental punishment (Jones, 1990).

This statement reflects the same characteristics evident in HPSCs that emerged from the findings. Only continual success, however, fully binds them to the role and having these characteristics alone was not enough.

A further characteristic in the findings was, paradoxically, that these coaches are extremely hard regarding standards and yet soft with people. HPSCs talked of establishing high standards of performance and challenging their athletes to meet those standards. This uncompromising, hardnosed approach by HPSCs was revealed in comments such as: 'And the guy is knackered, he's nearly crying. He said: "I don't think I can do it"... I said: "I don't care... You find it in there somewhere" (Marshall, personal communication, 27th September, 2013, p.17). This example was a common feature of the findings. The tough no-nonsense approach also extended to athlete behaviours during work related activities. HPSCs, however, all displayed a more humanistic caring side of their nature when engaging with athletes on an emotional level.

It was evident that HPSCs had the ability to build effective relationships and engage with their athletes, showing high levels of emotional intelligence and labour (Goleman, 1996; Humphrey, 2012). Comments such as: 'She wasn't talking, she wasn't laughing and I had to put that right. I had to get a smile on her face and get her happy again' (McNulty, personal communication, 23rd September, 2016, p.2). These were common responses to interview questions prompting for such examples. These coaches, however, were also able

to deconstruct coach-athlete relationships where it was evident that partnerships, or at least working relationships, were not viable.

Findings also showed, together with these common characteristics, HPSCs needed other sources of influence that enabled them to meet athletes' needs. In the international competitive swimming context, the margins between success and failure are extremely small. The expertise needed for these levels of extreme performance is scarce, diverse and in high demand. The technical knowledge needed at these levels of competition for skill, fitness, health and lifestyle is wide ranging and beyond the capabilities of one person. The ability of the HPSC lies, not simply in having high levels of technical knowledge, but in seeing what is needed and coordinating a supporting team of experts to achieve it.

Whilst not explicitly stated, HPSCs learn very quickly and are extremely aware of context. This learning agility (Hoff and Burke, 2017), possibly generated by ambition and a high drive, creates a Coaching-Eye capable of identifying essential information and future possibilities. They sit closer to the edge of time (Heidegger, 1962) giving them the competitive advantage needed for continued success at the elite level.

The role, then, becomes one of a synthesiser of information, coordinator of a technical team and creator of a context that enables elite athletes to achieve on the world stage. A number of HPSCs talked of coaching at this level as a creative process. 'Personally, to me, it's a very creative feeling, it's a creative thing. It's like doing any other sort of creative job' (Coach #8, personal communication, 26th February, 2015, p.2). However, to perform this role, the HPSCs need the necessary resources and support of a viable and effective swimming organisation.

Finally, the HPSCs appear to be very adaptable to each field in the wider context. They have multiple roles and identities, which result in a range of styles. In the Core-Coaching Agency Internal (Field #1a) they act as leaders to elite athletes. These athletes can, as the findings show, be difficult to handle and are potential sources of conflict. It is their needs and character that determine each HPSC's style.

In terms of programmed training activities, in the home facility HPSCs tend to adopt a 'tell and talk' style. However, where possible, it seems they use a more 'consultative' style (Tannenbaum and Schmidt, 1973). In relation to the Core-Coaching Agency (Field #1b), the role and style seem to change. As British HPSC James Gibson, responding to questions at the 2016 BSCA Conference, stated: 'I need to be a chameleon. I ask myself each day - what do I need to *be* today for each of my athletes?' (Gibson, personal communication, 23rd September, 2016, p.2).

In the Swimming Competition Arena the HPSC takes on a leadership role that is more supportive than directional in nature and style: the HPSC becomes a servant leader. As British HPSC Melanie Marshall answering questions at the 2016 BSCA Conference pointed out: 'We need the athletes to feel comfortable in the competition arena. They need to feel good about themselves' (Marshall, personal communication, 23rd September, 2016, p.3). Beyond the core coaching context, the roles change again.

In the Coach Agency, the primary role of the HPSCs is to lead coaches and not athletes. These actors are followers, but of a different kind. The HPSCs take on the role of a delegating leader, setting standards and acting as a developmental mentor to assistant coaches. Athletes in the Athlete Agency, however, require a figurehead (Mintzberg, 2011) someone to look up to and impress. Their need is not for direct leadership, but a source of inspiration.

An HPSC's role regarding the Technical Support Agency is to lead a team of technical experts. These are not followers of the HPSC in the generally accepted sense, but a group of suppliers. These actors are providers of vicarious competence to the HPSC and could be viewed as leaders to the HPSC. What the findings reveal is that leadership in the five fields is highly distributed and that the essential element in the leader-follower-context dynamic is the context.

Conclusion

This chapter has detailed how the four second-order sub-themes that emerged from the UK HPSC interviews – self identity, social identity, relationships and influence – all merge to form the final theme of contextual fit. The context in this case refers to the five fields, as described in Chapter 4 and analysed in Chapters 5 and 6.

The first section detailed how the two second-order themes of self identity and social identity fuse into the third-order theme of contextualised identity. The identity of the HPSC merges with the social identity associated with their swimming organisation to become one. The concepts of Bourdieu helped describe an HPSC's journey towards fit under the three headings: finding purpose, efficiency and recognition – namely the 'accumulation of being'.

The analysis shows that finding purpose begins with positive early experiences in swimming related teaching or coaching. HPSCs' character traits seem to drive them towards the coaching of elite athletes. Once embedded, they seek to become efficient in the role in order to gain recognition as an effective leader of those athletes. This accumulation of being (Bourdieu, 1977) evidences their perception of finding a purpose, so that the two aspects of identity merge into one.

The second section analysed the two second-order themes of relationships and influence, recognising that relationships and influence are fundamentally the essence of leadership. The first part of the section discussed relationships and the importance of separating personal and working components in relation to psychological contracts. This was in order to fully understand the *de jure* and *de facto* components as related to the emotional contracts (Etzioni, 1964).

Following on, the dangers of the HPSC forming in-groups and out-groups, was discussed along with engagement and trust in relationships. It suggested that engagement was a reflection of trust in the HPSC-athlete relationship and that athlete loyalty is of the utmost importance. The findings showed that perceived acts of betrayal had a significant effect on HPSCs, although if they were involved in an athlete's move between clubs the effect was less severe.

The next section discussed the social mediating forces acting *on* the HPSCs, which either alienated them, or attracted them to their role. Those forces that created the greatest pull regarding social gravity, it seemed, were building long-term relationships with athletes and the challenge of producing world class performances. This vicarious achievement appeared to alleviate some of the pain related to personal underachievement.

The analysis shows that all the contextual fields are potential alienating forces. The main source of negative mediating influences came from the parents or guardians of the athletes, competing assistant coaches and peer international coaches, and actors in the technical support teams. The findings also revealed that, in the wider context of British society and sport in the UK, there are moral dilemmas and toxic cultures that can alienate HPSCs.

The last section of the chapter discussed how the two third-order themes of contextualised identity and contextualised leadership merge and are the primary sources of influence on an HPSC's feelings of being at home in the role. Contextual fit here is defined by finding a meaningful purpose as a leader, where the HPSC is able to build influential relationships, which meet collective needs.

What became evident from the research is that the HPSC and athlete being labelled (Becker, 1963) the 'leader' and 'follower' respectively in the HPSC-athlete relationship are wholly dependent upon context. There is currently, in leadership literature, a paucity of discussion regarding follower and leader needs or how they meet those needs in a purposeful role. It would seem that research should become more context-centred and include the followers and leader as an integral part of that context.

This thesis, whilst focussing on HPSCs' experiences, has revealed their personal needs and drives. It has given visibility to the nature of the HPSC role and those factors that

determine fit. One aspect has been how HPSCs formulate their Coaching-Eye and being able to see themselves in context. The ability to analyse the context at a macro and micro level is the main source of their competitive advantage and is worthy of further research.

It is only by being able to see what needs to be done, and having the ability, with the support of a team to do it, that they can enable athlete performance. The findings support a constitutive view of leadership (Grint, 1997) where the leader-follower dynamic is only relevant when considered with the essential element of context.

The need for leadership emerges from followers in context and a leader's needs are only met by the followers and other actors within the context. As Grint points out:

> [T]he "essence" of leadership – as an individual leader – leaves out the followers, and without followers you cannot be a leader. Indeed, this might be the simplest definition of leadership: "having followers" (Grint, 2010, p.2).

Chapter 8, the final chapter, includes a discussion, recommendations, reflection on findings and method and final concluding thoughts. The discussion reviews the findings and analysis against the theoretical concepts detailed in Chapter 2. The recommendations made are derived from the analysis of findings and associated discussion. The final concluding comments afford me the opportunity to reflect on my response to the original research question and the learning gained through the process of completing the thesis.

Chapter 8: Discussion and Conclusion

> Imagine an underground chamber like a cave. In this chamber are men who have been prisoners since childhood... Suppose one of them were let loose... First he would find it easier to look at the shadows, next at the reflections of men and other objects in the water, and later on the objects themselves. After that he would find it easier to observe the heavenly bodies and the sky itself at night, and to look at the light of the moon and stars rather than at the sun and its light by day (Plato, 1987, p.242).

Introduction

This final chapter of the thesis provides me with an opportunity to discuss the research findings, make recommendations for future research, reflect on my research findings and methods, and make my concluding comments. The discussion contains an interpretation of the findings and how they accord, conflict or make contributions to the existing theoretical perspectives as described in Chapter 2 - Literature Review. The recommendations section offers suggested areas for coach education and development together with potential further research.

Following the discussion and recommendations, I reflect on the research findings and methods. I consider the implications and personal learning that emerged, and the advantages and limitations of the research findings and selected methods. In the final section of the chapter, I offer my concluding thoughts on the challenges I faced in producing this thesis. My intention, in a Heideggerian sense, was to shine a light on the nature of an HPSC's role and how they achieve a contextual fit.

I began this chapter with a quote from Plato's *Allegory of the Cave*. Socrates explains to Glaucon what he supposes would happen if a prisoner, in captivity since childhood, was suddenly released from a cave and saw the intense light of reality for the first time. This allegory captures, I would posit, the essence of what it is to become increasingly aware of a phenomenon formerly hidden from view – an interstice in the fabric of reality. Below, the discussion interprets the findings from Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

Discussion

To begin the discussion, I return to the original research question posed in my introduction to the thesis – the personal question which has held my attention for over forty years: 'How does a High Performance Swimming Coach (HPSC), as an effective leader, develop a contextual fit?' The purpose of the research was to address this relatively unexplored aspect of theory and offer a contribution to the literature on leadership and sports coaching.

What the findings clearly show is how essential the consideration of context is to the understanding of leadership as a phenomenon. Followers' needs emerge from within a specific context. They seek a leader who is contextually aware and one that can help them navigate a path to their desired goal. That leader emerges from within this unique social context in which the leader and followers interact. The leader, however, also has needs. Like most humans, the leader seeks purpose, efficiency and recognition (Bourdieu, 1977).

The most significant and unexpected finding to emerge from the research relates to HPSCs' expanding contextual awareness within the landscapes of meaning and possibilities (McGilchrist 2018; Peterson, 2002) in which they perform their role – that is at both a macro and micro level. The findings show that HPSCs are extremely competitive and highly driven, and consequently have an insatiable appetite for contextualised knowledge which they need in order to gain a competitive advantage.

In Chapter 2 - Leadership as Skill, Mumford (2000) describes cognitive ability linked to motivation and personality as key attributes found in effective leaders. Katz (2009) also recognises the importance of conceptual and technical skills. These views accord with the findings, although they fail to recognise the diversity regarding operational contexts. At a micro-foundational level in the Core-Coaching Agency there are two fields, the training and international competition arena. At an intermediate level in a swimming organisation there are four other separate agencies, and hence four fields. At a macro level there are two fields, Sport in the UK and British Society. Across this spectrum, the Coaching-Eye is forged.

At a micro level, the Coaching-Eye concerns itself with skills, fitness and the behaviour of athletes. In terms of conceptual skills (Katz, 2009), HPSCs talked of internal mental models. They spoke of being able to see and learn more and more over time through continually watching their athletes in training and competition. This tacit pool of experience enhances HPSCs' ability to spot deviations from established standards held in their cognitive schemas. HPSCs can see any novelty or future potential which enables their coaching interventions. In the wider context of international competition, HPSCs continually collect micro-level information to increase their skills and hence their ability to help their athletes.

The findings show that HPSCs have a high learning agility and are adaptive. They try things out and are not overly concerned about failing. HPSCs' expanding contextual awareness and analysis evidence their desire, in their regulatory role as leaders, to achieve requisite variety (Ashby, 1957). A Systems Approach to Management, in Chapter 2, highlights the importance of the regulatory function of a system requiring the same level of complexity as the context in which it operates. In essence HPSCs are regulators in control of the activities.

The Coaching-Eye is also drawn to athlete behaviours and their associated emotional states. In Chapter 2 – Leadership as Transformational, emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1996) and emotional labour (Humphrey, 2012) are identified as important characteristics of transformational leaders. High levels of emotional intelligence and labour enable HPSCs to build effective multiple stakeholder relationships. Visiting other international training centres and learning from other elite coaches and technical experts at a macro level featured highly in the findings.

HPSCs recognise 'what is needed to do the job' (Counsilman, 1977, p.265) through their highly developed contextual and self-awareness. They transform themselves by fully investing in the role they have chosen, which they find meaningful and fulfilling. The context gives the HPSCs feedback through whooshing moments (Dreyfus and Kelly, 2011) and accolades from peer HPSCs, athletes, and other stakeholders. Being inspired and motivated by the realisation that they are effective creates a desire in HPSCs to accumulate more being (Bourdieu, 1977). They do this by gaining mastery and transforming the lives of their athletes.

The findings revealed that all of the HPSCs in the study are transformational leaders, as evidenced by their results over time - they are serial achievers. In the case of elite competitive swimming, however, the transformation begins at an individual athlete level. In order to produce elite athletes capable of achieving at the highest level, HPSCs must create a suitable enabling context. When constructed from a non-performance swimming organisation, however, this inevitably resulted in athlete losses. Their ruthless pursuit of improving performance standards featured strongly.

In terms of transformational leadership, detailed in Chapter 2, the findings accord with Avolio's views regarding a continuum between transformational charismatic and transactional laissez-faire. A number of examples showed the transactional element where, in order to gain access to scarce resources, athletes subordinated themselves to HPSCs' standards. There were also examples where the athletes had made direct approaches to HPSCs requesting their leadership. This conflicts with the leader-centric stance of the theory, which attributes idealised influence exclusively to the leader and ignoring follower motivations.

The evidence also challenges the reliability of the seven factors of transformational leadership (Avolio, 1999) – that is in terms of their definitions and boundaries. According to the experiences expressed by HPSCs, athlete motivation derives more from the pursuit of personal goals than inspiration from the HPSC. To evidence this, all interviewees gave examples of where some athletes had left them to seek a context more suited to their needs. Moreover, the stimulation athletes need at elite level is more physical than intellectual.

Together, these findings bring the boundaries of Avolio's four 'I's into question. Where they agree, however, is in terms of individualised consideration. The aim, expressed by all HPSCs, was to meet their athletes' individual needs. The relationships formed between HPSCs and their athletes in the Core-Coaching Agency determined their effectiveness as leaders.

What the findings clearly show is that the most significant factor for an HPSC's contextual fit is the number and strength of dyadic links they form with their athletes. The value of leader-member-exchange (LMX) theory, as described in Chapter 2 – Leadership as Relational, is that it addresses the micro-level view of leadership and provides some insights into the stages of development in the leader-follower relationship. In this aspect, the theory aligns with the findings of this study. The latter, however, revealed some of the recognised limitations of LMX concepts. Two examples of this are the failure to show how high-quality leader-follower relationships evolve over time, and clarity of the supporting definitions (Uhl-Bien, Maslyn and Ospina, 2012).

The findings show that the mature partnership category (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995) is more complex than described in the theory. HPSCs gave examples where they had felt no affection for the athlete – yet despite this, the athletes were still able to achieve positive results. At an emotional contracting level, the personal relationship can be frosty, while at the same time the functional working level can be highly productive. Thus partnerships can be separated into two components - a working relationship and a personal relationship.

The findings also conflict with the theory by highlighting dynamic changing states in the mature partnership over time. As British HPSC Jon Rudd commented: 'I think the athlete goes through three phases... First there is dependency... Second, is their independence phase, where we have the - "I have arrived syndrome"... [and the] third phase is the interdependence phase' (Rudd, personal communication, 23rd September, 2016, p.11).

A further significant gap in the theory was also revealed – namely the threat to HPSC-athlete relationships through the formation of triadic links made between athletes and other stakeholders in the context. HPSCs gave examples of problematic triadic links, especially those related to technical support agents and assistant coaches. This, they said, had affected their ability to influence athletes.

Where the findings do agree with LMX theory is in the need to develop a network of partnerships within the swimming organisation, as opposed to concentrating on a small number of followers (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995). HPSCs are dependent upon the support of technical support agents, assistant coaches and interlocutors in the administrative functions in the delivery of athlete performance. The findings also concur on the dangers of creating in-groups and out-groups, which can be perceived as unfair. This, however, may be outside

HPSCs' control especially if athletes decide not to form a co-operative emotional contract with them. The findings reveal differing levels of engagement, trust and care within the relationships that HPSCs formed with their athletes, assistant coaches and other stakeholders.

An omission from LMX theory is the combined effects of care, emotional intelligence and emotional labour in the creation of strong dyadic links. These three interrelated factors became most evident when HPSCs described the feelings they experienced at competitions. Being aware of their own emotions and the need to employ emotional labour to conceal feelings emerged from a number of comments. Triangulating the research data, during poolside observations, I witnessed the need for HPSCs during competition to act the part (Gardener and Avolio, 1998; Goffman, 1959) of a confident and competent coach.

Responding to questions at the 2016 BSCA Conference, British HPSC James Gibson commented: 'It's a process I go through in the mornings: who do I need to *be* today? You need to be a chameleon, so I think I need to be this person for that athlete' (Gibson, personal communication, 23rd September, 2016, p.3). The use of emotional labour here highlighted the need to develop effective 'arena skills' at competition to support the athlete. The construction of effective HPSC-athlete relationships is shown to be complex and multi-faceted. There were, however, also examples of a need to deconstruct a relationship.

Another omission from LMX theory relates to emotional contracting between the leader and their followers in order to reach the mature partnership phase. Although not explicitly stated, the conflicts experienced by HPSCs with some of their athletes showed that limited contracting at an emotional level had taken place. This was evidenced by comments such as: 'He was very resistant and maybe because he was 24 years old and he had some success, but I did fail with Mark even though he got a few British Records' (Haller, personal communication, 21st September, 2012, p.2). This remark was made by British HPSC Dave Haller, about international athlete Mark Foster, at the 2012 BSCA Conference.

An unexpected finding emerged when HPSCs discussed athletes who had decided to leave them. Emotional impact was lessened if the HPSC had been actively involved in an athlete's decision-making process. Where they had not been involved, they felt a sense of betrayal. As Coach #26 recalled: 'She had only just won gold at the European Juniors when she comes up and tells me she is moving... I thought (pause)... I can't do this anymore' (Coach #26, personal communication, 13th September, 2015, p.7). This single event almost resulted in a complete loss of this HPSC's contextual fit.

HPSCs' progression towards a contextual fit begins with life choice, a moment of major significance. All the interviewees had decided to invest in the role of HPSC to the exclusion of all other career options. The choices these coaches made derived from a diverse range of

early experiences in the contextual field of elite competitive swimming. A large percentage of interviewees had been former competitive swimmers and inspired either by their own coach or by watching others. There was, however, a small number who were not swimmers and had entered the sport initially as poolside assistants, lifeguards or teachers.

Regardless of the nature of their initial entry, the findings show that they find meaning in their lives as HPSCs. Leadership as Identity, in Chapter 2, refers to the construction of self identity and the mediating forces which create ambiguity (Collinson, 2003). The complexity of an HPSC's operational context necessitates a multi-dimensional mapping of the human world (Jenkins, 2008; Mead, 1934). This factor accords with the findings in revealing the multiple roles and identities held by the HPSC. The findings also provided empirical evidence that when HSPCs achieved, feedback resonated with them and provided a premise for their identity construction project.

The findings show clearly that HPSCs are extremely competitive, and highly motivated. These characteristics led to a strong personal drive; thus, they set high standards for themselves and their athletes. Coupled with their brutal honesty, this resulted in a tough, no-nonsense coach, prepared to challenge athletes face-to-face for any perceived deviations from standards. This ruthlessness is counter-balanced by their high quotient of emotional intelligence and athlete-centeredness. Various HPSC characteristics from the findings align with those detailed in Chapter 2 – Leadership Perspectives.

Kouzes and Posner (2011) identified honesty and straightforwardness as two important characteristics of admired leaders. Few authors, however, comment on competitiveness, or a leader's uncompromising stance on standards, which may account for their perceived toughness. The findings do, however, accord with the main criticisms of trait theory – no approach delimits a definitive list (Northouse, 2007). The findings also contest self-confidence as a predictor of effective leaders. During the early phase of their development, a significant number of HPSCs described feelings of low confidence, especially in the competitive arena; and of being an imposter (Clance and Imes, 1978) in their chosen context.

Bass and Stogdill (1990) also highlight the importance of context when considering leadership characteristics. They argue that leadership should be viewed more as a pattern of characteristics relevant to followers' needs and activities taking place at a given time in a specific context. The findings clearly show, however, that the characteristics common to HPSCs can result in athlete alienation. Examples of this are where HPSCs had transformed swimming clubs. Athletes retained were only those able to meet HPSCs' standards and were willing to subordinate themselves to their leadership. The findings show that creating and/or maintaining an existing high-performance context is a primary aim of an HPSC.

In the case of British swimming, the context had already been established. Therefore, the role of the HPSC was limited to activities in the Core-Coaching Agency. Athlete recruitment and the social identity of the organisation are mainly the responsibility of the NPD and Head Coach. The findings do show, however, that lack of control over the context affected feelings of fit. 'The problem with the ITC was that I couldn't do what I wanted. I couldn't just say to a swimmer you're out, see you later' (Coach #4, personal communication, 13th November, 2014, p.5). Activities generally classified as management, as set out in Chapter 2 – Management Perspectives, it appears are important enablers to HPSCs' leadership.

Weber's rational/legal authority or *de jure* power, and personal charisma or *de facto* power, it seems are derived out of character, capability credibility and conduct, and are all important sources of HPSCs' influence. The functional aspects of leadership correspond with those in the findings. The Adair ACL model (1988) and the McKinsey 7S model (Peters and Waterman, 1982), although lacking in detail and conflating management with leadership, provide helpful insights into the range of activities which HPSCs carry out in order to create and maintain a context that meets joint needs for achievement.

The findings also clearly show that, having created a context and social identity for themselves and their swimming organisation, HPSCs needed to manage any mediating influences that presented a barrier to their leadership. Issues associated with assistant coaches that created triadic links were common. Another potential source of mediating influences which adversely affected HPSCs' leadership and hence contextual fit was that of actors in the Technical Support Agency. While these experts provided HPSCs with vicarious competence, they were also a potential source of conflict and hence needed managing.

A key role that emerged was the need for the HPSC to act as a project manager, on top of their coaching roles, in order to create and manage the context. The technical knowledge requirements for producing world class athletes are beyond the scope of one individual. The continual supply of athletes into the Core-Coaching Agency through a value chain (Porter, 1985) also needs to be established in order to sustain the HPSC in their role over time.

Finally, the findings show that HPSCs' leadership styles varied according to which agency they were providing leadership; this accords with Situational Leadership Theory (Hersey, Blanchard and Johnson, 2001) regarding the readiness of followers. In the Executive, Coach, and Technical Support Agencies, especially where they were in the primary leadership role, interviewees described a more delegating style of leadership. In the Core-Coaching Agency, however, styles varied considerably.

The findings contest the alignment of readiness factors to styles (Bryman, 1992). Despite elite athletes being highly skilled, willing and confident, when challenging them in

training, HPSCs used a very directing style. At the 2013 BSCA Conference, British HPSC Melanie Marshall discussed her athlete, Adam Peaty, in training stating: 'And the guy is knackered, he's nearly crying. He said: "I don't think I can do it"... I said: "I don't care... You find it in there somewhere"...' (Marshall, personal communication, 27th September, 2013, p.17).

For the same athlete in skill-based activities, however, a more collaborative style was used. HPSCs talked of being more flexible, allowing athletes to decide on their warm-up routines and choosing competitions to attend during periods between major championships. The findings here align with Continuum Theory (Tannenbaum and Schmidt, 1973).

What the collective findings clearly show is that context is an essential component in leader-follower dynamics and a determinant of leader effectiveness. The nature of an HPSC's role in providing leadership to their athletes can only by understood by careful consideration of the context. An HPSC's contextual awareness, ability to create an enabling context and build effective, mature partnerships with elite athletes is the focus of my following recommendations.

Recommendations

My first recommendation is that further research should be conducted on the concept of the Coaching-Eye (see Fig. 8-1). At the micro level of skill, the process by which HPSCs develop an extremely high level of contextual awareness is relatively unexplored. Although HPSCs were able to explain the more explicit aspects of their knowledge, the findings revealed that the tacit dimension remains hidden. The experiential development of the mental skill models which HPSCs

Fig. 8-1 The Coaching-Eye

British Society

UK Sport

HPSC & Athletes

Competition Arena National & International

Swimming Organisation/Club

Core-Coaching Agency HPSC & Athletes

Owl photograph by Graham McGeorge printed with kind permission
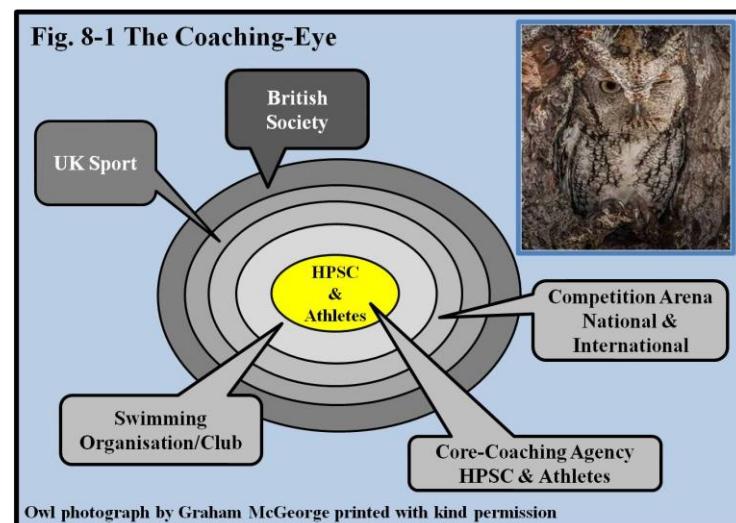
hold, through continuously watching athletes on a day-to-day basis, is worthy of further investigation.

At intermediate and macro levels of contextual awareness and analysis, consideration should be given by coach educators to clarifying the boundaries and definition of each field as defined in Chapter 4: Field #1 - Core-Coaching Agency; Field #2 - Swimming Organisation;

Field #3 - Swimming Competition Arena; Field #4 - UK Sport; and Field #5 - British Society. Specifying the agents who are active in each field and HPSCs' roles and responsibilities within each of these would broaden their contextual awareness and help identify areas for continued professional development.

The focus of my second recommendation is on HPSC and follower relationships. In the discussion section and the Literature Review - Chapter 2, omissions in LMX theory were identified regarding three possible states of a relationship: stranger, acquaintance, and mature partnership (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995). The main criticisms were lack of clarity on how high-quality relationships are created (Anand et al., 2011) and lack of definition of relationship states (Uhl-Bien, Maslyn, and Ospina, 2012). There is a need to focus on the initial formation of relationships to develop trust and align goals (Gardener and Avolio, 1998) in order to reach the mature partnership state as quickly as possible.

Building on the second recommendation is my third: contracting between HPSCs and followers in the main agencies on a functional and emotional level. The findings showed that conflicts had arisen between HPSCs and followers forming triadic links with athletes in the Core-Coaching Agency. Whilst the functional aspects of contracts are visible, the emotional aspects, evidenced by HPSCs' comments, need further investigation. The part played by emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1996), emotional labour (Humphrey, 2012), and care, as discussed in the leadership literature (specifically, on transformational leadership) needs to be included.

My fourth recommendation recognises that HPSCs, especially those in a leadership position within their swimming organisations, utilise the services of a number of specialists in the Technical Support Agency. As part of their role in developing elite athletes, this involves integrating support programmes, scheduling and co-ordination of a range of activities, synthesising specialist knowledge, and dealing with any barriers to athlete development. The HPSC acts, in this sense, as a project manager. The recommendation here is that coaching education would benefit from training in project management.

My final recommendation is that a more eclectic approach should be included in future research on the phenomena associated with leadership. The findings of this thesis, in my view, make a strong case for the inclusion of management and sociological perspectives as part of any studies investigating leadership. Leadership only emerges from within a social setting and the separation of management from leadership has been shown throughout the findings to be redundant.

Reflection on Research Findings

The findings revealed that four corner-stones determine contextual fit - namely self identity, social identity, relationships, and influence in a context conducive to facilitating athlete performance. Contextualised identity (self and social), and contextualised leadership (relationships and influence), integrate to define contextual fit. The research findings, however, also identified multiple contexts (five social fields), resulting in multiple roles, and hence multiple identities and that entry into this social milieu begins with HPSCs making life choices.

The formulation of an HPSC's self identity begins with the choice of context suited to their habitus (Bourdieu, 1977). Bourdieu's concept of field, which he likens to a battlefield, liberated my thinking and allowed me to see an HPSC's context as a set of multiple competitive fields, each with their own purpose and emergent needs, including those of the HPSC. What also liberated my thinking and informed my research was mentoring the HPSC James Gibson during his transition from athlete to a highly successful elite swimming coach. James also acted as a critical friend which helped inform my research.

The findings revealed that all HPSCs had a number of common character traits. They were all extremely competitive, with a high level of personal drive and resilience and were brutally honest. All interviewees also displayed ruthlessness regarding standards but not with people. The three most identifiable standards were those of athlete commitment, behaviour and performance. The community of HPSCs unanimously described themselves as athlete-centred and caring in their coaching relationships. It is within the Core-Coaching Agency, both internal and external, where they initially found purpose and meaning – the heart of the enterprise.

Feedback from the operational contexts answered an HPSC's identity question: 'Who am I?' (Jenkins, 2008). Such feedback triggered a personal investment of self into a context that matched their habitus. One of the most marked differences between HPSCs interviewed related to their choices of context. Some indicated that they preferred having a level of security: so had sought employment in established organisations. Others were less risk averse, so were prepared to transform development based clubs and build their own performance centres.

Once HPSCs had found their context, the findings show that a rapid learning journey began, along with further development of their habitus. This was intended to match their concept of self to the international swimming competitive scene, where they completed their quest for requisite variety (Ashby, 1957). The findings show that HPSCs absorbed the complexity of context over time to become more effective. They invest themselves and accumulate being

through the development of self-awareness – the 'I' (Mead, 1934) – and contextual awareness at a macro and micro level.

In forming a sharp Coaching-Eye, HPSCs gain a competitive edge over their rivals. In a Bourdieusian sense, this reflects their need for efficiency and recognition (Bourdieu, 1977). The context leeches into the HPSCs very being, through a process of watching and talking to the more successful athletes and peer international coaches. In the training environment, the findings showed that they spend most of their time watching their athletes and learning unconsciously. The findings also reveal that Nietzsche's 'will to power' (Nietzsche, 2016) is a prominent characteristic found in HPSCs. Their need to be the source of influence that affects their followers is the basis of the symbiotic relationships which they build: so much so that without influence, there is no relationship. An analysis of the data, however, revealed the importance of maintaining a separation between the two types of relationships - working and personal.

Another of an HPSC's needs concerns the in-context enablers of authority and control. From a systemic perspective, authority over and regulation of the training and competition contexts was, they said, a major factor in positive performance outcomes. The findings identified three aspects of control, as defined in an HPSC's standards: control of behaviours, activities and direction, associated with their programme. From observation, the outward impression is of a hard-nosed disciplinarian. The research, however, reveals a different reality. HPSCs, as enablers of performance, also have high levels of emotional intelligence.

By definition, HPSCs are operating at the highest levels in their sport, where margins between success and failure are extremely small. Sports science and athlete conditioning at this level is highly complex; gaining a competitive advantage through a trial and error approach is a major differentiator. The findings revealed that HPSCs are transformational leaders who exhibit entrepreneurial characteristics in finding new ways to deliver world class performances. Zhang and Cone offer a useful statement to encapsulate this ability of HPSCs to synthesise complex and diverse technical knowledge, stating:

> [E]ngaging the "the emerging now", that is, a configuration of productive forces that coalesce into a processual flow that entails the aligning, organising and coming together of hitherto unrelated concepts, qualities and practices in a new way (2018, p.81).

The need for additional expertise is evident in the findings and therefore, they rely heavily on vicarious competence from a range of experts bringing together concepts and synthesising them into new ways of achieving. Whilst not explicitly stated, the interviewees appeared to possess high levels of learning agility, possibly enabled by their personal drive and

competitiveness. They have an insatiable appetite for knowledge of the competitive swimming context. Their multiple roles and identities, however, go beyond this core context.

It became evident that an HPSC's roles, behaviours and identities changed within each context. In the nature of each context is a desire or need for leadership. Each internal agency within a swimming organisation seeks a different form of direction. The Executive Agency needs an HPSC either to coach athletes or to be the leader for the entire organisation. In the Coach Agency, assistant coaches need direction regarding coaching competence. In the Athlete Agency, the actors need an inspirational and motivational figurehead and in the Technical Support Agency, there is a distinct need for a team leader to coordinate their activities.

Each context also has agents with inherently competing needs. As a social field, the milieu becomes a sea of mediating influences, all affecting the HPSC. These influences can be either attracting or alienating forces and will determine how the HPSC feels. If alienating forces become overbearing, HPSCs will seek an alternative context which they believe will help them achieve their ambitions. It is also evident that greater external challenges may attract them.

Finally, a limitation of the findings is that experiences of HPSCs and my interpretations are subjective. The introduction highlighted the danger of bias from my own personal experiences. Although my personal knowledge assisted in the analysis and interpretations of the research data, I recognise that phenomenology as a research method does not provide statistically reliable information. It was, though, despite the limitations, a method that helped reveal the nature of elite swimming coaching.

Reflection on Research Methods

The most enjoyable and stimulating aspect of the research was in adopting the role of participant observer of HPSCs, meeting them face-to-face, and discussing their experiences. Following the same process as HPSCs do in developing contextual fit, I invested myself in their world. Attending major competitions and conferences and visiting HPSCs in their operational context over a six-year period gave me unique insights hitherto invisible to me in my age-group coaching role.

> [Q]ualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them... [It] involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials – case study, personal experience, introspective, life story (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994, p.1).

I chose a qualitative single case study method, employing formal semi-structured interviews, with a purposive sample taken from the community of HPSCs based in the UK.

Throughout the interviews, I was conscious of the asymmetrical power relationship and the part I played. As Kvale highlights:

> The research interview is not an open everyday conversation between equal partners. The interviewer has scientific competence, he or she initiates and defines the interview situation, determines the topic, poses the questions and decides which answers to follow up, and also terminates the conversation (2007, p.14).

As much as possible, I aimed to allow interviewees to tell their stories, while being aware at all times that my presence itself influenced outcomes. However, from my impressions of the interviews and the HPSCs' responses, I gained confidence that they had given me an honest account of their lived experiences. Their revelations could be career threatening, which bears witness to my statement.

My choice of research method was heavily influenced by Husserl's phenomenology and heuristic inquiry, advocated by Moustakas (1990). I originally intended to use an exclusively ethnographic approach, which would draw upon my personal coaching experience. I felt, however, that to do so would only provide an external perception of HPSCs' fit to the role. I decided it would be more productive to hear HPSCs' own stories and the feelings they experienced during memorable events in their lives as coaches.

Unfortunately, I spent a considerable amount of time deciding on the method before choosing to use the single case study. Although I had always intended to interview HPSCs, I wrestled with the range of options. Having assessed HPSCs for national governing bodies' coaching certifications and with personal experience as a swimming coach, I felt there was something missing, something of which I was yet unaware (Polanyi, 1962). My comprehensive functional knowledge could not answer the fundamental research question I had posed. Through the single case study with elements of phenomenology, heuristic inquiry and ethnography, the phenomenon of contextual fit started to reveal itself.

The notion of context revealed itself as a complex web of social settings, each with a set of unique needs. During the interviews, each of the fields affecting HPSCs became apparent. I formulated a set of conceptual diagrams to help in the research analysis. This helped me locate mediating influences into specific fields. It is, however, the collective which is the overall determinant of contextual fit. It became apparent that historical influences also play a significant role within each field in the formulation of the coaching habitus. The interviews, which lasted for between one and two hours, provided the most enjoyable part of the research, although they were not the only source of research data.

The second richest source of research data was collected at BSCA conferences between 2012 and 2016, a period spanning two Olympics. At the 2012 Olympic Games in London,

British HPSC, James Gibson, gained his first major success in competition. His athlete, Floren Manaudou, won Olympic gold. This allowed me to witness first-hand how the social identity of a successful HPSC is formed. At the same Olympics, the poor results of British athletes prompted a change in National Performance Director and Head Coach, and barriers to my access to HPSCs were thankfully removed.

Prior to the 2012 Olympics, the NPD and HC were reluctant to grant me access to their coaches. The reason given was that they did not want any distractions leading into the championship. Fortunately, a new NPD and HC were appointed by British Swimming and full access was then granted. The major cultural change in British Swimming which followed the change of leadership assisted my research and also had a beneficial effect on British athletes.

At the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, UK athletes and HPSCs had their most successful Games since 1908. As an added bonus, my critical friend on the journey, James Gibson, was selected as one of Team GB's coaches and could comment on my final thoughts. This contrast in fortunes with 2012 also helped during interviews, including those conducted in poolside settings, by creating a positive atmosphere within the community of UK HPSCs.

My final source of data was collected poolside at major competitions between 2011 and 2017, when larger cohorts of HPSCs were in attendance. Being a coach embedded in context and adopting my researcher role, I could observe coaches first-hand and hold short, informal interviews. From an anthropological perspective, I could observe their behaviours, body language and emotional reactions as they unfolded.

Towards the latter stages of the research, I became aware of the Coaching-Eye in action as the HPSCs intensely watched their athletes. Their head movements to one side to change perspective and indicators of indwelling as they moved their bodies in sympathy with the athletes (Huxley, 2010) captured my attention and added to the research data.

Analysing and collating research data presented the greatest challenge. My primary source of data was from HPSC interviews. There was a large volume of research data. It was extremely rich in content; however, it required considerable effort to analyse. I did consider using qualitative data analysis software, such as NVivo, to assist; but decided against doing so. I felt that HPSCs' responses could only be interpreted effectively through the eyes of a swimming coach with relevant knowledge and experience. I wanted to get close to the data, allow it to 'speak to me' and reveal its inner secrets.

I did find, however, that continuous reading of the research transcripts, interspersed with periods of incubation, was very time-consuming. At times, I became saturated with information and frustrated with the whole process. Eventually, however, themes did begin

to emerge; I found that Bourdieu's sociological concepts informed me more and more. His concept of habitus as linked to social fields started to become more meaningful.

Bourdieu (1977) suggests that Shakespeare's ontological question, 'to be or not to be?', is an either/or question. Bourdieu argues that it should be a 'how much' question: how much *being* we accumulate. Relative notions of the accumulation of being through social investment, increasing practical efficiency and a search for recognition provided an ideal framework for data analysis.

Throughout the research, I remained cognisant of the strengths and limitations of using qualitative research methods. One of its strengths was that it allowed me to obtain deep insights into the HPSCs' world and how they achieved their contextual fit. It provided me with new ways of looking at the coaching role and revealing its complexities.

A key benefit of this method is that it is primarily concerned with process, not outcomes. It is an inductive approach, enabling the researcher to develop new theoretical perspectives from abstract concepts. It is effective at managing and simplifying research data without losing the contextual complexity (Creswell, 1994).

Yet a limitation of qualitative approaches relates to ambiguities associated with language. As Wittgenstein (2009) points out, words can have multiple meanings and are context-dependent. As qualitative researchers are concerned with meaning and how actors make sense of their experiences, misinterpretation of language is a significant threat to the reliability of data.

The main disadvantage, though, is the inability to extend findings to the wider population. I was conscious that the findings in this thesis would only apply to long-term professional UK HPSCs with a high level of personal drive and ambition. In order to address the language limitations, I was particularly careful in clarifying the meaning of terms we used in interviews with HPSCs.

Concluding Thoughts

After watching and talking to HPSCs over six years of research, the statements they made truly resonated with me. I now believe that I see the nature of the HPSCs' role and how they develop their contextual fit more clearly. I am grateful to the community of UK HPSCs for allowing me into their inner world and sharing their experiences.

My original view of the importance of having a leader has not changed: as Adair relates, 'although some people dispute whether an orchestra needs a conductor, I have never disputed it' (1988, p 50). The sources of their social influence seem to be found in the interrelationship between who HPSCs are, what they can do, what they have done, how they do what they do, and how they behave within their chosen context.

While my view on the need for a leader remains the same, my perspective on how leadership is accomplished has changed. I now see leadership as an emergent phenomenon determined by the social context and widely distributed. The part that relationships play in the leader-follower dynamic is much greater than I imagined at first and needs further investigation.

My choice of research, on reflection, was extremely ambitious and intellectually demanding. The outcome, however, suggests to me that more research is needed regarding the Coaching-Eye and the context in which leadership takes place. Having become much more aware of contextual factors, I would like to continue working on the phenomenon of an HPSC's ability to see what others cannot.

Regarding my own learning throughout the programme, I have developed my skills in data collection and analysis. I have also gained experience of using a range of data collection methods; and have come to recognise the importance of keeping an open mind and allowing phenomena to reveal themselves. At the start of the programme, I had some preconceptions of how HPSCs develop a contextual fit. I fell into the trap of believing it to be a question of developing the correct coaching knowledge and as a leader, inspiring, motivating, and giving direction to the athlete.

I now realise that the situation is far more complex. In order to understand it, the additional theoretical lenses of sociology, leadership and management are required. The complexity of the context in which the HPSC performs their role became evident during the interviews. HPSCs operate in multiple contexts; in metaphorical terms, being able to see and gather important contextual information at macro and micro level are critical enablers to leadership.

Overall, this research has revealed the complexity associated with leadership in multiple social contexts. 'What is different about complexity is its perception of the context in which leadership is embedded and, consequently, of the manner in which leadership is conducted' (Allen, Maguire and McKelvey, 2011, p.396). Although extremely challenging, the time spent producing this thesis has been one of the most rewarding periods of my life.

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Appendix 1

Purposive Research Sample

The primary research data was collected from thirty two High Performance Swimming Coaches (HPSCs) from across the UK. The selected coaches listed below were representative of HPSCs found within swimming organisations across the country. The sample included coaches from England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. At the time the research was conducted all HPSCs, with the exception of those working for British Swimming, were all leaders of their respective swimming organisations.

Coach Label	Gender	Location	Interview Year
Coach #1	Male	West	2015
Coach #2	Male	Midlands	2014
Coach #3	Male	Midlands	2016
Coach #4	Male	North	2014
Coach #5	Male	North	2015
Coach #6	Male	West	2014
Coach #7	Female	South	2015
Coach #8	Male	South	2015
Coach #9	Female	West	2015
Coach #10	Female	East	2015
Coach #11	Male	Northern Ireland	2014
Coach #12	Male	West	2014
Coach #13	Male	Midlands	2012, 2013 & 2014
Coach #14	Male	Scotland	2015
Coach #15	Female	East	2015
Coach #16	Male	North	2015
Coach #17	Male	South	2013
Coach #18	Male	Scotland	2014
Coach #19	Male	South	2012
Coach #20	Male	East	2015
Coach #21	Female	East	2015
Coach #22	Male	East	2015
Coach #23	Male	West	2015
Coach #24	Male	Midlands	2013
Coach #25	Male	South	2014
Coach #26	Male	North	2015
Coach #27	Male	North	2015
Coach #28	Female	East	2014
Coach #29	Male	Wales	2014
Coach #30	Male	South	2015
Coach #31	Male	Wales	2013
Coach #32	Male	Midlands	2015

To protect anonymity, names of the clubs, HPSCs, athletes and their locations have been omitted. Research data was gathered at the HPSC's place of work and all interviews were audio recorded and electronically anonymised before transcription into text documents. Audio recordings and documents were held in a secured location.

Appendix 2

Interview Consent Form

I confirm that I have been fully briefed on the interview process for this PhD leadership research study regarding: ➤ the purpose of the research ➤ the intended outcomes ➤ privacy and confidentiality of information ➤ security and disposal of information post study ➤ selection of HPSC participants ➤ target audience for the PhD	YES/NO
I have been given the opportunity to consider the information provided and to ask questions of clarification	YES/NO
I also recognise that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the interview at any time	YES/NO
I agree to the interview being audio recorded for later transcription	YES/NO

I agreed to take part in this PhD research study on leadership	YES/NO

Name of Interviewer	Date	Signature
Paul Robbins		
Name of Participant	Date	Signature
1 copy for participant 1 copy for research file		

Appendix 3

Personal Interview Checklist

1. Introduce yourself and explain the purpose of the interview.

2. Confirm the amount of time the session will take (1-2 hours).

3. Give an indication of the type and number of questions to be asked.

4. Confirm strict anonymity to elicit honest and open responses.

5. Ask permission to take field notes and audio record the interview.

6. Listen carefully to their responses and take supplementary field notes.

7. Clarify any terminology to ensure mutual understanding.

8. Do not answer your own questions.

9. Ask open questions to elicit their views.

10. Avoid assumptions and clarify if there is any ambiguity.

11. Use probing questions in order to gain deeper insights.

12. Finish on time.

13. Summarize the process used and promise security of information.

14. Ask if the interviewee has any questions for you.

15. Thank the interviewee for their time.

Appendix 4

Interview Questions

➢ How did you become a High Performance Swimming Coach (HPSC)?

➢ What factors led up to you becoming an HPSC?

➢ Why specifically did you want to become an elite swimming coach?

➢ Tell me about the role as you see it.

➢ What are the boundaries associated with your role?

➢ Tell me about the experiences you have had with athletes and other stakeholders.

For each experience:

(How did you feel? What did you do? What did you say? What did they do? What was the outcome? What did you learn from it?)

➢ Can you think of any times when you had a very positive experience?

➢ Can you think of any times when you had a very negative experience?

➢ Do you feel at home in your current role?

➢ How do you perceive contextual fit?

➢ How did you think you have developed contextual fit?

➢ What do you see as the generic determinants of contextual fit?

➢ What are the determinants of contextual fit particular to HPSCs?

➢ What are the barriers and challenges to achieving contextual fit for HPSCs?

➢ How do HPSCs overcome challenges or barriers to achieve contextual fit?

Appendix 5

Statements of Understanding

I produced the following Statements of Understanding whilst acting as mentor to James Gibson MBE following our face-to-face review meetings. James, acting as a mentee and a critical friend became an ideal fellow traveller on my journey through the thesis. The ten statements generated served to help us reach a common understanding of leadership terms and also helped me formulate my research questions. Observing James, over a five year period, reach a strong contextual fit in the role of an elite coach was enlightening.

Photograph by Graham McGeorge printed with kind permission

The photograph below and puddle theory, as postulated by Douglas Adams, encapsulates the phenomenon of contextual fit – that is being fully adapted and at home in the role.

'This is an interesting world I find myself in - an interesting hole I find myself in - fits me rather neatly, doesn't it? In fact it fits me staggeringly well, must have been made to have me in it' (Adams, 2012, p.131).

1-The term leadership has multiple meanings.

The different perspectives on leadership have led to multiple interpretations. Leadership can be viewed from the perspective of: who the leader is; what they can do; what they actually do; how they do what they do; the leadership style used; and the results they achieve. There is a need, therefore, to be precise in the language we use to describe the phenomenon if we are going to have a joint understanding.

2-Power is the capacity or potential to influence.

Power is the capacity or potential to influence others. Power is then the *source* of influence and derives from a person's physical and mental attributes; their abilities and the resources they have control over; their achievements; how they comport themselves and how they are connected to others. These sources collectively affect others who either know of these sources or make assumptions about them. Power and knowledge are therefore inextricably linked.

3-Influence refers to the effects of power on another person

Influence should be regarded as the effects that power has on another person. That is whether another person changes how they think or how they behave due to the effects of that source of power. It is worth recognising that influence may also be the result of internal power. In other words a person may provide their own leadership. If there is no influence as a result of external power then there is no connection or relationship with others.

4-Connectedness is a function of power and influence

A person can decide whether they respond to a source of influence. They have a choice as to whether they think or act differently with respect to any source of influence. There are a number of potential sources that may affect others. These sources are other people; Fields of Interest (FoI); and other contextual factors (environment, artefacts, intelligibilia, etc.). With regard to leadership the degree to which a person subordinates self to another will determine the degree of leader-follower connectedness. Relationships can be developed in each of these areas and are determinants of outcomes. The relationships can be unidirectional or bilateral in nature.

5–The four main sources of influence affecting connectedness

There are four main sources of influence for any person, including the HPSC. These are the attributes of the person as a character (who they are); the capability of the person (what they can do); the credibility of the person (what they have done); and the way the person conducts their self (how they do what they do). Whilst these four factors influence others they are not properties that can be *used* on others.

6–Leadership is a directional influence

Leadership, if it is about anything, is about direction. By definition, therefore, leadership involves a process of change. These changes are goal related, have defined outcomes and are linked to purpose. Leadership, when viewed as directional influence might best be referred to in terms of *influence-towards-goal.* This separates leadership from other forms of influence that are outside the goals and purposes of a specific FoI.

7–Leadership is a distributed phenomenon

All stakeholders have power. Therefore, they are all potential sources of *influence-towards-goal*. Providing direction, therefore, is not the sole prerogative of the leader. Followers and other contextual factors can be sources of influence when it comes to providing direction. People can also be influenced by the wider context in which they are embedded. This distributed leadership forms leadership capacity or total leadership.

8-Followers decide who they will follow

Followers legitimise the leader. It is the follower that chooses to follow based on their perception and the knowledge they have of the leader. Hence the terms power *over* others only applies to physical force. Leon Brown, the American Major League Baseball player, highlights this saying: 'It all starts and ends in your mind. What you give power to [response to other peoples' sources of influence], has power *over* you.

9-Charisma is a temporary form of intense influence

People are not born charismatic they become charismatic. Charisma is context dependent and temporary in nature. It is bestowed on an individual by others and is mostly outside the individual's own control. Charisma is not a property that can be used on others and it can be argued that it is an intense form of influence, nothing more, nothing less. In this respect an individual can increase their charisma by developing their sources of influence.

10-There are three types of power, hard, firm and soft.

To gain compliance from followers, leaders could use physical force or hard-power as seen in war or when used by the police. This is influencing followers without their consent. In today's context force is only available in extreme circumstances. Firm-power can be viewed as a potential to influence others with the use of punishment or reward. Followers might conform to the required direction on a purely cost-benefit basis, a calculative stance. The choice in this case is theirs. They would not normally choose the direction given freedom but decide it is in their own interest to follow. The final type of power is soft-power, where the follower legitimises the leader and follows. They choose to co-operate and follow the leader.

Appendix 6

Concept Maps (CM1-CM8)

I also produced the following concept maps whilst acting as a mentor to James Gibson MBE following our face-to-face review meetings. The maps, which attempt to capture the essence of an HPSC's role as a leader, are offered to support the research findings. Of particular help were CM7 and CM8 as they reflect our discussion on an HPSC's sources of influence and the

contexts in which they perform their role. The adjacent photograph shows James and British athlete Ben Proud at their home training venue (shown on the left) and in an international competition arena (shown on the right).
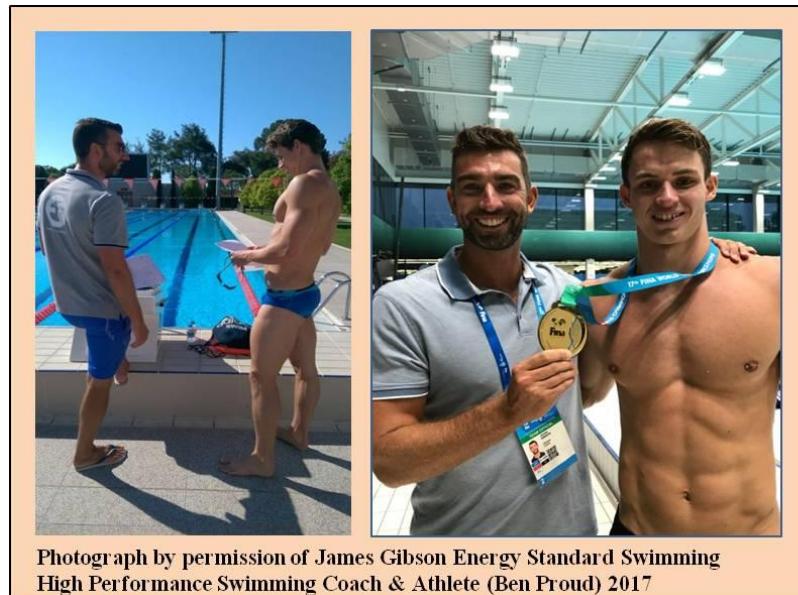
Photograph by permission of James Gibson Energy Standard Swimming
High Performance Swimming Coach & Athlete (Ben Proud) 2017

This is an example of vicarious achievement as James helped facilitate Ben's World Championship 2017 Gold Medal in the 50 Metres Butterfly.

Concept Map	Page
CM 1 - Language of Leadership	239
CM2 - Management v Leadership	240
CM3 - Lenses on Leadership	241
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CM5 - Power and the HPSC	243
CM6 - Figure of 8 – Customer/Supplier Relationships	244
CM7 - Sources of Influence	245
CM8 - Five Contextual Fields	246

LANGUAGE of LEADERSHIP
for James Gibson

$$\frac{ART}{(Emotional)} \quad v \quad \frac{SCIENCE}{(Rational)}$$

The Language of Leadership: Metaphors for James Gibson. 2016

Paul Robbins 2015

as Machine

- F.W. Taylor 'Principles of Scientific management'
- Henri Fayol – organisational structure
- Ludwig Von Bertalanffy – Systems approach
- Henry Mintzberg – Machine Bureaucracy

"A Systems View"

Requirements → Measures → Outputs
Control → Standards → Process → Inputs
Control / Feedback

management 'gaze' Panopticon

Transforms

"Capitalism turns the unity of money into a tool for rational cost - profit Calculation" (Schumpeter)

SA / ML / $ / CORE

as Accounting

Benchmarking
Quality
TQM
RESULTS!

Reduction of waste £! prevention saves £10 in waste, maximisation of profit

'The Bottom line is that you had better make your bottom line (Jack Welch)'

Return on Investment (ROI) Cost v Benefit.

as War

outcomes very clear – 'there is no complication for the eye'

Ubiquitous source of metaphors

"Go off half cocked"
"Crusades"
"Not a hill I would die on"
"In the firing line"
"Time to fight!"

There is, like Sport, contextual clarity. Rules of engagement – Gladiators. Command and Control

as Sport

A closed system 'World of Sport' winning and losing – the game.

'I give the same half-time speech over and over. It works best when my players are better than the other coach's players' (Chuck Mills).

"The gloves are off" (boxing); 'Keep your eye on the Ball" (cricket)
"Take it on the chin" (boxing)
"Win by a nose" (horse racing).

Concrete, like war, it is easy to see success!

as Religion

Leaders with supreme powers – charismatic Magical properties

Extra-ordinary experiences

Towards perfection – Dream

'The good Shepherd' Servant Leadership (Greenleaf)

Visions

Missions

Mystical experiences

'The Soul of man is a strange mixture of God and Beast – infinite and Infinite.

as Theatre

'all the worlds a stage and the men and women merely players'

Plays, like stories help people understand their experiences.

Perform, show, illusion, roles, visions

"Theatre of Dreams" – Visions

Erving Goffman – "On Stage" "Back Stage" 'we play a part'-role.

'Being' in the role – Indwelling Loss of self

A conspiracy between the actors and the audience – Participation.

'Stories we tell ourselves about ourselves – Sources of Learning

The 5 functions of management

Separate or Part of?

organising planning
developing
controlling

Leading

JOHARI WINDOW

	you	
OTHERS	K	UK
K	ARENA	BLIND SPOTS
UK	SECRETS	?

Self k / uk

- Personal effectiveness
- Time management
- Personal development

people
processes
work/activities

Others

Resources: PEM/PEM

- People
- Equipment
- Materials
- Plant
- Environment
- Money

Break down Structure (WBS)

Work
Activities

'The HPSc creates, and manages the context in order to lead their athletes to Olympic Gold'

Organising

Entropy
High = Chaos
Low = order
"order out of chaos"

MANAGEMENT v LEADERSHIP

Managing

for James Gibson
2015

MANAGEMENT

Dream 08/2016

Planning

Vision

mission/purpose (meaning)

Resource Plan

Activity Plan

Relationships
Critical Path
Analysis

A B D E C

Time

Plan
Dream
Do
Review

Developing

Self

CPD
Learning
self development

Requisite Variety for "fit"

Management (M) M = f(o, P, c, L, d)

McKINSEY 7S

STRATEGY
SYSTEMS
STRUCTURE
STAFF
SKILLS
SHARED VALUES
STYLE

ADAIR ACL

TASK NEEDS
INDIVIDUAL NEEDS
TEAM NEEDS

Leading

This way to gold at Rio

Controlling

requirements
STANDARDS
COMPARATOR
ADJUSTER

SENSOR
MEASUREMENT
Quality
Quantity
Time
Cost

Control +/-
--Feedback-->
or Feedforward

OUT
Contract

Purpose
Activities
Context (Transforming)

IN
Contract

time

> Contextual Analysis (CA)
> Problem Solving (PS)
> Decision making (DM)
> Risk Analysis (RA)
> Creating Solutions (CS)
> Future proofing (FP)
> Planning for Implementing (PI)
> Presencing (Pr)
> Locating

CA
Location
PS DM RA CS FP PI Pr

LENSES on LEADERSHIP
for James Gibson

Image projected

as Person (who you are)

Physical

Personality (Myers Briggs, Eysenck, Jung)
Mind-Set (Habitus) (Bourdieu)
Intelligences (Howard Gardener)
Motivations (Maslow, Herzberg, Vroom)
Traits / Qualities

ICO
COO
CEO
CFO
MD

as Position (where you are)

location – physical
organisational context
operational level { Top. Senior. Middle. Supervisory
'field' of play (Bourdieu)
Sources of power (Weber, French & Raven) • Traditional • Legal/Rational • Charismatic

Purpose : To meet the needs of people (individuals and teams) and the task. (Adair)

Level 5
Level 4
Level 3
Level 2
Level 1

as role or function (what you do)

Context

TASK NEEDS
INDIVIDUAL NEEDS
TEAM NEEDS 2+2=5

$$L = f(l, f, c)$$

Purpose
Standards
Measures
Control
Strategy
Structure
Systems

Maslow
Herzberg H&M

Build team
Integrate skills
Recognise
Reward

Lenses on Leadership as:
Robbins 2015
for James Gibson

as Skills (what you can do)

being

applying
communicating

Sensing
perceived
see (hears
smells
feels
tastes)

Thinking
• gathering sense data
• reflecting
• conceptualising
• storing / retrieving
• memorising
• creating

Management
• Organise
• Plan
• Control
• Develop

Leadership
• Influence
• give direction
• motivate
• inspire

acting — doing
Psychomotive
Choosing
Affective
Cognitive
Conative

Knowledge Explicit Tacit

• problem solving
• decision making
• forecasting
• analysing risks
• generating options

Charisma

Leader's Level of Influence

Follower Wavelength (meeting needs)
H2

→ HPSC James Gibson
Athletes.

Forces in Leader
• Authority
• Competence
• Psychological contract.

Forces in Followers
• competence
• experience
• Psychological contract.

as process (How you do it)

Styles

'The way we do things round here'

Tannenbaum & Schmidt
Continuum of Leadership Behaviour
← Range of Leadership Styles →

Freedom for Leader
Freedom for Followers

Start from S7 decide how much freedom to give followers

Level of CONTROL

S1 S2 S3 S4 S5 S6 S7
tells tells Sells Talks Involves delegates abdicates
(autocratic) Consults delegates

Blake & Mouton Grid.

Concern for PEOPLE (y)

Country Club Leader (1,9)
Team Leader (9,9)
Middle of the road (5,5)
Impoverished (1,1)
Authority Compliant (9,1)

Concern for TASK
(x)

Fluid
Roles Rules Game

Habitus
• Beliefs
• Values
• Philosophy
• Behaviours

Species of Capital SC F SV H

Symbolic Violence

(Bourdieu)

ACTION CENTRED LEADERSHIP

"A leader is the sort of person; qualities, character, personality, with the appropriate [technical] knowledge, who is able to provide the necessary functions [meeting needs] to achieve the common task and build the team. Not doing it all himself or herself drawing in contributions from other people to that end."

(Adair, 1984)

TASK

PEOPLE

FUNCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

by James Gibson
2015

TASK NEEDS

INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

TEAM NEEDS

(John Adair)

McKINSEY 7S

SYSTEMS
STYLE
STRUCTURE
SHARED VALUES
STAFF
STRATEGY
SKILLS

(Peters & Waterman)

PINK

▲ Mastery
▲ Purpose
▲ Autonomy
} 3 key motivators

HERZBERG

2 FACTOR THEORY

MOTIVATORS
Ability
Opportunity
Achievement
Reward & Recognition
Meaningful work
Responsibility
Advancement
Growth

HYGIENE
Policy & Strategy
Conditions of work
Environment
Relationships
Supervision
Safety & Security
Positional status
Pay & Remuneration

∨ movement

∨ motivation

MASLOW

SELF ACTUALISATION
ESTEEM
SOCIAL
SAFETY & SECURITY
PHYSIOLOGICAL

ALDERFER

> Existence
> Relationships
> Growth

McCLELLAND

> Affiliation (social)
> Power (influence)
> Achievement (actualisation)

VROOM

EXPECTANCY — e
f
v — VALANCE

$e \times v = f$

$H = \varnothing \quad v = \varnothing \quad f = \varnothing$

STAGES of TEAM DEVELOPMENT

(TUCKMAN)

Forming → Storming → Norming → Performing

Team Building

Culture (Beliefs/Values)
Ethos
Integrating skills
Distributed leadership
Coaching
Reward & Recognition
Roles & Responsibilities

2 + 2 = 5 (Synergy)
Team strategies

WOODCOCK

> Undeveloped team
> experimenting team
> Consolidating team
> Mature team

pf
t →

POWER and the HPSC
for James Gibson

What is it?

Capacity or Source of influence.
Influence is the effect the source has on other people.

"All people are potential sources of influence ∴ power is distributed"
— Foucault

Types of Power

Hard

Soft

- Visible (effects) or Invisible (doxa)
- Hard (Physical force)
- Firm (discipline & order)
- Soft (influencing people)
- De jure (legitimate)
- De facto (personal)

Expert Views

Max Weber [3]
- Traditional
- Rational Legal
- Charismatic

French & Raven [5]
- Reward Power
- Coercive Power
- Legitimate Power
- Referent
- Expert

POWER

Robbins 2015
for James Gibson

Hicks & Gullett [7]
- Physical Strength
- Control over resource (economic)
- Superior or Scarce knowledge
- Above average performance
- Magnetic Personality
- Organisational position
- Ideological persuasiveness

Alternative Views

thoughts on Power for the HPSc.

→ Power & Knowledge cannot be separated
→ Power relations are dependent on culture, place, and time } Consider Hitler & Churchill
→ Power is not a commodity, a position, a prize or a conspiracy. Activation is by political technologies.
→ Power relations are mobile non egalitarian and asymmetrical.
→ Power is multi-directional
→ Productive Power = efficiency (Gaze)
→ Power is a matrix; effects all.

— Foucault

Lukes 3 Dimensions

[1st] Dimension
Overt influence creating followers

[2nd] Dimension
Covert exclusion from decision making
↓
Political

[3rd] Dimension
Covert – implanting in people's minds interests contrary to their own good

Overt → Covert
→ Can be observed
→ More difficult to see
→ Deeply embedded.

Promised Land / Utopia

FIG 8 – CUSTOMER/SUPPLIER RELATIONSHIPS

for James Gibson

'multiple collaborative partnerships in which the individual needs are being met'

'A journey of joint discovery'

'The athletes meet the HPSC's higher order needs'
– Engagement
– Responses to leadership
– Followership

Babysteps to mastery
Experience
Competence
Education
Ability
Time →

Feedback on performance
Learning through experience
output to COACH

Performance

Resonance,
Athlete needs →
Coach Athlete Engagement

Connectedness
output to ATHLETES

Feedback on performance
Learning through experience

Customer/Supplier relationships

'The HPSC meets the athletes' needs'
– Low entropy context
– Programmes of meaningful work
– Leadership

Robbins. 2015 *for James Gibson*

HPSC

'a symbiotic relationship or a Partnership that delivers co-produced outcomes'
Coach
Future – 'in the house of How'
Past – 'now presencing'
James

LEVEL 1 CONTEXT
HPSC
ATHLETE

'co-created context that meets collective needs in a results driven business'
Team

ATHLETES

'James Gibson Supplier of Leadership' Est. 2012

COACH INPUTS
ATHLETE INPUTS

CONTRACTS

SUPPLIES
HIGH PERFORMANCE COACH (HPSC)
– Context (low entropy)
– Programme of work
– Leadership
– Motivational input
– Inspirational input
– General support
– Feedback
– Reward & Recognition
– Opportunity

CONTRACT

NPD and Head Coach

Inputs from Level 2 Context
Athlete and HPSC support
EXEC AGENCY
TECHNICAL SUPPORT

SUPPLIES
ATHLETES
– Attention
– Response to leadership
– Conformance in context
– Authority/Legitimacy
– vicarious competence
– Performance
– engagement
– Feedback
– Support
– Followership

CONTRACT

'Contextual fit acts as an enabler to swimming performance'

SOURCES OF INFLUENCE — Josef James Gibson

COMPETENCE
Context — internal / external
Conative · Psychomotive · Affective · Cognitive

Paradigm:
- Who you are.
- What you can do.
- What you have done.
- How you behave.
- How you connect.

Resources
People
Equipment
Materials
Plant
Environment
Money
PEM / PEM
(Scarce resource / network contacts)

Authority & Legitimacy — rational / legal · charismatic · traditional

Stories we tell about ourselves!

Achievements — Standard reached / level attained

Qualifications — School / University · Sport e.g. UKCC / ECAP

Experience — Memories

Competence to mastery — journey of discovery
Competence Levels — mastery / competence
time →
future learning — presencing — In the moment flow

Intellectual Processes
problem solving
decision making
visualising
reflecting .....
wicked problems
Curiosity

Drive — Motivations
Beliefs → Standards
Values / Qualities
Cultural Capital

Cognitive Abilities
Intelligences
- Contextual
- Linguistic
- Logical / mathematical
- Musical
- Kinesthetic
- Spatial–visual
- Interpersonal
- Intrapersonal

Personality
Competitive
Physical
Identity
Stability → Neuroticism
Extrovert ↔ Introvert — Ego Control
Psychoticism

"Gibbo"
- Posture
- Expression
- Clothing
- Erotic Capital
- TWHM effect

- Age
- Height
- Weight
- Looks
- Ratios (Anthropometric)

A man with a mission.
Identity "Me & I"

Expectations (Future Self)
Economic / social / cultural (Capital)

positional
Self Identity

P–Ca Capability
P–Cr Credibility
P–Ch Character
P–Co Conduct

CONNECTEDNESS
TOTAL POWER (Source of Influence)
$TP = f(Ch, Ca, Cr, Co)$

Reputation — What people say about your:
- conduct
- achievement
- appearance
- qualifications
- beliefs
- values
- Past reflections

Activities — Managing & Leading
Organising / Planning
Developing
Controlling / Leading

Control elements
STANDARD Requirements
COMPARE measures
PROCESS
RESOURCES
IN → CM
CONTROLLING

NLP
Behaviours & Style
Freedom for Leader / Freedom for Followers
S1 S2 S3 S4 S5 S6 S7
Body Language
Learned Behaviours
Programming (Habitus)

Robbins 2015 — for James Gibson

"It's all becoming a habitus" — Reay (2004)

Five Contextual Fields (Bourdieu, 2015) for James Gibson

HPSC
Athlete
Athlete Team

Core-Coaching Agency
Field #1

Swimming Organisation   Field #2

Swimming Competition Arena   Field #3
{Community of UK HPSCs
* Includes Core-CoachingAgency}

UK Sport   Field #4

British Society   Field #5

Paul Robbins
for James Gibson 2015

Kazan World Championships
2015 Russia
"Russian Dolls" Cultures in
Cultures.

#1
#2
#3
#4
#5

Self Identity
Leader

P-Ca
P-Cr
P-Ch
P-Co

P-Ca
P-Cr
P-Ch
P-Co

Self-Identity
Follower

P-Ca
P-Cr
P-Ch
P-Co

Key:

Power of
Capability

Power of
Credibility

P-Ca
P-Cr
P-Ch
P-Co

Connectedness
in
Relationships

Self-Identity "I".

Power of
Conduct

Power of Character

Coaching-Eye

End of Thesis

'We shall not cease from exploration and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time'

T. S Elliot