



Citation for published version:

Molan, C, Matthews, J & Arnold, R 2016, 'Leadership off the pitch: the role of the manager in semi-professional football', *European Sport Management Quarterly*, vol. 16, no. 3, pp. 274-291.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/16184742.2016.1164211>

DOI:

[10.1080/16184742.2016.1164211](https://doi.org/10.1080/16184742.2016.1164211)

Publication date:

2016

Document Version

Peer reviewed version

[Link to publication](#)

University of Bath

General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

Abstract

Research question: The first-team manager's position in semi-professional or professional football clubs can be viewed as the de-facto leadership role. Although there has been considerable research conducted in relation to leadership on the pitch, in a coaching or in-game context, the football manager's leadership off the pitch remains an underexplored topic. The purpose of this study was, therefore, to explore the manager's off the pitch leadership role, utilising semi-professional football in Ireland as the research setting.

Research methods: The participants in this study were four first-team managers, four players, and three board members from semi-professional football clubs in the League of Ireland. The qualitative method of semi-structured interviews was used in this study to gain a rich, in depth exploratory insight on the manager's role from a variety of perspectives.

Results and findings: Six key leadership themes were identified relating to the manager's role with players off the pitch. These were: team vision, setting performance expectations, establishing behavioural expectations, effective communication, individual consideration, and use of archetypes. Leadership themes were also identified in relation to the manager's role with other key stakeholders, including: cooperation with the board, leadership through support staff, and influencing through the media.

Implications: Practically, it is anticipated that the findings will encourage managers, football clubs, and national associations to place more emphasis on the leadership skills required by managers away from their on-pitch activities, and address these appropriately through professional development.

Keywords: management, multi-perspective, performance, sport, stakeholder

Introduction

Football is a sport that has socio-cultural significance, generating intense public interest on an international scale (Chadwick & Hamill, 2010). As a result, in professional football, there is an extreme pressure to perform, which has led to the turbulent nature of the first-team manager's role (Bridgewater, 2010). Indeed, the contemporary role of the football manager, as the face and voice of the football club, is often now scrutinised just as much as team performances are (Carter, 2013). Furthermore, due to the manager's interaction with various stakeholders (e.g., players, support staff, media, supporters), his or her role can also be viewed as the most important position in a professional football club (Ogbonna & Harris, 2014). To operate successfully within this unique and challenging environment, leadership away from the on-field priorities has been identified as a key element of the manager's role (Morrow & Howieson, 2014).

To inform the off-pitch leadership of the football manager, it is worthwhile drawing from the abundance of existing leadership literature, with leadership being one of the most widely studied human behaviours (Higgs, 2003). An ongoing and noteworthy topic within the literature has been the discourse regarding the similarities and differences between the constructs of leadership and management (Simonet & Tett, 2013). Northouse (2012) defines leadership as a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals, through behaviours, acts, or skills, to achieve a common goal. Meanwhile, Drucker (2012) states that 'management is the organ of leadership, direction and decision' (p.17) noting that 'management cannot create leaders, it can only create the conditions under which leadership can become effective' (p.318). Although there are conceptual differences between leadership and management, there are significant similarities at an operational level. For example, researchers have suggested both leadership and management involve conceptualizing what needs to be done, solving problems, taking an active role, working with others, and creating

success (Fletcher & Arnold, 2015; Young & Dulewicz, 2008). Fletcher and Arnold (2011) highlighted this commonality in elite sport organisations, where national performance directors see themselves operating as leaders and managers (dependant on the situation) and are responsible for developing and communicating a vision, managing operations, leading people, and creating a culture. Likewise, in football, although there are management functions (e.g., recruitment, team selection) that overlap, the manager's role is underpinned by a desire to lead, inspire, and motivate people towards an objective (Morrow & Howieson, 2014).

To date, research in professional football has tended to focus on leadership on the pitch without acknowledging the manager's leadership role outside the direct football coaching context (e.g. Konter, 2009; Potrac, Jones & Armour, 2002; Potrac, Jones & Cushion, 2007; Smith & Cushion, 2006). A small number of studies have, however, begun to highlight the relevance of leadership behaviours outside the coaching context. For example, Potrac and Jones (2009a) refer to the off the pitch leadership skills required from a newly appointed semi-professional head coach (a leadership position with similar duties to a manager as the main decision maker in the team; Arnulf, Mathisen, & Hærem, 2012). Utilising micro-political theory, the authors discuss how power, influence and control strategies are used by the head coach to manage the complex social interactions *outside* the training ground with players, assistants, and the board. Potrac and Jones (2009b) have also discussed the need for greater research outside the functional on-the-pitch football coaching process, and suggest that the behaviours used with various stakeholders to achieve desirable leadership situations should be explored. Furthermore, Kelly (2008) reinforced the relevance of the manager's leadership role in professional football off the pitch. Specifically, the findings revealed how newly appointed managers insist that the board allow them total control over team matters, including the signing/releasing of players and the appointment of

support staff. In addition, recent research in the context of the manager's career development has further indicated that football management requires functions beyond coaching, particularly involving leadership of people (e.g. players, support staff) in a complex environment with unique power distributions (Morrow & Howieson, 2014). Although these studies have briefly referred to the manager's off the pitch leadership role within professional football, the specific leadership behaviours used with players off the pitch have not been fully captured. Additionally, the aforementioned studies do not focus on how the manager's leadership role off the pitch requires interaction with other pivotal stakeholders in the club's organisational structure (Carter, 2013; Morrow & Howieson, 2014). Although, the wider leadership literature has suggested the importance of a leader's upward influence (e.g., Epitropaki & Martin, 2013) and political skill (e.g., Aherne et al., 2005) within organisations, there is limited evidence of how this is used by managers with board members in football clubs. Despite their hugely influential positions, the views of the club chairperson or other board members in relation to the manager's leadership role have not been reported (Cruickshank & Collins, 2015; Kelly & Harris, 2010; Potrac & Jones, 2009a;). Indeed, there is still little known on how the football manager's interaction with other stakeholders influences his or her leadership role with the team (Gammelslater, 2013). Hence, there is a need for sport-specific research that will reflect the idiosyncratic culture of and leadership interactions involved in football (Cruickshank, Collins, & Minten, 2014; Kihl, Leberman, & Schull, 2010).

There are multiple theories that can inform and explain the contemporary football manager's leadership role. Researchers have found the manager's position to be deeply rooted in the traditions of legitimate authority and to predominantly adopt an autocratic leadership approach (Kelly, 2008; Kelly & Waddington, 2006). These findings have parallels with theory on heroic leadership which views one single leader as responsible for the

performance of the group and all wisdom is concentrated in the leader (Crevani, Lindgren, & Packendorff, 2007). This emphasis on the leader's influence within sport is also central to theory on transformational leadership which suggests that the leader's behaviours inspire and motivate followers to exceed performance expectations by shaping followers' beliefs and attitudes (Bass, 1985). Bass and Riggio (2012) also propose that the optimal leadership profile includes transactional leadership behaviours which involve some form of exchange, usually a reward or corrective action, which encourages compliance with the leader's requests. However, despite the focus on the leader's influence within literature, researchers have recently argued that the idea of football managers as the single source of leadership and primarily accountable for a team's success (or failure) may be exaggerated (Arnulf, Mathisen & Hærem, 2012). Indeed, team leadership has been offered as an alternative perspective and can be viewed as emerging from processes of social interactions within the team and may be as much an output from these processes as an input variable from an individual, such as the manager (Arnulf, Mathisen & Hærem, 2012; Day, Gronn & Salas, 2004; Ilgen, Hollenbeck, Johnson & Jundt, 2005;). Evidently, there are two central perspectives on the manager's leadership role off the pitch, one which views the manager as the source of leadership and another which views the manager's leadership role as a consequence of interactions with key stakeholders (Arnulf, Mathisen & Hærem, 2012). The current study aims to underpin emerging themes with appropriate theoretical approaches to further explain the football manager's off the pitch leadership role.

Extant research on the football manager's leadership role has tended to focus on leadership behaviours on the pitch, in a coaching or in-game context without recognising the various interactions with key stakeholders off the pitch that may contribute to the leadership role. Therefore, the purpose of the present study is to explore the manager's leadership role off the pitch from the perspective of players, managers, and board members in semi-

professional football clubs. It is anticipated that such in-depth information from active stakeholders in football will enable this study to accurately frame the football manager's role away from the on-pitch priorities and extend research on the leadership role of the football manager.

Method

Research design

The study adopted a phenomenological research design, which is particularly suitable for this exploratory study as it allows the researcher to describe the phenomenon under study while refraining from using a pre-determined framework (Groenewald, 2004). Specifically, the intention of this study is to gather rich and insightful data on football managers' off the pitch leadership role from the perspectives of the participants. In line with the principles of phenomenology, the epistemological position taken was that the data are contained within the perspectives of people who experience the phenomenon; thus, these were the chosen participants (Groenewald, 2004). As there is limited research available on the phenomenon and the researcher does not yet know the important variables to examine, qualitative research was deemed an appropriate exploratory approach (Cresswell, 2013). Specifically, qualitative methods enable the researcher to build rapport with participants and discover how they interpret social experiences relevant to the phenomenon (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). Semi-structured interviews were chosen specifically as the data collection method as they are often the most effective way of guiding participants through appropriate topics and revealing important information about human and organisational behaviour (Qu & Dumay, 2011). Furthermore, semi-structured interviews have previously been used effectively to explore leadership in sport (e.g., Arnold, Fletcher, & Anderson, 2015; Cruickshank & Collins, 2015; Fletcher & Arnold, 2011) and aspects of professional football management (e.g. Kelly, 2008; Morrow & Howieson, 2014).

Participants

The participants represented four clubs in the League of Ireland Premier Division, which is currently ranked 40th out of 54 professional national leagues within the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA), based on the performance of its clubs in European competition (UEFA, 2014). The modest international standing and limited finances of the league means that clubs are predominantly semi-professional, retaining players on part-time, single season contracts. Teams typically train three to four times per week and play a total of 33 league fixtures in a season that runs from March to November, with average match attendances estimated at 1,550 ($M= 1,250$) (Reilly, 2015). Two of the clubs represented operated as privately owned limited companies, two operated a member trust ownership structure, which were the typical structures operated within the league, and all four were governed by a board which was led by a chairperson. Although football clubs have tended to utilise a head coach model in other European leagues, in the context of the League of Ireland, clubs employed a traditional manager, who reported to the board and was responsible for leading the coaching staff, recruiting of and negotiation with players, and overall team performance.

In methodological terms, participants were selected through a purposive sampling strategy, since it allows researchers to select suitable individuals from a particular context appropriate to the area being studied (Gray, 2004). The sample ($n = 11$) consisted of four managers, four players and three board members (all male), aged between 24 and 51 years ($M = 38.2$, $SD = 8.9$), all with significant careers within League of Ireland in their respective roles and considerable exposure to the manager's leadership role off the pitch. Participants had an average of 11.7 years ($SD = 9.0$) experience as player, manager, or board member. All managers held the UEFA Pro Licence, a pre-requisite qualification for managing football clubs at a senior professional level, and were former professional players. In addition to

playing in the League of Ireland Premier Division, three players had played in UEFA competitions and one player had previously played in the English Premier League.

Furthermore, each board member held positions on the board that frequently interacted with the first-team manager and all had experience working with a number of different managers during their tenure.

Procedure

Following institutional ethical approval, participants were initially contacted and provided with an overview of the study. The first author is a former semi-professional player and UEFA 'A' Licence qualified coach, which facilitated some access to the 'closed social world' of professional football (Kelly, 2008). Participants who agreed to take part in the study were contacted to arrange a convenient time and location for the interview. All interviews were digitally recorded and by the ninth interview (three from each stakeholder), analogous vignettes were being cited. Two further interviews were conducted with no new themes emerging, therefore it was deemed that data saturation had been achieved (Bowen, 2008). Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006) propose that, once purposive samples are carefully selected, between 6 and 12 interviews is sufficient to effectively understand the perceptions or experiences between groups of individuals. Therefore, consistent with this guideline, after the eleventh interview with no new ideas elicited, the sample was deemed complete.

Interview guide

An interview guide was developed which had five sections. Section One detailed the purpose of the study and the participants' ethical rights, before asking them for their informed consent. Section Two consisted of a number of general introductory questions exploring the participants' background and experiences (e.g., "Can you describe your football background and how you got to where you are now?"). Section Three focussed on questions relating to each manager's leadership with players away from the coaching and in-game context (e.g.,

“How does the manager unite players and create a strong dressing room?”). Section Four progressed onto each manager’s interaction with the board, support staff, and the media (e.g., “How would you describe the manager’s relationship with the board?”). Finally, Section Five contained summary questions further exploring the manager’s leadership role (e.g., “In your opinion, what are the key leadership skills required in the manager’s role?”). In designing the interview guide, the first author’s knowledge of semi-professional football and the extant literature provided the initial ideas and phrasing for the questions. For example, the literature on transformational leadership (e.g. developing a vision, fostering teamwork), transactional leadership (e.g. positively reinforcing preferred behaviours), micro-politics and upwards influence (e.g. manager’s relationship with the board) informed development of some of the questions. This fits with a phenomenological approach which accepts that the researcher cannot be completely detached from his or her own presuppositions and should not pretend otherwise (Hammersley, 2000). Although the interview guide was followed, the natural flow of the conversation was allowed to dictate the direction of questioning to encourage participants to share information which they felt was pertinent to the manager’s leadership role off the pitch, and thus allowing new themes to emerge. Although participants frequently referred to experiences with their current club, the interviews also explored their experiences and interactions with previous clubs and managers throughout their careers in the League of Ireland.

To ensure the appropriateness of the interview guide, three pilot interviews were conducted with a group of stakeholders that mirrored the study participants. Following these pilot interviews, a small number of questions and elaboration probes were adjusted in order to emphasise the study’s focus on the manager’s leadership role off the pitch. For example, in the pilot interviews, the question “How does the manager unite players and create a strong dressing room?”, resulted in a number of references to on-pitch activities, therefore this was

edited to read, “How does the manager unite players and create a strong dressing room, specifically outside training and match situations?”

Data analysis

The interviews, which ranged from 27 to 56 minutes in duration ($M = 38.6$, $SD = 10.9$), were transcribed verbatim, and resulted in 146 pages of 1.5 spaced text. Pseudonyms were used to ensure the anonymity of the participants. Content analysis was the chosen method of analysis, since this enabled new concepts or categories that describe the phenomenon to emerge from the data (Elo & Kynaas, 2008). In addition, the data analysis adopted an inductive approach, which is particularly appropriate where the research is exploring a multifaceted phenomenon that is new or fragmented (Elo & Kynaas, 2008; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005), as is the case with the football manager’s off the pitch leadership role. For the content analysis, the researcher conducted a process of open-coding to interpret and categorise raw data as meaning units related to the manager’s off the pitch leadership behaviour (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). First, notes and headings were written on the transcripts as they were read. The transcripts were continually re-read and any meaning units classified as belonging to the same category were paraphrased into lower-order themes, using content-characteristic words, and subsequently grouped into higher-order themes (Elo & Kynaas, 2008). The higher-order themes were then categorised into two general dimensions. The use of deductive logic occurred in the final stages of the analysis, specifically in labelling some higher-order themes. This approach is not unusual in qualitative research particularly when the researcher is aware of pre-existing concepts and frameworks (Gibbs, 2008). The final stage of the analysis involved recording the number of data quotes within each higher-order and lower-order theme in order to identify the themes most frequently emerging from the data.

Trustworthiness and rigor

Trustworthiness in qualitative research is important in order to establish credibility and authenticity in the interpretation of the data, and to recognise multiple perspectives and sometimes conflicting realities within the data (Gray, 2008). A number of steps were taken in order to ensure trustworthiness in the present study. First, credibility was addressed by selecting participants with significant experience and in-depth knowledge of the topic area. Second, to address authenticity, the research team encouraged critique and continually challenged each other's interpretations of the data throughout the analysis process before arriving at consensus (Biddle, Markland, Gilbourne, Chatzisarantis, & Sparkes, 2001). To further enhance the authenticity, member checking was employed by sending a list of the themes and dimensions to three randomly selected participants to review, who unanimously supported the research team's findings (Sparkes & Smith, 2009). Finally to add rigor, the analysis and results were verified through a peer-review process (Côté, Salmela, Baria, & Russell, 1993; Bucci et al., 2012). To elaborate, a graduate student reviewer was asked to place approximately 25% of the raw data quotes within the relevant lower-order theme. This resulted in a reliability score of 79%. Additionally, the reviewer was asked to match all lower-order themes to the relevant higher-order theme, which resulted in a reliability score of 92%. After providing context to the misplaced quotes and re-labelling two higher-order themes, the reviewer agreed with the research team's interpretation, ensuring that an accurate representation of the manager's leadership off the pitch was formed.

Results

The interview data yielded 206 raw data quotes which were paraphrased into 23 lower-order themes. The lower-order themes were grouped into nine higher-order themes and then categorized into two general dimensions. The general dimensions involved in the football manager's off the pitch leadership role were labelled as: leadership with the players (see Figure 1) and leadership with other stakeholders (see Figure 2). Leadership with the

players involved the manager's leadership behaviour with players, individually or as a group, outside the on-pitch coaching context. Leadership with other stakeholders involved the manager's interaction outside coaching or in-game situations with non-playing stakeholders who impacted on the leadership role.

Leadership with the players

The first general dimension was the manager's leadership with the players, specifically outside the coaching or in-game setting. Participants referred to this interaction occurring in team meetings, outside the club environment, or in discussions between scheduled pitch sessions or match times. Manager and player participants provided the majority of data quotes as they were the stakeholders with most visibility of this general dimension. This dimension consisted of six higher-order themes: team vision, setting performance expectations, establishing behavioural expectations, effective communication, individual consideration, and use of archetypes (see Figure 1). In relation to the higher-order theme of team vision, there was broad consensus from participants that the manager was responsible for developing the vision of how the first-team will play based on his football principles. In addition, participants described the importance of managers being able to sell their vision by articulating aspirations for the season and motivating players to commit to the preferred football philosophy. Although all the managers and two players discussed how the team vision is developed based on a preferred football style, two players referred to how this can change to a win at all costs approach based on the clubs expectations to achieve, as described by one successful player:

I think the manager has to get across that this is a club that wants to win stuff. You know when players came to [the club name], you know I'm talking about some players coming from smaller clubs, so-called smaller clubs, and when they

made the step up to the bigger clubs they are expected to win week in week out, year in year out. (Player B)

[INSERT FIGURE 1 HERE]

Moving from team vision to setting performance expectations, this was also identified as a key aspect of the manager's off the pitch leadership with players. Although the manager is required to drive player performance on the pitch in training and matches, participants discussed situations off the pitch, such as team meetings, where performance expectations were developed by managers. To elaborate, managers used team and individual player meetings to create role awareness and clearly outline player responsibilities within the team. Manager and player participants also emphasised how the manager facilitated collective input from players into performance targets for the season; thus creating a shared ownership and commitment to group goals. Furthermore, a number of players and managers referred to the high demands that managers placed on players in relation to their performance. Although manager participants broadly discussed how they set the team's performance expectations, three players specifically referred to their experiences with different managers. The following quote illustrates one player's experience of managers with different levels of performance expectations:

That winning mentality . . . it does stem down from management. . . I think if you want to win the league you can't be happy with drawing . . . with [previous manager name] we were just too happy (to draw). . . I think it [the winning mentality] comes from management; it has to be nailed down, like [current manager name] has it, you are nearly afraid to lose. (Player D)

Turning to the theme of setting behavioural expectations, participants spoke about how managers were required to create a united squad of players by fostering respect and teamwork within the group. Player and manager participants also cited examples of how

managers enforced discipline in order to maintain preferred behavioural expectations among the players. Additionally, player and manager participants described how managers established preferred lifestyle standards for the players by promoting a professional approach to nutrition, rest, strength and conditioning, and making players individually accountable for their behaviour off the pitch. In particular, manager participants highlighted this as an important aspect of their role primarily due to the limited contact time with players at semi-professional level, as this manager explained:

It's not just what we do at the club; it's what they do after the club in terms of their nutrition, in terms of their sleep, in terms of their drinking behaviour and habits and stuff like that . . . we have them three or four times a week, but a lot of that stuff they can improve themselves. (Manager A)

With regards to the theme of effective communication, participants referred to the need for managers to interact with players on a one-to-one basis in order to motivate and provide personalised feedback. Specifically, both player and manager participants recognised the value in allowing players a voice to provide feedback on their role and any issues within the squad. Although player responses focussed on the need for interaction with the manager, two manager participants highlighted the need to be direct in delivering difficult messages in relation to performance which can be challenging for players to accept, as this manager stated: "You have got to be able to fight with people because that's an important part as well. I don't mean physically but I mean fight as in tell them [the players] things they don't want to hear sometimes". (Manager C)

Turning to the theme of individual consideration, all participants discussed the importance of managers showing concern for players' needs. Player and manager participants commented on how managers use player development methods, such as video analysis, to highlight individual strengths and weaknesses. In addition, there was consensus among

participants that managers must understand and be able to manage the different personalities in the team in order to support and motivate them effectively, as summed up by this manager:

There are many different types of people and if you deal with one the same as the other one, it might be fine for the first one but it might not be fine for the second one . . . therefore you won't get the benefits out of him for the team. (Manager D)

The final leadership theme in this dimension was the manager's use of archetypes. In this theme, both player and manager participants described how the manager used certain players to exemplify the values that he wanted to uphold within the team. Managers achieved this by highlighting former successful players at the club, which motivated current players to target similar achievements. Participants also referred to managers recruiting new players that espoused a winning mentality and leadership qualities that would positively influence the team. Furthermore, both player and manager participants acknowledged the importance of managers using current senior players as role models to influence the group, as illustrated in the following quote by one manager: . . . character, attitude, is so important, you know in the modern game. I've got two or three experienced players to the club and their character and attitude is fantastic and that rubs off on the young players. (Manager A)

Leadership with other stakeholders

The second general dimension was the manager's off the pitch leadership role with other stakeholders. This consisted of three higher-order themes: cooperation with the board, influencing through the media, and leadership through support staff (see Figure 2). In relation to the theme of cooperation with the board, managers and board members provided the majority of data quotes and described how managers need to carefully handle relationships upwards with key individuals, such as the chairman or CEO, in order to gain support for their own leadership position. Managing these relationships through frequent communication ensured that the manager appeared cooperative; thus, allowing him opportunities to influence

key individuals, who were more likely to view his requests for further resources (e.g. players, staff, facilities) favourably. With regard to the manager's level of input into club decisions, manager and board member responses suggested some discrepancy between their views.

Manager participants suggested that the board should grant managers a certain level of autonomy into club decisions, such as spending on player transfers, club facilities, and staff recruitment. However, one board member gave a conflicting view on the manager's input:

It's not a good thing for the manager to get involved [with club decisions] because they tend not to last too long at any club and you know, the more they know the more dangerous that information could be in other people's hands . . . The manager needs to focus on just the football. (Board member B)

[INSERT FIGURE 2 HERE]

The second higher-order theme within this dimension was leadership through support staff. Manager responses indicated that they demonstrated leadership by using their assistants and coaches as a conduit to reinforce their expectations. In particular, managers used their assistants as an alternative voice of authority off the pitch aimed at maintaining player standards. Manager and board member participants also indicated that the manager's choice of assistant and coaches was deliberate in order to fulfil important roles which involved developing close day-to-day relationships that could provide motivation and support to the players. However, two player participants indicated that, although there is generally a closer day-to-day relationship with the assistant manager, they recognised that all information shared is likely to be reported back to the manager, as this senior player commented: Can a player really trust the assistant manager? It's hard to know if you can be pally pally with them or will they go back to the gaffer and tell him what you are saying. (Player A)

The final higher-order theme within this general dimension was influencing through the media. In this theme, board members provided examples of how managers used media

interviews to set agendas with the board in terms of signing new players or improving facilities. Additionally, two managers described how they deflected negative comments from the media regarding performance thus protecting players from public criticism and ensuring that player confidence and team cohesion were not impacted. Furthermore, impression management, which involved altering or influencing the public image of the team, was a frequently cited lower-order theme. Board member and manager responses highlighted the benefits of managers creating a positive public perception of the club through the media, as this board member explains: No one wants to hear from the administrators. The manager really is your voice. For good or bad, the manager is the voice of the club so having a media savvy manager is great. (Board Member A)

However, player responses indicated that they often questioned the manager's motives during media interviews and that the interactions were used as a tactic to alter the manager's own image and that of the team in the eyes of supporters, the chairman, and the media, as the following player describes:

You know what the manager says in the media and what he is saying to you could be two completely different things. Like, he has got to put on a bit of a face for the media and for the fans as well you know. So he could be saying something there just to keep the chairman happy, keep the media happy, keep the fans happy. (Player A)

Discussion

Recent research has suggested that due to the evolving structures within football clubs, the manager's ability to demonstrate effective leadership off the pitch is becoming increasingly important (Morrow & Howieson, 2014). The present study extends this idea by identifying key areas where a football manager demonstrates leadership outside the direct coaching or in-game context. The central message to emerge is that, to fulfil their leadership role, managers must adopt a dynamic leadership approach that interacts with key stakeholders

off the pitch, such as players, assistants, and board members. For example, while the manager's leadership role may be required to engage with senior players who will act as archetypes demonstrating preferred behaviours to other members of the squad, concurrently, the manager will likely need to manage key relationships with board members to buttress his leadership position. This would resonate with a relational leadership perspective which views leadership as emanating from the social connections and interdependencies within the organisation (Uhl-Bien, 2006).

A key finding to emerge from the data was that developing a team vision is an important area in the manager's off the pitch leadership. Recent research on leadership in Olympic sport has highlighted how creating a vision can assist in creating shared aspirations and inspiring individuals and teams towards performance goals (Fletcher & Arnold, 2011; Slater et al., 2013). Additionally, visionary leadership has been associated with a wide range of positive outcomes including follower job satisfaction and perceptions of leadership effectiveness (Groves, 2006). However, a novel finding to emerge in this study is that selling the vision to the players and quickly gaining their commitment is a crucial part of this process. To elaborate, the football manager is unlikely to be granted the long-term preparation required to implement a team vision due to the insecure and short-term nature of managerial positions in professional football (Bridgewater, 2010). Therefore, as suggested by Potrac and Jones (2009a), managers should engage in micro-political strategies off the pitch at an early stage in their tenure in order to quickly persuade players to buy into their vision and methods.

With regards to the theme of setting performance expectations, managers are required to develop role awareness, facilitate collective input, and be highly demanding with players. This is in line with the conceptualisations of transformational leadership, particularly those relating to high performance expectations (i.e. expressing expectations of excellence) and

fostering acceptance of group goals (i.e. promoting cooperation towards common goals) (Bass & Riggio, 2012). These are critical managerial requirements, since recent research on leadership in sport teams has found that setting high performance expectations can predict task cohesion, while fostering acceptance of group goals can predict both task and social cohesion (Callow, Smith, Hardy, Arthur, & Hardy, 2009). The data reported suggests that football managers should clearly identify individual roles, encourage players' input into team objectives, and demand consistent, high levels of performance, which is likely to have a cohesive effect on the team.

Turning to the theme of establishing behavioural expectations, managers are required to communicate and enforce preferred behaviours with their players in relation to their lifestyle and conduct within the group. This theme resonates with elements of transactional leadership behaviour such as contingent reward (i.e. where leaders positively reinforce preferred behaviours) and active management by exception (i.e. where leaders monitor for deviations in standards and take corrective action if necessary) (Yukl, 2009). The findings in this higher-order theme support previous research suggesting that effective leadership in sport is likely to involve some transactional skills to initially engage with athletes before the leader can utilise transformational behaviours that will positively impact their athletes' emotions and values (Gould, Voelker, & Griffes, 2013; Rowold, 2006). Moreover, previous research has focussed on managerial leadership in relation to athletic performances (e.g. Fletcher & Arnold, 2011; Slater et al., 2013). In contrast, the findings in this study uniquely differentiate the leader's behavioural expectations from the performance expectations of players, thus highlighting the importance of football managers influencing their players' behaviour off the pitch and away from the performance environment.

Effective communication, which involved one to one interaction, facilitating feedback, and delivering difficult messages, was viewed as central to the manager's off the pitch

leadership with players. In a broader elite sport context, communication and feedback processes have previously been found to be crucial in the leadership of teams and in strengthening relationships within the organisation (Arnold, et al., 2012; Fletcher & Arnold, 2011). In addition, communication can be viewed as a core skill for both transactional and transformational leadership behaviours in sport (Gould, et al., 2013; Rowold, 2006). To elaborate, without communication, leaders cannot clearly describe how tasks and roles should be performed, as required for contingent reward behaviour, or articulate a positive long term vision to follow, as required for inspirational motivation (Rowold, 2006).

In relation to individual consideration, it is important that a football manager's leadership approach involves understanding the individual needs of players and developing them appropriately. Interestingly, previous research on professional football managers has suggested that aggressive behaviour (e.g., verbal abuse, intimidation, physical violence) was routinely used by managers towards players (Kelly & Waddington, 2006). However, this is not supported in this study as managers and players all agreed that understanding and showing concern for each player will instead lead to more positive outcomes. Indeed, individual consideration, as a component of transformational leadership, has previously been linked to task cohesion within sport teams (Callow et al., 2009; Smith et al., 2012). Furthermore, research has demonstrated how transformational leadership behaviours can enhance the performance of athletes by augmenting coach effectiveness and increasing athlete self-efficacy (Price & Weiss, 2013; Rowold, 2006).

The final higher-order theme in this general dimension was the manager's use of archetypes in leading the players. In line with this, Bucci et al., (2012) found that elite coaches utilise athlete leaders as role models, since they can communicate the coaching staff's instructions to their peers. Furthermore, it has been suggested that managers should make peer leaders aware of their role as an archetype, as this will encourage them to display

the preferred leadership behaviour and promote others to engage in positive forms of leadership (Price & Weiss, 2013). Evidently, the manager's leadership role cannot be viewed as a unitary activity but instead as collection of processes which requires collaboration with key players in the team. This finding provides further support to the post-heroic theoretical perspective of team leadership, where leadership is constructed and shared by many people in interaction and not all responsibilities are placed on one leader (Arnulf, Mathisen, & Hærem, 2012; Crevani, Lindgren, & Packendorff, 2007).

Beyond the manager's interaction with the players, the findings from the present study revealed that the manager's leadership role off the pitch also required dealing with other key stakeholders, such as the board, support staff, and the media (see also, Arnold et al., 2015). A key finding to emerge was that the manager's leadership role required cooperation with the board, which involved managing relationships upwards and negotiating input into club decisions. Ogbonna and Harris (2014) have previously highlighted the strong sub-cultural dynamics in professional football where the first team manager engages in de-facto leadership activities, such as persuading board executives to sanction player transfers. However, the data in the present study indicates that managers must first develop these complex working relationships and appear cooperative, before being in a position to influence the board. In line with this finding, Cruickshank and Collins (2015) recently suggested that socio-political awareness and engineering maybe a valuable skill for elite sport leaders in creating beneficial leadership conditions. Additionally, the findings of the present study indicate that, while some managers perceive their role as having influence and input into club decisions, board members view the manager's role as being strictly responsible for football matters. These conflicting views may be due to the lack of clarity around the extent of the manager's remit and leadership role in professional football (Kelly, 2008). Overall, this higher-order theme suggests the importance of upward influence as a vehicle to participating

in decision making and persuading those higher in the formal hierarchy to agree with the manager's proposals (Epitropaki & Martin, 2013; Olufowote, Miller, & Wilson, 2005).

The second higher-order theme in this general dimension was leadership through support staff which involved using staff to reinforce performance expectations and providing appropriate support and motivation to players. Fletcher and Arnold (2011) previously highlighted the leadership of people and staff management as an important element within elite sport (see also, Arnold et al., 2015). The present study's findings support this idea by highlighting how managers utilise committed assistants and coaches to transmit their authority and expectations to players. This adds to the post-heroic theoretical perspective of leadership in football suggested by Arnulf, Mathisen, and Hærem, (2012), which emphasises leadership as rooted in sets of social interactions and networks of influence rather than a result of individual input (Crevani, Lindgren, & Packendorff, 2007; Fletcher, 2004:). Furthermore, Morrow and Howieson (2014) recently suggested that football managers are beginning to understand that a leadership approach, where there is less dependence on the figurehead and instead leadership practices are shared, is more beneficial than a traditional authoritarian approach.

Turning to influencing through the media, which was the final higher-order theme, managers demonstrated their leadership by setting agendas with the board, protecting their players, and using impression management tactics via media interviews. The findings suggest that managers use the media as an opportunity to influence key stakeholders towards their own interests, for example signing new players. This approach indicates the presence of certain 'dark' leadership traits, such as Machiavellianism, which may be effective in strategically negotiating the power dynamics between the manager and the board (Judge, Piccolo, & Kosalka, 2009; see also Fletcher & Arnold, 2011). Previous research has also found that individuals with Machiavellian tendencies displayed high levels of impression

management tactics in order to affect the opinions of others (Bolino, Kacmar, Turnley, & Gilstrap, 2008). Although interaction with the media is often unlikely to directly affect the match result, if used effectively there may be benefits for football managers in reinforcing messages and shaping the views of directors, fans, players, and staff (Arnold et al., 2015; Carter, 2013; Cruickshank & Collins, 2012; Furnham, Trickey, & Hyde, 2012). Indeed, Cruickshank and Collins (2015) recently suggested that elite sport leaders strategically engage in dark leadership behaviours via the media, in order to manipulate the perceptions of people outside the team at pivotal moments in the season.

Moving from a discussion of the findings to the study as a whole, it should be recognised that this study was explorative in nature and had strengths and limitations. A key strength of the study was that the participants were highly experienced individuals with different perspectives on the football manager's role. The diversity of personnel interviewed assisted in validating stakeholder perspectives on the manager's role while also identifying discrepancies in certain themes. In terms of limitations, by utilising a relatively small sample from one national league, the generalizability of these findings is a possible limitation; however, as a preliminary exploratory study in this area, it contributes further knowledge and understanding of the manager's role. Although, this research adds to the small number of studies exploring leadership in this domain, the participants came from a primarily semi-professional background, which may further limit the applicability of the findings to higher ranked professional leagues within UEFA where increased commercialisation and player power add further complexity to the manager's role. Therefore, future research should look to extend the current study's sample and include individuals at various professional levels. There are also opportunities to further investigate the manager's relationship with chairmen, directors, and owners. If, as the post-heroic leadership perspective suggests, the interactions with these key individuals are vital to the manager's leadership of the team, it would be

interesting to understand how leadership develops through manager-board relationships at successful clubs. Finally, Cruickshank and Collins (2015) have suggested that, 'elite team leaders cannot be entirely transformational (or bright), if they are to be optimally effective' (p. 30). Therefore, researchers should endeavour to integrate multiple theoretical approaches to underpin future studies within football management, in order to understand effective leadership in this complex role.

From a practical perspective, the findings of this study can assist managers, and practitioners working with them, to identify the key leadership dimensions involved in the manager's role off the pitch. This knowledge can inform club owners, board members, and aspiring managers within semi-professional football and can also be incorporated into manager development programmes within national football associations and league manager associations. For example, the themes identified could be utilised as a framework for self-reflection, or as part of assessment tasks within leadership courses for aspiring managers, such as the UEFA Pro Licence. In addition, the finding of cooperation with the board, as an important aspect of the manager's leadership role, highlights how managers should recognise and manage potential conflict with chairmen, directors, and owners. Early training on board-centred leadership and operating effectively through the manager-board relationship may be a beneficial addition to manager professional development programmes. Recent research, inside and outside the sport domain, can provide guidance on best practice application of evidence-based leadership development programmes (McCauley-Smith, Williams, Gillon, Braganza, & Ward, 2013; Voight, 2012).

In conclusion, this exploratory study of semi-professional football in Ireland has provided further insight regarding the off the pitch leadership role of the football manager from the perspective of players, managers, and board members in semi-professional football clubs. These findings can advise practitioners in developing programmes and policy in

relation to manager education within national football associations. Additionally, the research offers interesting themes for future exploration within upper echelons of the game.

Furthermore, as the professional football manager's position has become increasingly short-term focussed and precarious in recent years, it is hoped that this study will inform managers on how they can employ appropriate leadership strategies with players and key stakeholders away from direct coaching or in-game activities, thus contributing to a more secure tenure.

References

- Ahearn, K. K., Ferris, G. R., Hochwarter, W. A., Douglas, C., & Ammeter, A. P. (2004). Leader political skill and team performance. *Journal of Management*, *30*(3), 309-327.
- Arnold, R., Fletcher, D., & Anderson, R. (2015). Leadership and management in elite sport: Factors perceived to influence performance. *International Journal of Sports Science and Coaching*, *10*, 285-304.
- Arnold, R., Fletcher, D., & Molyneux, L. (2012). Performance leadership and management in elite sport: Recommendations, advice and suggestions from national performance directors. *European Sport Management Quarterly*, *12*(4), 317-336.
- Arnulf, J. K., Mathisen, J. E., & Hærem, T. (2012). Heroic leadership illusions in football teams: Rationality, decision making and noise-signal ratio in the firing of football managers. *Leadership*, *8*(2), 169-185.
- Bass, B.M. (1985). *Leadership and performance beyond expectations*. New York: Free Press.
- Bass, B. M., & Riggio, R. E. (2012). *Transformational leadership*, Mahwah, NJ: Psychology Press.
- Biddle, S. J., Markland, D., Gilbourne, D., Chatzisarantis, N. L., & Sparkes, A. C. (2001). Research methods in sport and exercise psychology: Quantitative and qualitative issues. *Journal of Sports Sciences*, *19*(10), 777-809.
- Bolino, M., Kacmar, K., Turnley, W., & Gilstrap, J. (2008). A multi-level review of impression management motives and behaviors. *Journal of Management*, *34*(6), 1080-1109.
- Bowen, G. A. (2008). Naturalistic inquiry and the saturation concept: A research note. *Qualitative Research*, *8*(1), 137-152.
- Bridgewater, S. (2010). *Football management*. Warwick, UK: Palgrave Macmillan Ltd.

- Bucci, J., Bloom, G. A., Loughead, T. M., & Caron, J. G. (2012). Ice hockey coaches' perceptions of athlete leadership. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology, 24*(3), 243-259.
- Callow, N., Smith, M. J., Hardy, L., Arthur, C. A., & Hardy, J. (2009). Measurement of transformational leadership and its relationship with team cohesion and performance level. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology, 21*(4), 395-412.
- Carter, N. (2013). *The football manager: A history*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Chadwick, S., & Hamil, S. (Eds.). (2010). *Managing football: An international perspective*. Oxford, UK: Elsevier
- Chelladurai, P. (2007). Leadership in sports. In G. Tenenbaum & R. C. Eklund (Eds), *Handbook of sport psychology* (pp. 113-135). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- Chelladurai, P. (2012). Models and measurement of leadership in sport. In G. Tenenbaum, R. C. Eklund & A. Kamata (Eds), *Measurement in sport and exercise psychology* (pp. 433-442). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- Côté, J., Salmela, J. H., Baria, A., & Russell, S. J. (1993). Organizing and interpreting unstructured qualitative data. *The Sport Psychologist, 7*, 127-137.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Crevani, L., Lindgren, M., & Packendorff, J. (2007). Shared leadership: a post-heroic perspective on leadership as a collective construction. *International Journal of Leadership Studies, 3*(1), 40-67.
- Cruickshank, A., & Collins, D. (2012). Culture change in elite sport performance teams: Examining and advancing effectiveness in the new era. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology, 24*(3), 338-355.
- Cruickshank, A., & Collins, D. (2015). Illuminating and applying “the dark side”: Insights

- from elite team leaders. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 27(3), 249-267.
- Cruickshank, A., Collins, D., & Minten, S. (2013). Culture change in a professional sports team: Shaping environmental contexts and regulating power. *International Journal of Sports Science and Coaching*, 8(2), 271-290.
- Davis, N. W., & Meyer, B. B. (2009). Qualitative data analysis: A procedural comparison. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 21(1), 116-124.
- Day, D. V., Gronn, P., & Salas, E. (2004). Leadership capacity in teams. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 15(6), 857-880.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). (2008). *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Drucker, P. (2012). *Management*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Elo, S., & Kyngäs, H. (2008). The qualitative content analysis process. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 62(1), 107-115.
- Epitropaki, O., & Martin, R. (2013). Transformational–transactional leadership and upward influence: The role of relative leader–member exchanges (RLMX) and perceived organizational support (POS). *The Leadership Quarterly*, 24(2), 299-315.
- Fletcher, D., & Arnold, R. (2011). A qualitative study of performance leadership and management in elite sport. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 23(2), 223-242.
- Fletcher, D., & Arnold, R. (2015). Performance leadership and management in elite sport: Current status and future directions. In S. Andersen, B. Houlihan, & L. T. Ronglan (Eds.), *Managing elite sport systems* (pp. 162-181). Abingdon, UK: Taylor & Francis.
- Fletcher, D., & Wagstaff, C. R. (2009). Organizational psychology in elite sport: Its emergence, application and future. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 10(4), 427-434.
- Fletcher, J. K. (2004). The paradox of postheroic leadership: An essay on gender, power, and transformational change. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 15(5), 647-661.

- Furnham, A., Trickey, G., & Hyde, G. (2012). Bright aspects to dark side traits: Dark side traits associated with work success. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 52(8), 908-913.
- Gammelsæter, H. (2013). Leader succession and effectiveness in team sport. A critical review of the coach succession literature. *Sport, Business and Management: An International Journal*, 3(4), 285-296.
- Gibbs, G. R. (2008). *Analysing qualitative data*. London, UK: Sage.
- Gould, D., & Maynard, I. (2009). Psychological preparation for the Olympic Games. *Journal of Sports Sciences*, 27(13), 1393-1408.
- Gould, D., Voelker, D., & Griffes, K. (2013). Best coaching practices for developing team captains. *The Sport Psychologist*, 27, 13-26.
- Gray, D. E. (2004). *Doing research in the real world: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. London, UK: Sage.
- Groenewald, T. (2004). A phenomenological research design illustrated. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 3(1), 1-26.
- Groves, K. S. (2006). Leader emotional expressivity, visionary leadership, and organizational change. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 27(7), 566-583.
- Guest, G., Bunce, A., & Johnson, L. (2006). How many interviews are enough? An experiment with data saturation and variability. *Field methods*, 18(1), 59-82.
- Hammersley, M. (2000). *Taking sides in social research*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Higgs, M. (2003). How can we make sense of leadership in the 21st century? *Leadership and Organizational Development Journal*, 24 (5), 273-284.
- Horn, T. S. (1992). Leadership effectiveness in the sport domain. In T. S. Horn (Ed.), *Advances in sport psychology* (pp. 181-199). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

- Hsieh, H. F., & Shannon, S. E. (2005). Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qualitative Health Research, 15*(9), 1277-1288.
- Ilgen, D. R., Hollenbeck, J. R., Johnson, M., & Jundt, D. (2005). Teams in organizations: From input-process-output models to IMOI models. *Annual Review of Psychology, 56*, 517-543.
- Jones, R., Armour, M., & Potrac, P. (2003). Constructing expert knowledge: A case study of a top-level professional soccer coach. *Sport, Education and Society, 8*(2), 213-229.
- Judge, T. A., Piccolo, R., & Kosalka, T. (2009). The bright and dark side of leader traits: A review and theoretical extension of the leader trait paradigm. *The Leadership Quarterly, 20*(6), 855-875.
- Kelly, S. (2008). Understanding the role of the football manager in Britain and Ireland: A Weberian approach. *European Sport Management Quarterly, 8*(4), 399-419.
- Kelly, S., & Harris, J. (2010). Managers, directors and trust in professional football. *Sport in Society, 13*(3), 489-502.
- Kelly, S., & Waddington, I. (2006). Abuse, intimidation and violence as aspects of managerial control in professional soccer in Britain and Ireland. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport, 41*(2), 147-164.
- Kihl, L. A., Leberman, S., & Schull, V. (2010). Stakeholder constructions of leadership in intercollegiate athletics. *European Sport Management Quarterly, 10*(2), 241-275.
- Konter, E. (2009). Perceptions of soccer players about leadership powers according to their level of play, *Social Behavior and Personality, 37*(4), 503-512.
- McCauley-Smith, C., Williams, S., Gillon, A. C., Braganza, A., & Ward, C. (2013). Individual leader to interdependent leadership: A case study in leadership development and tripartite evaluation. *Advances in Developing Human Resources, 15*(1), 83-105.

- Morrow, S., & Howieson, B. (2014). The new business of football: A study of current and aspirant football club managers. *Journal of Sport Management, 28*(5), 515-528.
- Northouse, P. G. (2012). *Leadership: Theory and practice*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Ogbonna, E. & Harris, L. C. (2014). Organizational cultural perpetuation: A case study of an English Premier League football club. *British Journal of Management, 25*(4), 667-686.
- Olufowote, J. O., Miller, V. D., & Wilson, S. R. (2005). The interactive effects of role change goals and relational exchanges on employee upward influence tactics. *Management Communication Quarterly, 18*(3), 385-403.
- Potrac, P., & Jones, R. (2009a). Micropolitical workings in semi-professional football. *Sociology of Sport Journal, 26*(4), 557-577.
- Potrac, P., & Jones, R. (2009b). Power, conflict, and cooperation: Toward a micropolitics of coaching. *Quest, 61*(2), 223-236.
- Potrac, P., Jones, R., & Armour, K. (2002). 'It's all about getting respect': The coaching behaviors of an expert English soccer coach. *Sport, Education and Society, 7*(2), 183-202.
- Potrac, P., Jones, R., & Cushion, C. (2007). Understanding power and the coach's role in professional English soccer: A preliminary investigation of coach behaviour. *Soccer and Society, 8*(1), 33-49.
- Price, M. S., & Weiss, M. R. (2013). Relationships among coach leadership, peer leadership, and adolescent athletes' psychosocial and team outcomes: A test of transformational leadership theory. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology, 25*(2), 265-279.
- Qu, S. Q., & Dumay, J. (2011). The qualitative research interview. *Qualitative Research in Accounting & Management, 8*(3), 238-264.

- Reilly, B. (2015). The Demand for League of Ireland Football. *The Economic and Social Review*, 46(4), 485-509.
- Rowold, J. (2006). Transformational and transactional leadership in martial arts. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 18(4), 312-325.
- Simonet, D. V., & Tett, R. P. (2013). Five perspectives on the leadership–management relationship: A competency-based evaluation and integration. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, 20(2), 199-213.
- Slater, M. J., Evans, A. L., & Barker, J. B. (2013). Using social identities to motivate athletes towards peak performance at the London 2012 Olympic Games: Reflecting for Rio 2016. *Reflective Practice*, 14(5), 672-679.
- Smith, M., & Cushion, C. J. (2006). An investigation of the in-game behaviours of professional, top-level youth soccer coaches. *Journal of Sports Sciences*, 24(4), 355-366.
- Sparkes, A. C., & Smith, B. (2009). Judging the quality of qualitative inquiry: Criteriology and relativism in action. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 10(5), 491-497.
- Uhl-Bien, M. (2006). Relational leadership theory: Exploring the social processes of leadership and organizing. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 17(6), 654-676.
- Voight, M. (2012). A leadership development intervention program: A case study with two elite teams. *The Sport Psychologist*, 26(4), 604-623.
- Wright, A., & Côté, J. (2003). A retrospective analysis of leadership development through sport. *The Sport Psychologist*, 17(3), 268-291.
- Young, M., & Dulewicz, V. (2008). Similarities and differences between leadership and management: High-performance competencies in the British royal navy. *British Journal of Management*, 19(1), 17-32.
- Yukl, G. (2009). Leading organizational learning: Reflections on theory and research. *The*

Leadership Quarterly, 20(1), 49-53.

UEFA (2014). *UEFA Rankings – Country coefficients 2014/2015*. Retrieved from:

<http://www.uefa.com/memberassociations/uefarankings/country/index.html>.

Figure Captions

Figure 1. Manager's leadership off the pitch with players. [Note The frequency of data quotes in each theme are displayed in brackets.]

Figure 2. Manager's leadership off the pitch with other stakeholders. [Note: The frequency of data quotes in each theme are displayed in brackets.]