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Comments	Section		
	<p>Title and Abstract Title to include: A concise indication of the research question/problem. Abstract to include: A concise summary of the empirical study undertaken.</p>		
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CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

Prifysgol Fetropolitan Caerdydd

CARDIFF SCHOOL OF SPORT

DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (HONOURS)

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TITLE:

**AN EXPLORATION INTO THE EXPERIENCES OF
FEMALE FOOTBALL COACHES IN THE WOMENS
WELSH PREMIER LEAGUE**

**Dissertation submitted under the discipline of
Socio-Cultural**

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COACHES IN THE WOMENS WELSH PREMIER
LEAGUE

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Abstract

Much literature regarding women's experiences in football has concerned the ways women who play football are perceived and treated within a predominantly masculine sport. However, while football has been extensively associated with males, recent research has highlighted women are playing football in ever-increasing numbers. In spite of this, football has seen no logical increase of women represented in other areas of participation, especially in the coaching milieu, where women are considerably underrepresented compared to males.

This research gains an in-depth and rich understanding of the lived experiences of female football coaches, in order to shed light on the possible difficulties and positives females might face as a female football coach. The qualitative method of life history was utilised to learn about female football coach's experiences, specifically during the process of becoming and being a football coach. Furthermore, two female football coaches within the women's Welsh Premier League were extensively interviewed. Through the analysis of the interviews a number of significant themes emerged: (a) Role Models, (b) Restrictions and Barriers, (c) The Visibility of Stereotyping, (d) Maintaining Female Identity and (e) Opportunities.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

Throughout much of the World, Football (referred to as soccer in the USA) is seen by many as a national men's sport, a sort of flagship of masculinity (Caudwell, 2002; Harris, 2001). In spite of this, women's football has become the most popular team sport for females to play in the UK, having exceeded netball in 2003 (Welford, 2011). Yet, research shows such a significant progress in female's participation rate in football has not been translated into leadership positions (Knoppers, 2006). Although women have progressed significantly in participating in football, an increase in women in coaching roles has not yet followed such trends in football. It is evident that only a small number of females pursue a career in coaching and take up education to obtain their licence, with statistics for 2010 signifying only 117 women held 'A' or 'B' licences, as compared to 5902 male trainers (Schlesinger & Weigelt-Schlesinger, 2012:57; see also DFB, 2010). Given the evidence that women are significantly underrepresented in coaching positions in football, the intention of this research is to explore the lived experiences of female football coaches in the Women's Welsh Premier League in order to shed light on the possible reasons to the lack of female football coaches considering the increase in women's participating rates.

Much of the previous research surrounding women and football have mainly highlighted women's experiences as a participant in football, primarily using interview based research (Cox and Thompson, 2000; Harris, 2005; Meän, 2001). This research adopts the life history approach to uncover the lived experiences of 'successful' female football coaches. These women can tell their side of the story being of female identities playing football, advancing into football coaching, up until their current engagement in coaching. By understanding the life histories of women who have successfully achieved a coaching position within football, we may better understand the positives and obstacles, women experience during the process of becoming and being a football coach, in hope of establishing the potential reasons to the scarcity of female football coaches.

Chapter two offers a review of the literature, addressing the current literature of identities in sport, the increased presence of women in football and their involvements in areas of leadership and coaching. Chapter three explains and justifies the methodology utilised for this research project. Moreover, this chapter will justify the use of an interpretative approach through the method of a life history qualitative inquiry. The findings of the conducted research are presented in chapter four. Within this chapter a thorough account of the two women's life history interviews are revealed. Also, vital themes that arose from the data are discovered by what the researcher deems as the most relevant to this study and a constant comparison of the similarities and differences of the women in this study's life stories are documented. Chapter five will discuss and evaluate the findings of the data by relating them to the review of literature and the researches aim. Finally, chapter six provides a concise conclusion of the key findings from this study in relation to the research question, and suggests future improvements and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Gendered Body Identities in Sport

Sport represents 'a potential environment for the construction and display of identity' (Macguire et al., 2002:143). Through particular forms of expression, 'sports are vehicles of identity, providing people with a sense of difference and a way of classifying themselves and others' (MacClancy, 1996:2). Hence, identity is not solely about the 'self' but how one constructs themselves in accordance with the social processes, whereby their essential differences are used to signify or represent them. In effect Harris and Parker (2009:22) indicate 'this lends itself to binary forms of classification such as, "women and men", which, in turn, symbolise or represent forms of social exclusion and political difference'.

Sport can be a significant site for the re/production of male identities (Messner, 1987). Generally, this is seen as being tough, aggressive and heroic in nature. Acquiring such gendered identities through sports; gender specified as, 'expected behaviour based on unitary conceptions of sexual character' (Hargreaves, 1994: 145) can be explained through 'socialization'. Coakley (1990) insinuates, 'socialization' is a process where individuals learn the leading norms and beliefs of society, which may well have beneficial or less typically, negative effects. Clearly, women are surrounded by social pressures that challenge their identities when participating in sport. Traditionally, they are deemed to be 'the weaker sex', physically, mentally, and emotionally, stereotypically viewed as being feminine, and expected to uphold a beautiful and delicate body; remaining passive, moral and pure (Griffin, 1998). The issue of what is feminine in appearance and behaviour is referred to as 'femininity' (Sherrow, 1996). The socially and historically constructed concepts of what is masculine and feminine in appearance and behaviour play a key role in sport. When the principle of femininity is applied, females are expected to live up to these specific gender roles that are held by both men and women in mainstream society (Sherrow, 1996). Thus, the expectation of femininity or women being seen as behaving in a feminine manner may result in women being dissuaded from participating in sports, with assumptions that sweating and grunting is manly. This could diminish their appearances, as acceptable within these areas and stigma is often attached to

those who do participate, for example, lesbians and/or butch, which can be seen as a mechanism of control to limit their participation (Griffin, 1998). Nevertheless, Turner (1987) indicates, gender stereotypes do not generally devalue an individual. It is rather that we depend on stereotypical beliefs and expectations in order to orient ourselves in this complex world. Gender stereotypes function as a means of helping us find a place within a social environment (Hirschauer, 2001). Though, you could argue, such distinctions lead to exclusion and discrimination within certain social contexts like sport.

2.2 Women's Increased Participation in Football

While traditional gender stereotypes have remained fairly constant over the centuries, they have been challenged and confronted by females. Challenging renowned sexist barriers and restrictive notions, in an attempt to establish themselves in the sporting field is apparent, through women's significantly increased involvement in sports. It would seem that sport has become an activity for male and female, facilitating and encouraging unification between people of different gender. This is particularly evident with females increasingly entering a traditionally all-male sport - football, the dominant, most popular and influential sport throughout the world (Sugden & Tomlinson, 1994). Currently, a considerable and accepted presence of female football players exists in the UK, with '1.6 million women and girls participating in recreational football' (The Football Foundation, 2006). However, Clayton (2005) implies football in the UK links closely to the notions of hegemonic masculinity, where the domination of men and subordination of women is central. Therefore, you could assume females are challenging gender norms and restrictive notions to establish themselves within football particularly in the UK with their increasing presence. It is suggested in a society of hegemonic masculinity women are restricted from entering or participating in certain areas, such as sports (Coakley, 2001), and men hold power and strive to maintain power over women (Connell, 1995; Dixon and Bruening, 2007). Previously, football also excluded female participants at all levels, arguing the game as unsuitable for females, and banned women from playing on any FA-owned pitches (Owen, 2005). This signifies football as an exclusively male domain where women are

seen as unacceptable participants. However, football is being played by females in contemporary society, and women's football continuously increases with it presently the most popular team sport for females (Welford, 2011). Therefore, football's increasing popularity has made sense of its lack of opportunities by removing such impediments as the ban on women playing on FA-owned pitches (Owen, 2005).

Although women are entering traditionally male sports in ever-increasing numbers research suggests more. While the earliest attitudes towards football placed great value on masculinity, a significant rise of female interest and involvement in football over time has encouraged women to fight to be given the same right as men to play football (Williams and Woodhouse, 1991). As Pelak (2005: 59) suggests, 'women continue to challenge men's sense of exclusive entitlement to football by continuing to put on their boots and showing up at the playing field'. Hence, the English Football Association (referred to as 'the FA') was forced by FIFA in 1993 to embrace female players. Also, it seems by their simple entrance into the football culture, women are assertive of their constraints (Harris, 2001; Meän, 2001; Pelak, 2005). Similarly, a range of research addresses the notion that women often have to cope with and castoff the identity conflicts and misperceptions surrounding them playing traditionally male sports. Research suggests the stereotyping issues of female athletes sexual identities when the gender norms are violated, participating in a male sport football. Female football players highlighted 'their sexual identities are affected by football' and stated women's football is labelled as 'a predominantly lesbian culture' (Caudwell, 1999:390-402). Harris (2009:83; Clayton, 2005) reinforces such stereotypical views expressed by male students in their study, who displayed negative connotations regarding the sexual orientation of the women's football team, signifying 'all female football players are necessarily lesbian'. There is also suspicion around the 'women's game differing from the men's game' and how it is less developed (Harris and Parker, 2009:75). Nevertheless, Shaw and Slack (2002:88) suggest, such 'powerful views, beliefs and attitudes that may shape women's actions can be altered if women challenge such views/discourses of how women and men are "supposed" to behave through engaging in the activity'.

Discourse implies, 'the language or unwritten rules that are used to explain/guide social practices and is created and perpetuated by those who have the power and means of communication' which is conceivably is men in this case(Cited Jones, Potrac, Cushion and Ronglan, 2011: 29).

Similarly, Cox and Thompson (2000) provide a detailed analysis of how this image has been constructed and the effects it has on the players within football. They referred to 'feminine' as a code word for 'heterosexuality' within the context of sport (Griffin, 1992; Hall, 1996). Cox and Thompson (2000:16) suggest 'the homophobic climate of sport puts pressure on all female athletes to present a heterosexual image of femininity'. They found that heterosexual norms deeply influenced these female football players as seen in a way they would often portray what they deemed to be a 'heterosexy' image to avoid the label of lesbian or butch. These women would often rely on a fat-free body and hair in order to identify themselves as women and to avoid being mistaken for men (p.12-14). The length and style of their hair was used to be perceived as "heterosexual" as 'short, spikey hair' was by many players associated with the stereotypical image of 'lesbianism'. Likewise, 'using make-up and avoiding clothes that conveyed a stereotyped lesbian image, were ways the majority of players perceived they would be recognised as heterosexual' (p.16). This alludes that stereotypes are still a problem in some sense, even while the female identity in football has become increasingly popular. It seems stereotypes still heavily frame these women's experiences in football.

Nonetheless, the FA has 'launched a five year plan aimed at making women's football the second-most played sport in the country' (Sheringham, 2012a, Online). Also, developments in women's football were made in 2011, with the launch of the FA women's super league. This significant development is perhaps the successful entry of women's football into the administrative body (The FA) that are responsible for well-established male structures, and through women challenging the renowned barriers and male entitlements by continuing to participate.

2.3 Women in Other Participation-Roles

Despite increasing numbers of players and great improvements to women's acceptability in football, this in turn has generated greater demand for people to coach females. Logically, the subsequent increase of female players would be expected to advance other forms of participation, such as decision-making positions, including: coaching and managerial positions. The research area concerns the noticeable imbalance of females holding coaching positions in football, as a considerable increase in players is not replicated into positions of power. SportsCoach UK (2008) estimates '74% of all coaches in the UK are male', and 61% of FA-affiliated coaches for women's football clubs are male (Scraton, Caudwell, and Holland, 2005). Consequently, male defined practices continue to dominate football, by which, men continue to play key management roles within women's football clubs, besides, all England women's football coaches previously being male (Lopez, 1997). Additionally, Willmann and Zipprich (1995) suggest, coaches are important in sport as they can have great influence on the athletes and often function as role-models. Fielding-Lloyd and Meän (2008:14) illuminate 'coaches are considered crucial to the aim of building and maintaining female participation and quality as players, encouraging females to progress into coaching and pivotal to the acceptance of females as a normative part of the game'. Therefore, with a lack of female coaches as role-models, perhaps there is little to inspire female players to become football coaches. With this in mind, Hope Powell, the coach of England women's football team, is possibly one of the only recognisable female football coaches in UK with credentials; being the first women to achieve the UEFA Pro licence, the highest coaching qualification. Therefore, it is possible for her to coach/manage men's professional football teams, having achieved the equivalent qualifications that most top male managers in the game hold. Although this highlights success and potential success for women, it doesn't signify a smooth inclusion of women holding positions of power within the football cultures. Having obtained her UEFA Pro licence in 2003 (BBC, 2012a, Online), she still has not been considered for management positions within professional male football teams. Caudwell (2011:332) contends, 'Men continue to dominate privileged positions in the game and the entitlement to these opportunities'. Likewise, an examination of female coaches, signifies the small portion within

female teams, especially in FIFA 2010 women's world cup, with 63% of coaches being male (FIFA, 2012). Furthermore, women occupied less than 5% of the administrative positions (Desai, 2010), as well as, 'practically all the coaches, commentators, judges, administrators, and referees being males' (Machingambi and Wadesango, 2011: 152). However, Machingambi and Wadesango (2011:151-152) contend, 'if women were represented in central and important roles it could have advanced them, by reconstructing the patriarchy of football and providing a space where masculinity and femininity are re-negotiated'. The FIFA 2010 World Cup served as a hegemonic institution to preserve the power of men over women (Machingambi and Wadesango, 2010). There is also a serious lack of representation of females at the top of the game, with Karen Espelund the only female on the UEFA executive committee, and all the twenty four members of the FIFA executive committee being men (Machingambi, and wadesango, 2011: 152). Therefore, regardless of the formal requirement's being the same for both male and female trainers to start coaching education, explicitly a small number of females pursue a career in coaching or other leadership positions. This exemplifies sport as a domain where masculinity is produced and demonstrated. Therefore, this may indicate with an under proportionate level of female top coaches, and mainly males represented in the chain of command within football, society may take for granted that a good coach is masculine due to the social order portrayed. This said coaching remains a gendered occupation where males are the norm and females are "othered", through the limited appearance of females in the game, with which discourses aren't being challenged and men continue to transfer knowledge, allowing them to be seen as the norm (Fielding-Lloyd and Meän, 2008). The concept of 'other' is a process by which societies and groups exclude 'others'- in this case women, who they view as inferior or who do not fit into or act in similar ways in their culture (Jackson, 2010:519-520). This is echoed by Willmann and Zipprich (1995:108) alluding, 'the picture of a good coach is like that of a good father; he is strict, powerful, masculine and demands respect'. As Shaw (2006) highlights, females are a minority in the profession compare to males. Moreover, no female coach is in charge of a men's national team (Norman, 2008). Therefore, football which is heavily associated with masculinity, yet an increasing accessibility for female athletes to participate, needs better understanding.

2.4 The 'Glass Ceiling'

Although Hope Powell and Karen Espelund, amongst the very few, highlight women in decision-making positions within the football culture, Hargeaves (1994:208) suggests 'the problem of inequality cannot be solved by a few exceptional women who hold powerful positions; women are needed in approximately equal numbers with men'. Lovaglia (1995) suggests, the level of power one possesses within a given situation may be related to well-established societal ideologies (perceived capabilities), and ascribed stereotypes, that is, status. However, societal status and power may be gendered (Ridgeway and Smith-lovin, 1999). Knoppers, Bedker-Meyer, Ewing, and forest (1990) supports this, finding that within a sporting organizational context, female coaches of non-revenue sports had lower control to resources than males in revenue-generated. Therefore, the power distribution was highly gendered and Knoppers, et al, (1991) provided evidence of the "glass ceiling" as a barrier for women within coaching. The "glass ceiling" supposes there is an invisible barrier which limits the level a woman can advance within the hierarchy in an organization (Knoppers, et al. 1991). Likewise, the 2010 World Cup supports the "glass ceiling" effect within the sporting context, with it prepared by men, and mainly for male spectators with women only playing complementary and insignificant roles. Although, there were no formal barriers evident to prevent women from holding significant roles, the World Cup possibly illustrated a clear gender division of women, by prohibiting women from advancing to superior positions. Jost and Banaji (1994) state, this social ideology can lead to the development of social stereotypes through social arrangements and structures, similar to the FIFA 2010 World Cup, which results in predetermination of the group, that is women, placed wherever their social position dictates. Therefore, one group is dominant (males), as they secure more power than the other (Females), which normalizes their involvement, whereas, the women are placed as the 'other'.

Similarly, Fasting and Pfister (2000) identified factors that work on an informal level and often remain invisible, but nevertheless prevent women from undertaking coaching positions. They document issues of stereotyping in society, where 'some

fellow coaches, the public, and female and male athletes have been suspicious with regards to women's competence as coaches' with football traditionally dominated by males. This advocates that hegemonic masculinity is exerting power over female coaches. *Sky Sports* television presenters Andy Gray and Richard Keys also epitomize some of men's responses to women presence in professional positions within football, by questioning their knowledge and competency in such decision-making roles³.

Other studies (Knoppers et al., 1989; Parkhouse and Williams, 1986; Theberge, 1990) also highlight, in addition to being few in numbers, female coaches faced such short comings as, having less status, lower salaries and less power than their male counterparts. This illustrating, gender specific beliefs and expectations, suspecting males possess power and have competence opposed to the little competence and legitimacy women supposedly have within the profession. However the FA's coach education literature, states the qualities of a good coach include 'enthusiasm, patience, open-mindedness, fairness, knowledge of the sport, a desire to learn and a willingness to help other people improve' (Houlston, 2001:2). Subsequently, Knoppers (1992) argues emphasising such qualities should have led to an increase in female coaches, given the predominant discourses that naturalise women as possessing these qualities. As Knoppers (1992) proposes, females are perceived as employing a 'democratic, nurturing approach'. Therefore, perhaps by women embracing and adhering to ideological meanings, attitudes and beliefs, and not entering the profession, their behaviours embody traditional gender roles and norms, but also serve to limit one's acceptance and inclusion within settings that are commonly associated with gender stereotypes, for example, organisational leadership positions (Schein, 1973). Therefore, because females respond to cultural forces they are possibly limiting their inclusion and acceptance unconsciously within other participation positions, such as coaching. Hence, these self-limiting behaviours may well contribute to the

³ These presenters clearly illustrate such stereotypical views of women who have pursued a career within the football culture. Claiming assistant referee Sian Massey needed to learn the offside rule, whilst also, mocking West Ham vice-chairman Karren Brady's claims in a newspaper column, talking about the issue of sexism in football still being prevalent. BBC One, 2012.

underrepresentation of females in leadership roles, like coaching within the football culture.

Additionally, for females to obtain and/or maintain their coaching positions, research advocates women need to work much harder in order to establish credibility and respect, and become a substantially decorated coach (Parkhouse and Williams, 1986; Kamphoff, 2006). Karen Espelund 'the first woman to join the UEFA executive committee in 2011' (UEFA, 2012, Online) verifies this notion by affirming she 'worked very hard for the first years, because you have to prove your competence, or at least I put that pressure on myself. But you had to also' (BBC One, 2012). On the other hand, this expresses momentarily the progress of football, with Karen Espelund interrupting the 'glass ceiling' effect by achieving a position of power within a global organisation, still extremely dominated by males. This may feed the hope that women can advance into positions of power within football and the notion that males are the dominant agents is fading gradually.

Nonetheless, Hope Powell stated, 'there are more females with credentials, I have a pro licence and there are several other women around the world who have pro licences' (BBC, 2012b, Online). This insinuates the lack of female football coaches as the world is a big place and few females have these qualifications. With this, the Football Association (2011) alludes; over 22,000 females have successfully attained FA coaching qualifications, including 170 UEFA 'B' coaches. This leads us inexorably to question where these individuals are represented with the credentials, and highlights a need to further explore this proven under-representation to attempt to address the difficulties these women have/face. Former Northern Ireland boss Lawrie Sanchez seems to support this⁴.

⁴ Lawrie Sanchez state, the stereotypes have been knocked down. The no females been knocked down. It is very much still a male environment and that won't change because not every female grows up wanting to be a footballer or a football manager. Every single male that grows up wants to do that. (BBC One, 2012)

He also thought 'there would be a top-flight female manager within the next decade' (BBC, 2012b, Online). This may assume while there remains a significant underrepresentation within football coaching positions, such stereotypical reality constructs are fading with optimistic notions from allegedly the worthier gender; a top level male manager. Even so, the attitudes to women's football are without doubt changing, with the sensational support Sian Massey received from the public when off-air criticism was made. While, the FA general secretary Alex Horne states, 'We have to keep pace with the top female footballing nations both on and off the pitch' (Sheringham, 2012a, Online). Therefore, the 'worthier' gender not only makes optimistic reference to women as players, but other positions within the game. This indicates, while attitudes to women participating within playing roles have drastically improved, opinions of females within positions of power are most certainly shifting. Thus, justifying the effort to better understand why an overwhelming trend of the limited representation of female football coaches still persists, with significantly increased participation rates and acceptance.

2.5 Summary and Rationale

The purpose of this study is to explore the lived experiences of female football coaches. The study will shed light on some key points of reflections concerning barriers and positives of females' involvement in football as a player and a coach. This will aim to help generate an in-depth understanding of the conceivable reasons behind the lack of female football coaches, through establishing any prevailing experiences/concerns surrounding females' involvement within football and any expressive changes that stand out overtime.

The participation of females in football is growing with estimations of over 1.6 million girls and women now playing football regularly (Cochrane, 2007). However, the number of women in football coaching has seen no logical increase. A recent study regarding the representation of women during the 2010 FIFA world cup, clearly confirms the scarcity of female football coaches with 'nearly all of the

coaches, commentators and referees who participated . . . were males' (Machingambi & Wadesango, 2011:152). Therefore, this research is of significance, as it highlights the problem. Thus, the underlying issue of the lack of female football coaches, despite increasing female participation rates needs further understanding. A further reason for this study is, it is vital to provide the experiences, stories, and expressions of women in sport (Sykes, 1998); through their eyes, to indicate the real experiences (Harris, 2005). Therefore, 'documenting women's own experiences helps expose silent voices and challenges of women's exclusion from physical sporting roles' (Caudwell, 2006:24).

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the research design and specific methodology adopted by this study to explore the experiences of female football coaches. The purpose is to gain an understanding of the lived experiences of female football coaches, particularly gathering their perspectives on their experiences, issues and enjoyments during their time as a player, and predominantly within the coaching profession.

3.2 Methodological Approach

To gather the necessary data required, there are two possible approaches available, namely, qualitative and quantitative. Research that comprises of numerical measurement and analysis is known as a quantitative approach (Gratton & Jones, 2010: 29). However, areas of social reality, such as thoughts and feelings of people are problematic to enumerate and statistics cannot measure such areas (Gratton & Jones, 2004). Therefore, it is assumed 'dependence on purely quantitative methods may neglect the social and cultural world, by not understanding the "meanings" that are brought to social life' (Silverman, 2000: 4-5).

To capture the appropriate data for the nature of this study a qualitative approach is employed. Qualitative research intends to capture meanings or qualities that are not quantifiable, such as thoughts, feelings, and experiences, the concepts that are associated with an interpretive approach to its subject matter, giving priority to what the data contributes to important research questions or existing information (Cited Gratton & Jones, 2010:30). This is deemed the most appropriate because it enables the lived experiences, memories, thoughts and feelings to be collected from the participant's perspective, which is of prime importance to this studies intention. Moreover, an interpretative, qualitative study does not try to document that the studies hypothesis is 'true', but attempts to seek understanding of the phenomena (Gratton & Jones, 2010).

3.3 Data Collection Methods

The gathering of this studies data emerged within an ethnographic design. This involved the 'in-depth study of a group through immersion into the culture of that group', this being female football coaches (Gratton & Jones, 2010:109). Life histories, a qualitative research method, was conducted to allow the participants' to 'provide a narrative about the stages of their life' (Rubin and Rubin, 2005:8). This enabled participants to re-present stories of their experiences and concerns in relation to the study's aims.

The participants were required to recall their stories of being a female football player and a football coach at present. This generated an overview of participants' experiences in a way which provides 'meaning' in their lives (Sparkes, 2002). Such life history inquiries were accomplished using a life history interview technique (Atkinson, 2002). Veal (2006) notes, the use of interviews are necessary when the research is exploratory and where there is only a small population. Gratton and Jones (2010: 156) suggest 'Interviews enable participants' to talk about their own experiences in their words, and allows them to elaborate on any areas of particular interest or importance'. Therefore, interviews are capable of providing rich qualitative data related to the problem under study.

This research specifically aims to comprehend specific facets of the female football coaches lives, not their life as a whole. This type of life history is referred to as 'a topical life document which confronts a particular issue of a person's life' (Plummer, 2001:26). The process required the participants to relive and narrate their experiences, and life histories, whilst describing and developing how they make sense of things that have happened to them (Gratton & Jones, 2010). Therefore, Life history interviews are an 'excellent method of understanding the group and changes within the group' (Gratton & Jones, 2010:204). It intends to capture the true essence of the lived experiences of the participants, as well as being seen as a valuable research tool and a way to link theory and practice within ones research (Cole & Knowles, 2001; Goodson & Sikes, 2001). However, 'the

researcher needs to be prepared to be able to work with whatever is available' as some topics such as sexual identity, are personal and sensitive and may not naturally occur or want to be spoken about (Palmer, 2000:371).

A pre-prepared interview guide listed the issues and questions used during the interview to help gather information relevant to the study (Appendix C). The questions were formed based on the topics underlined in the literature review and illuminate responses that may help answer the research question. Each participant participated in a two part life history interview. Moreover, this approach was deemed necessary to gain an insight into the lived experiences, standpoints, difficulties and challenges women face being a football coach. Additionally, exploring the participants lifetime experiences in football can successfully establish any changes overtime and contribute to the literature.

3.4 Sampling

In most cases of research a large sample size gives a heightened illustration of the population in question and is thought to create findings with fewer biases (Denscombe, 2007). However, the specific nature of this research, does not aim to assume that the experiences of the sample used, signify a population, and so a large sample size would be extraneous for this study. Furthermore, when determining a sample, it is essential that you recognise the participants who can give a rich insight into the phenomenon being explored (Amis, 2005). Therefore, with the study aiming to explore female football coach's experiences, it is important the individuals chosen are specific to this.

The participants were selected through the use of both purposive and snowball sampling techniques. Daymon and Holloway (2011:153) defined purposive sampling as 'adopting a certain criteria to choose a specific group and setting to be studied'. Participants are selected on the basis that they are regarded as the most relevant and 'information rich' cases (Patton, 2002). This allows gathering of

information off a particular group of interest. To further understand the sense of this research, the criteria of the sample chosen has been clearly established and justified.

Three female football coaches were contacted by telephone retrieved via the Welsh premier league website, and informed of the nature of the study and their potential contribution. The participants were over the age of eighteen, with over five years' experience of playing and coaching football. However, only one of the three contacted were able and agreed to complete in-depth life history interviews. Having located an initial participant the snowball method of sampling emerged as this participant was able to offer access to a further prospective candidate (Gratton & Jones, 2010:113). Likewise, though a small non-random sample of two participants was gathered; 'it is the amount of data that is important, rather than the amount of subjects' as this will allow for in-depth interviews to generate a great deal of information (Gratton & Jones, 2010: 169).

3.5 Procedure

Prior to the interviews, participants were contacted via telephone to confirm their participation. Once the interview schedule was confirmed they were informed of the interview content before interviews commenced to facilitate retrospective recall of data (Gratton & Jones, 2010). They were then sent a copy of the participant information sheet (appendix A) for information on the research, and their role as a participant. The interviews took place in a neutral setting decided by the participants so they could feel comfortable. Before the interview could commence a participant consent form was signed (appendix B). The participants were then reminded of their voluntary nature in this study, highlighting they can withdraw themselves from the interview and/or their information at any time during the research process. It was stressed that any information and responses during the interview would remain completely anonymous and confidential, with only the participant and researcher having access. Each interview was audiotaped and set

to last for approximately one hour. The interviews recorded were then transcribed verbatim.

3.6 Data Analysis

As this research is associated with an interpretative, qualitative method, this research will follow an inductive approach to generate explanations from the data collected. Initially, Surrena's (2011) triangulation process was employed to confirm the data on more than one level and rule out potential bias when transcribing. Therefore, the completed transcripts were returned to the participants' for 'member checking' where they can inform you if the data collected is an accurate account, and if their experiences have been described truthfully (Lincoln and Guba, 1985 cited in Maykut and Morehouse, 1994:147). Subsequently, transcripts were reviewed numerous times to recognise and code any 'concepts, themes, events and topical markers' (Rubin and Rubin, 2005:207). This allowed for the grouping of similarities, enabling the researcher to see how one concept was described throughout the interviews. Likewise, finding central themes within the transcripts helped connect the literature reviewed and the answers gathered during the interviews. In addition, the constant comparative method was employed to code the data 'by re-examining the data while comparing one source with another to find similarities and differences' (Yamagata-Lynch, 2010:73). The narratives drawn from these grouped concepts and themes then assisted in answering the research question. Finally the results were explained 'into a report that is inviting, accurate, thorough, convincing and rich' (Rubin and Rubin, 2005:246).

3.7 Judgement Criteria

Trustworthiness intends to support the argument that the inquiry's findings are 'worth paying attention to' (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p.290). Sparkes (2002) suggests the criterion in which to judge the study must be unique to the type of study. As this study is a life history inquiry, it is essential accurate accounts of the participants' experiences from the interviews are reported in the same context to ensure quality findings. All data from the interviews are related and backed with

previous research relating to female football coaches experiences, to show adequate self-awareness and self-exposure. The reader can then judge the study on the appropriateness of the completeness of theory with the data collected. Also, as the researcher comes to share similar interests, purposes, and values, being a female footballer and a coach, disagreements are resolved (Cited Sparkes, 2002: 221).

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval of the study was gained by Cardiff Metropolitan University prior to commencing. Before interviews could proceed, an informed consent form was required from each participant in the study, and their confidentiality and anonymity to protect identities is agreed within this statement. Participants are informed their involvement is entirely voluntary, and they can enter or withdraw at any time. Every participant will be given a pseudonym and any information which could lead to their identity being revealed will be hidden through the means of covering the names of places, and other people discussed during the interviews (Rubin and Rubin, 2005).

With the nature of this study being interview based, a number of ethical issues arise because of 'the complexities of researching private lives and placing accounts in the public arena' (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009:62). A potential risk of this study is the closeness of the subject, with female football coaches reflecting on their past experiences, which may lead participants to 'disclose information which they may later regret having shared' (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009:73). To alleviate this, trust and rapport was built with each participant by meeting up with them prior to the interviewing, to build a relationship and hope it can be a positive experience for them. Also, to reduce this concern it is essential participants are clear on the research aims prior to the interviews. Additionally, once the interviews were complete and transcribed, the participants were able to read over their life histories, and give their authorisation or condemnation of the anonymous individual and the manner in which their life history is presented in this study.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter reports the lived experiences of two women who coach football in the Welsh premier league. Data gathered from the transcribed interviews were constantly compared to identify similarities and differences in their life stories. Subsequently, vital themes from the data are revealed and correspondingly reflected upon through present literature and research. Though, at first it is necessary to provide an overview of each participant's biography in football to help understand their positions within football (*Table 1.*)

Table 1. Overview of each participant's biography in football

	Pseudonym – Abby	Pseudonym - Kelly
Age started football	Early childhood / Primary School	Early childhood / Primary School
First team played for	Local boys team	Local boys team
Team history	Clubs Leagues University Country	Clubs Leagues University
Finished playing	Continues to play	Roughly Year 2004 - Injury
Education	BSc (Hons) Sports Coaching	BSc (Hons) Sports Coaching MSc Sports Coaching PhD PGCtHE
Football qualification	Completing UEFA 'C' Licence	UEFA 'A' Licence candidate
Start of football coaching	Last year of School sixth form	3 rd year University - assistant coach
Coached/coach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - University - Under 8's - Bridgend County Borough Schools (present) - A Women's Welsh Premier league team (present) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - American company - Children's academy in University - Own football business in schools - A regional girls squad coach - World student games - University WFC head coach (present) - University WFC performance director (present)

4.2 Role Models

When analysing the transcripts a similar response emerged with respect to role models influence and importance in women's football. It was anticipated, with both of the participants being extensively involved in football in different decades, the responses would have perhaps been relatively different. However, interestingly this was not the case; both participants reported that when they were growing up and playing football there have been no/are no female role models present:

Kelly: "We didn't have any! At all! I don't think I could name one . . . I don't think I would have known . . . one high-profile female footballer at the time"

Abby also claimed she wasn't aware of any significant female role models. However, during Abby's experiences she felt the need to relate to male footballers:

"I was always David Beckham, all the big ones, like Cantona – I want to be like them"

These early experiences of female football role models in football, express they were non-existent to be of any significance, and by only able to report male footballers, reinforces football as a very male environment. However, in recent years the involvement of females in football is beginning to get acknowledged as Abby emphasises female footballers names are now getting more recognisable in relation to ten years ago. For example, she refers to female footballers being on TV and publishing autobiographies, which seems to influence her in a way that she wants to emulate these players. Similarly, Kelly expressed how the girls she has coached are now role models and ambassadors for Welsh football, and children can identify with these.

Similarly, Abby and Kelly's experiences portray the lack of female role models throughout the coaching of football, purely identifying Hope Powell as the only high-profile female coach. Abby states *"she's the only one I know of"*, although Kelly indicates she's *"not necessarily my role model"*. Additionally, Kelly corresponds to the importance and impact of female role models in football coaching along with all sports:

“You’ve seen the increase in female players as a result of female football role models and the ambassadors, so maybe that’s the way to go forward and it’s almost doing ourselves a favour, there’s this assumption that female players don’t know the nature of the game or don’t have the same sort of game sense as the men and I think that perhaps more competent coaches will nullify those thoughts and feelings. I think with any sport, perhaps the more role models you’re going to get the more participation there will be”

Likewise, Abby illustrates:

“We do need a role model as a coach as well as a player, because, as I said, my ideal job would be playing football, after football go coaching, be a coach . . . for men, that opportunity’s there, for females the only person who’s done it, is that girl again! There’s no-one there we can say I really want to be like”

This highlights the importance of having female role models outside of the playing arena. Interestingly, Abby seems to suggest that the lack of female football coaches can impact on the number of female coaches in football as there’s no-one females can aspire to be like or go on to emulate. This relates to Willmann and Zipprich (1995) literature suggesting, coaches are important in sport as they can have great influences on athletes by often functioning as role models.

4.3 Restrictions and Barriers

Each of the participants’ stories suggested the lack of provision they had experienced during their involvement in women’s football. They highlighted the array of difficulties and attitudes that would impede women’s involvement. Both, Abby and Kelly express their disappointment with the early impertinent quality or action they received and how they had no choice but to start playing with the boy’s because female teams didn’t exist in their local area back then. Abby recalls:

“The facilities, there was never anywhere with the girls. A couple of years after I was playing with the boys a couple of girls joined, so we used to have our own little restroom . . .”

Kelly captivates:

“So, when you’re younger and playing football as a female and at the time there wasn’t an awful lot of it, you’re almost extradited off sometimes!”

This exemplifies the peripheral nature both women experienced in their early involvement in football. However, Kelly's experiences expressed the obstacles she faced have improved. She expresses this difference through the team she now coaches:

"When I was younger it was very much different from the way it is now. We get priority over first team pitch, because it's done on performance by those competing in the highest league and whatever else, whoever is able to bring in the most points, or money. When I was playing that wasn't the case, it was just you were always treated as a second-class citizen . . . you'd be second priority over getting pitches and facilities etc."

This indicates how men always had priority in terms of facilities regardless of who was the higher ranked team but that things have changed more recently. However, Abby, seemed to feel resentful about the improved conditions that female football players now enjoy, and such conditions are often a disturbance to her as a coach, coaching girl's football in work:

"I think that... we've had to cancel things in work, because of the pitches. You try to do stuff for the girls and the facilities are just... if we said Oh we've got boys' football tournament and Cardiff City, are coming down for it! Oh, yeah, yeah! We'll make it available. For the girls, I still think it is (bored voice) Oh, it's not a big opportunity, it's not a big thing. We'll just leave it"

Although, this lack of provision never discouraged them to continue playing or coaching football, Abby narrated the difficulties she faces to gain higher qualifications in coaching opposed to men:

"They always put the 'C' Licence on a Sunday purely because males play on a Saturday, now for me as a player, or an ex-player, I couldn't do that . . . The opportunity for the females then, unless they wanted to give up their own playing time, they couldn't do it. Or they had to pay double to go on a crash course . . . obviously a lot of the stuff they put it on the times for the men. They know that every girls' team in Wales plays football on a Sunday . . . It's gone on for years now and they still won't change the day. I think there would be a lot more girls doing it if they had the opportunity to do it on a different day and I know it sounds stupid, but it does all come down to the day"

This signifies gaining coaching qualifications for Abby has proved difficult and prevented her from coaching at a higher level due to the structure and arrangements of the coach education courses. This cultivates a challenge for women still playing and wanting to coach, as they are somewhat limited in how they gain their qualifications due to male priority and superiority. In relation to the

literature of coach education formal requirements to start being the same for both male and female in chapter two, Abby highlights the schedule of courses are problematic. In comparison, Kelly didn't highlight qualifications as a restriction, possibly because of her early retirement from playing, but did frown upon her experiences on these coach education courses:

“ . . . every coaching course I've gone on I've been one female with 40 blokes and most of those blokes are completely clueless with regards to coaching, with regards to the female game and are almost shocked to see me there, so you get the patronising sort of comments – they're not always intentional, a lot of these people are naïve. I don't enjoy those elements”

'Glass Ceilings'

Kelly, the elder participant, seems to highlight the improvements and changes to play and coach a female team in terms of opportunities, facilities and the resources available, which have probably been more significant for her, because she played a long time ago. Despite this, their experiences relate to the 'glass ceiling' literature (Knoppers, et al. 1991) as something that occurs in coaching appointments. Knoppers, et al. (1991) referred to this as an invisible barrier that limits the level one can advance within the hierarchy of an organisation. Kelly and Abby exemplify this during their accounts of being a female coach:

“There are occupational barriers, aren't there? I'm only going to go as far as I can go within female football. I'm not going to go as far as I can go within football”

Abby: “Males, as I said, can go and apply for any job. For example a top-flight football team and they have a bit of a chance to get it. If you're a female and want to go to a top female club . . . How many other women have applied for that job? We don't have as much opportunity as men; we've got a handful of clubs that girls will apply for, whereas men have hundreds and hundreds of clubs”

This signifies a major issue that female football coaches encounter, when trying to gain coaching positions. They exemplify how they are virtually limited to gaining female only football coaching positions and so can never reach the top-level of football, with men having priority of going as far as they can within a football organisation.

4.4 The Visibility of Stereotyping

The following theme is in relation to the literature establishing the issues of sexuality and the image or identity which surrounds women's involvement in football. Earlier literature (Caudwell, 1999:390-402) drew upon the significance of stereotyping in football, highlighting the thought that surrounds women's sexuality in football, by substantiating football is labelled as 'a predominantly lesbian culture'. However when participants conveyed their experiences involving being stereotyped, the prominence of stereotyping wasn't as evident as expected by both. When Kelly recalled her involvement as a player, she didn't feel it was of any significance otherwise she would have remembered:

"Honestly, there's nothing that sticks out in my mind"

On the other hand, Abby made connection with Harris' (2009) literature, recollecting her experiences of stereotypes, but implies it's improved:

"I think a lot of the generation coming along now, there's not so much hatred, whereas when I first started playing football it was...Ah! You're a man! You're a man!"

Abby quite happily communicated her feelings towards the image of female's involvement, whereas Kelly, the elder participant was a little more cautious perhaps because she has seen the significant improvements and wants to appreciate this and protect football's identity. This is perhaps reflective of the times they've grown up in, and changed attitudes. Moreover, Kelly wouldn't explicitly tell her experiences of stereotyping and so used the term 'banter' instead. While, the sexual stereotypes associated with participating in a traditionally male sport identified in Caudwell (1999; see also Harris, 2009, Cox and Thompson, 2000) have been experienced, neither have implied they restricted their involvement within football as a coach.

When participants were asked to narrate their experiences of stereotyping as a female football coach, Kelly and Abby expressed how sexual stereotyping or negative remarks are not as predominant outside the playing arena:

Kelly: "I'm almost blinkered, I don't think I get any discrimination or negative treatment up here, but I've been here for so long I'm almost growing roots."

Abby: "I don't think a coach is seen as much as the stereotype as the players, I don't think that."

Nevertheless, the stereotypical image and assumptions that surround their involvement appear more of a hindrance. Participants expressed rather explicitly how there is an unequal assumption of women's competence to coach a traditionally male game. Abby recollected when coaching the younger teams the male parents would often question her coaching:

"Because they see a female coach, obviously their generation were probably fairly limited, I think it was generally the dads who'd shout and this was probably because they thought that I didn't know what I was on about. So I feel a bit intimidated by the parents, purely because it was the males shouting. But I think that was because I was a girl; I know for a fact if it was a boy they wouldn't have shouted. But I think that's just stereotyping again"

Similarly, Kelly exposed the perception of female coaches compared to men:

"In terms of competence, it has to be demonstrated, proven results with anything . . . You've got to compete with that male coach, you've got to be able to demonstrate that same level of knowledge and understanding and be that extra bit better"

This connects with Fasting and Pfister (2000) literature, demonstrating how the general public and men are doubtful of women's competence as a coach, as football has traditionally been dominated by males. Likewise, similar to Fielding-Lloyd and Mean (2008), Kelly suggests, males are deemed the more knowledgeable informant in society's eyes. This draws attention to an issue women encounter as female football coaches.

4.5 Maintaining a Female Identity

Following on from this, another theme to discuss is the issues of maintaining a female identity whilst being involved in football. The participants produced a clear picture of the want to present themselves in a way that appears 'girly' or 'feminine' in football. Interestingly, when both participants were asked if they felt they needed to confirm their female identity with football being heavily associated with masculinity, their responses were of the same meaning. Kelly articulated *"I think*

its personal choice” and Abby said *“I think it depends on the person”*. Both participants express the importance of presenting their bodies to be seen as feminine, and extensively refer to the subject of being referred to as ‘butch’ if not upheld, through their experiences in football as a player and a coach, alike Cox and Thompson (2000) literature. Abby more explicitly conveys how during her experiences as a player it’s important she endures a female identity, not to be looked upon as ‘butch’:

“ . . . I’d make sure my hair’s right; I’ll always wear make-up just generally. I wouldn’t wear a kit if it was too big . . . I suppose it’s trying to look girly in the football environment, I don’t want to look butch, but I suppose that’s me then probably trying to get my own identity within the match . . . ”

This emphasises the pressures Abby faces to present herself in a way that wouldn’t portray herself as ‘butch’. While Abby didn’t recollect any experiences concerned with her female identity as a coach, Kelly reminisces how being a female coach in football it’s almost expected:

“Even if I was to present myself as a very butch, very stereotypically coach I would expect people to think that of me. But I guess, I walk around in track suit bottoms, trainers or boots every day. Most days I look an absolute mess, wind-swept etc. so you’re going to invite some criticism, because I’m not looking my best when I’m out there! But this is the way it is, it’s part of the job; you’re always muddy, you’re always scruffy, but I do think you need to present yourself in the kit sense, in a good way”

This further highlights, as a female football coach it’s somewhat expected to have your female identity disapproved due to the physical bodily appearances the job itself requires. Therefore, this signifies how perhaps the required physical bodily appearances of the job, such as, the kit and getting muddy, are often associated with males. Both their experiences express the need to present themselves as feminine when involved in football otherwise you can expect some perception.

4.6 Opportunities

The final theme that emerged is opportunities, which the women’s experiences produced a clear image of footballs improvements for women. Initially, the responses from Kelly captivate *“the whole thing was stuck in the dark ages”* indicating the lack of opportunities at first, similar to Abby’s experience signifying

“when I first started, very, very, very limited. If I didn’t play with the boys I would never have played”. Though, Abby’s experiences allude opportunities have improved for females in football now:

“The FA have set up a scheme where they try to get as many girls as possible . . . So I think girls football is definitely on the rise and they’re so keen to get more girls, coaches employed and stuff like that”

Likewise, Abby highlights the increased opportunities she has had recently to become a high calibre coach through access to qualifications and the opportunities available for females now, to gain coaching qualifications in football:

“I’m lucky through my job, they put me on my ‘C’ Licence and paid for it and so on . . . But I think the opportunities now, again I would never have had opportunities before to go on all paid for . . .”

“Now, they generally put female only courses on, so the courses are together, all the girls do it together”

This may indicate there is now a further interest in getting female football coaches by exclusively targeting women through female only courses. Also, Abby portrays at different times during the interview, opportunities have improved for women to go into the football profession, narrating:

“My friend, she not a coach as such, but she does personal trainer/coach, sort of thing and she just got into Bristol now, but she’s one of the first females to get onto their coaching staff, which is all male, and she’s the first female”

Yet, Kelly felt the need to comment on the impact in which being a female could have had on opportunities available to her, emphasising as a female you got to work harder to create opportunities:

*“If opportunity doesn’t knock, then you build a door and that’s exactly what I’ve done and I’m well aware that, as a female coach, you’re going to have to work a lot harder; you are going to have to prove yourself and, as I said, I wasn’t an exceptional player, so I couldn’t fall back on that . . . But I **had** to prove myself through gaining qualifications, gaining the edge, achievements and so on”*

This connects with Parkhouse and Williams (1986; see also, Kamphoff, 2006) works. Kelly also expressed her thoughts about women wanting to go into football coaching unenthusiastically:

“I think they can go into football coaching but I’m afraid opportunities are few and far between. Opportunities to work with a high calibre of player are few and far between; certainly in Wales”

This exposes the opportunities available for females are limited particularly in Wales, and highlights a possible gender divide that makes it easier for males to improve job opportunities in football coaching. In contrast, Kelly narrated during her experiences she has gained opportunities as a female coach but by working hard, *“I’ve been fortunate in the opportunities I’ve had. I’ve been blessed in that respect. But I’ve worked hard as well . . .”*

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will discuss and analyse the main findings in chapter four and endeavour to draw analytic conclusions in relation to the research question. The key outcomes of this study will relate to the literature presented in the literature review and highlight what these findings have achieved and added in this context considering the research aims. This will propose a general conclusion.

5.2 Improvements

In spite of the increasing participation rates of women in football, coaching still appears to be a predominantly male occupation. The literature advocates many reasons for this issue. In such decision making positions, Machingambi and Wadesango (2011; 151-152), for example, highlight, if women are underrepresented in their positions they can be subordinated and marginalised, and reconstruct rather than re-negotiate the patriarchy of football, which is the case in the coaching milieu. Knoppers, et al. (1991) explains, the “glass ceiling”, an invisible barrier exists that limits the level women can progress in coaching, expressing male dominated organisations as barriers to women in the coaching profession. Therefore, previous literature highlights a struggle for females to gain sufficient opportunities, recognition and more strikingly privileges to coach football.

In this study, the participant’s experiences appear to confirm coaching football is an arena largely occupied by males, with neither able to relate to a female football coaching role model, other than Hope Powell. This perhaps highlights the need for a new generation and more role models with Hope Powell being the only one and undoubtedly of age within the profession, with both participants’ referring to her and there being a decade between them. Nonetheless, their recollections suggest the increased chances women have to become coaches and the improved opportunities that have become available to them as female football coaches. Abby exposed an unexpected response in that the FA, a governing body who is a member of FIFA, has “increased interest in getting more girls, coaches employed”, despite literature highlighting ‘FIFA in a recent Women’s World cup displayed a

lack of representation of female coaches' (Machingambi and Wadesango, 2011:152). This may contend outlooks of female football coaches are changing at the top of the football hierarchy, even though earlier literature elucidates top football organisations portray a significant site of gender hierarchy, as men dominate significant control and power influences (Scruton, Caudwell, and Holland, 2005; Machingambi and Wadesango, 2011). This may be of significant importance for women in football, because if female coaches are recognised or given opportunities by the running of the game, females may become more successful in coaching, presumably due to social arrangements reflected in the chain of command being passed down.

The present study also indicates the greater access to coaching qualifications through the founding of female only courses. This reflects a greater opportunity for females to become qualified coaches and possibly highlights the want for more female coaches involved, by exclusively targeting them. This may imply through an increase in opportunities available, it may well be crucial for 'females to progress into coaching as it is essential in the direction of the acceptance of females becoming a normative part of the game' (Fielding-Lloyd and Meän, 2008:14). By creating numerous schemes it could help encourage more women into the field of football coaching. Furthermore, Clayton (2005) alludes football in the UK is closely associated with hegemonic masculinity. Therefore, the findings may advocate, women making progressions in participation rates, as well as receiving increased attention and developments in terms of becoming a coach and/or increasing professionalism, may well be a threat for men to maintain power and control in football.

On the other hand, Kelly's involvement signifies improved opportunities by being 'successful' as a female coach, as she coaches mixed groups at university. Therefore, it could be argued if more opportunities were available to females previously, in hindsight we could have seen more successful female coaches more rapidly and additionally become more successful. With regards to the question of, do females receive enough opportunities in football to be able to

advance into coaching, the participants generally state they do receive opportunities and women can go into coaching. However, an interesting opinion that arose from Kelly and Abby's responses has been the possible issue of diverse opportunities available to women wanting to coach football in different countries. Although, the review of literature doesn't signify this potential issue, the participants were able to demonstrate improved opportunities more extensively in England. Kelly emphasises, "I think they can go into football coaching . . . Opportunities to work with a high calibre of player are few and far between; certainly in Wales" While Abby's narrations make little reflection to Wales, relating to the FA, a governing body of football in England and proposes examples of peers who have gained opportunities in England to coach. This suggests a culture that is possibly more accessible for males to achieve and improve job possibilities within Wales, than it would be for females. However, this is only a perception representative of the females within this study.

Nonetheless, the researcher deems that this study has presented enough evidence to propose the improvements for women do not seem to be of a significant threat to men, so that they challenge the domination of men in qualified professions in football.

5.3 Male Hegemony

What is evident throughout this study is women have been challenging the traditions of male only entitlement to football through their considerable immersion into footballs playing field. However, during the analysis of previous research the underrepresentation of female football coaches within football was a popular discussion. Previous studies illuminate women are a 'minority compared to men in the profession' (Shaw, 2006), and also specified the underrepresentation within women's football clubs, enlightening 61% of coaching positions were held by men (Scruton, Caudwell, Holland, 2005). Furthermore, Schlesinger and Weigelt-Schlesinger (2012:57, see also DFB, 2010) literature suggests, only a small number of females pursue a career in coaching and take up education to obtain

their license, with only 117 women holding 'A' or 'B' licences, as compared to 5902 male trainers. Correspondingly, Abby's experiences indicate gaining coaching qualifications in football whilst a participant proved challenging, due to the arrangements of coach education courses made more accessible to men. This suggests the challenges females face if they still play but want to become a coach, as males have sufficient control and priority over the arrangements, which seem to limit females' admittance, and possibly discourage them to advance into coaching.

Furthermore, while this study and the literature review portray female's football has made improvements, the participants life experiences of being a player and becoming a football coach signify females are still met with oppositions. This research found the participants encounter gender dissimilarities as female football coaches, and as such, males continue to overtly dominate higher occupations in football. Kelly narrates; ". . . *I'm only going to go as far as I can go within female football*" also reinforced by Abby; "*Males, as I said, can go and apply for any job, For example a top-flight football team . . . We don't have as much opportunity as men . . .*". These results echo the results found in Caudwell (2011:332) elucidating the existence of hegemonic masculinity, with males receiving entitlements to privileged positions and opportunities in football professions. In a society of hegemonic masculinity, men hold power over women and strive to maintain this power to restrict them from entering or participating in certain areas, such as sports (Coakley, 2001, see also Connell, 1995; Dixon and Bruening, 2007). Therefore, this distinctly elucidates the complications and impediments women face when attempting to gain coaching/ professional positions in football. It seems to indicate, women who coach football are limited to opportunities only to advance in the women's game, and cant progress to a high-level position. This may well relate to other studies, supposing women are faced with such shortcomings as, having less status, lower salaries and less power than their male counterparts (Knoppers, et al., 1989; Parkhouse and Williams, 1986; Theberge, 1990).

Similarly, the literature of Fielding-Lloyd and Meân (2008) was greatly pertinent in this study's findings, with both participants revealing the difficulties coaching football as a female, because it appeared women are perceived as inferior, particularly by male occupants. The results signify this as both participants highlighted how their competence to coach as a female needs to be demonstrated and proved particularly to men. For example Abby stated:

“Because they see a female coach, obviously their generation were probably fairly limited, I think it was generally the dads who’d shout and this was probably because they thought that I didn’t know what I was on about . . . But I think that was because I was a girl; I know for a fact if it was a boy they wouldn’t have shouted. But I think that’s just stereotyping again”

This notes men exert power over women in the coaching profession, and women coaches are categorically ‘othered’ as emphasised by Fielding-Lloyd and Mean (2008), and seem to lack acceptance and recognition in the coaching profession, similar to Knoppers, et al (1991) work. Therefore, it is important to note, while it is deemed women have explicitly threatened the gender norms entering the playing arena, women aren’t posing a severe threat to football’s sense of masculinity and male domination throughout the whole of footballs society. It seems women within coaching still need to do more to challenge the perception of football coaching being a highly gendered occupation.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter intended to analyse and discuss the key findings presented in chapter four and attempt to draw analytic conclusions in relation to the research problem. The literature review was used to help support the experiences of the women interviewed and the women’s experiences reinforced the literature. The findings from this study have helped suggest persistent shortcomings and rejections females face during their involvement in the coaching field compared to males. Although this discussion suggests women can gain coaching qualification, it highlights a major issue females encounter when they enter the coaching field. Abby and Kelly’s reflections significantly demonstrate the gender hierarchy of coaching as a barrier, with men being the gatekeepers to higher positions and women often subordinated. This research highlights females may be restrained

from entering the coaching profession because of the inadequacies to progress. Therefore, gender issues might require addressing across other team sports, because although women are challenging male's sense of ownership in football by participating and a few women holding coaching qualifications, it's not significant enough. As Hargreaves (1994:208) suggests, 'the problem of inequality cannot be solved by a few exceptional women who hold powerful positions; women are needed in approximately equal numbers with men'. Therefore, if the gender issue in coaching is addressed across other sports it could perhaps be taken more seriously. Likewise, even though this study implies improvements have been made, you could argue they have been made very gradually, with the participants' ages being a decade apart, and their experiences are not greatly different. It also gives an insight into the women's lived experiences being a female football coach in a predominantly masculine environment.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

6.1 Conclusion

This study intended to gain an in-depth and rich understanding of female football coaches' experiences, in an effort to shed light on the possible reasons to the underrepresentation of female football coaches. Previous research has established the underrepresentation of female football coaches (Machingambi and Wadesango, 2011; see also Schlesinger and Weigelt-Schlesinger, 2012), yet few studies have attempted to place the women at the centre of their research to illuminate women's own lived experiences. It was clear within this study that the women have faced some improvements in football, though this hasn't significantly threatened the sense of masculinity and male hegemony throughout the whole of football. What was greatly pertinent was the difficulties they highlighted they face during their involvement in the profession.

Although the findings can suggest women's football is improving, it seems that these advancements are only gradual and have happened over a number of years, with the participants' experiences not being greatly different despite being of different generations. Interestingly, the women seemed to portray these improvements in England, which perhaps points out fewer improvements have been made in their coaching environments and therefore less opportunity for other females in their surroundings. However, this study has established the complications and barriers women face when attempting to gain coaching positions and/or make progressions in football. It highlights females are limited in terms of progressing as far as they may want to when coaching football, because male coaches remain the centre of football. The findings seem to signify the issue of football as a gendered hierarchy, with men being the gatekeepers to privileged positions and attaining entitlements in the coaching profession, which limits the level women can advance, similar to the literature of Caudwell (2011; Knoppers, et al., 1991). Furthermore, a significant finding was the hindrances females face by male occupants whilst coaching. For instance the participants, stated they needed to prove their competence in the profession, particularly to males, as women are seen as sort of second best to men, also exemplified by, Fielding-Lloyd and Meän (2008).

6.2 Limitations of Study

A limitation of the research was the significant amount of data gathered during the life history interviews, as not all of the participants' experiences could be included in previous chapters. It was difficult to select the most prevailing themes and the most important comments to address these themes. Also, the restricted timescale meant it was difficult to capture the 'true' essence of the participants' life stories. Although the limited timescale meant it was difficult to reach a widespread sample of participants, this could have enabled a greater variety of female football coaches' experiences to be collected and strengthened the results of the study. Moreover, these results do not claim to be a detailed account of every female football coaches' experience. Though, it does attempt to uncover some of the significant experiences present during women's' involvement in coaching football.

6.3 Recommendations for Future Research

There are specific recommendations that could increase the quality of research if future research was carried out. Firstly a longer time frame to complete the study would increase the depth of research as a widespread of participants could be used to develop a broader range of opinions.

Another potential idea for further research could be to compare the experiences of females who have gained coaching qualifications but haven't advanced into coaching positions, with the experiences of women who do currently coach football. This will help understand the experiences women who want to or can enter the coaching profession face to understand what prevents other women in the same area of interest from entering the profession.

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APPENDIX A

Participant information sheet

Information sheet for _____

This informed consent form is to assist you in making an informed decision about whether you wish to participate in the research project.

Name of principle investigator: Carla Louise Rees

Name of Institute: Cardiff metropolitan university

Project Title: ‘An exploration into the experiences of female football coaches in the women’s Welsh premier league’

I am a student at Cardiff metropolitan university studying as an undergraduate student. I am doing research on the under representation of female football coaches. I will provide you with information about the research and invite you to be a participant within the study of research. You do not have to decide today whether or not you want to participate in the research project.

If there is anything in this information sheet that you do not understand please ask me to stop as we go through the information and I will explain. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to ask.

This information sheet provides information on:

- I. The background and aim of the research,
- II. My role as the researcher,
- III. Your role as a participant,
- IV. Benefits of taking part,
- V. How data will be collected, and
- VI. How the data / research will be used.

I. Background and aim of the research

Despite production and maintenance of traditional gendered boundaries in football, the number of female athletes has increased over the years. Conversely there is an increase in the demand for coaches for females, so logically there should be a rise in female football coaches. However, whilst the number of players has increased this has yet replicated into coaching positions for females. Consequently, males dominate key managerial positions within football. Such stereotypical issues in society have been identified, which questions women's competence as coaches' suggesting the masculinity that occupies the place of female coaches at this time. However, such stereotypical views may be presumably fading. We (me and my research team) wish to examine the experiences and concerns of female football coaches to seek to understand the under representation of female football coaches that is present, in order to address the problem.

II. My role as the researcher

The research project involves me (Carla Rees) carrying out life history interviews to generate an overview of your experiences.

III. Your role as a participant

Your role is to narrate different times in your life as honestly as possible. Each participant will take part in a two part life history interview which aims to understand your experiences and concerns as a female football player and examine your experiences within the coaching profession. The interview will last approximately one hour and will be audio-taped and transcribed verbatim to analyze the data. The completion of this interview is not compulsory, and you do not have to respond to every question asked should you wish not to.

IV. Benefits of taking part

The information we obtain from this study will allow a better insight into the problem. From this we will aim to understand what we can actually do and it may in the future help to increase the number of female football coaches in the arena.

V. How data will be collected

As stated above, data will be collected via life history interviews. Interviews will take place face-to-face in a neutral setting so that you are comfortable and will be conducted at the convenience of your time. No one else but the interviewer (Carla Rees) will be present during the interview unless you would like someone else to be there. The interview will be audiotape recorded with a Dictaphone and the interviewer may take notes during the interview. However, no one other than the interviewer and research team will have access to these notes and recordings to

ensure your anonymity and privacy. You will also be given a pseudonym to protect your identity.

VI. How the data/ research will be used

In agreeing to become a *voluntary* participant, you will be allowing me to use your responses to the interview and include them within a larger data set that includes the data of other participants. From the knowledge that we get from this research, we will provide a summary of the results to each participant. Your personal data will be confidential and will not be released to anyone except Carla Rees. The interview will be tape-recorded, but will be kept private with no mention of any names. Any information about you will have a pseudonym on it instead of your name. Only we (the researchers) will know what your pseudonym is and we will lock the information away.

Voluntary participant

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. As a voluntary participant you have the right to enter or withdraw from the study at any time. You are in full control of the part you play informing this research, if you decide not to take part in this research study, you do not have to or do not wish to provide certain information you do not have to. The choice whether you participate or not is entirely yours.

Participant protection

Efforts will be made to hide your identity by using a pseudonym in any written transcripts, notes and associated documentation that informs the research and its findings. Personal information will remain confidential according to the guidelines of the Data Protection Act (1998).

Contact

If you require any further details, or have any questions, then please contact me on the details below.

Miss Carla Louise Rees
Cardiff School of Sport
Cardiff Metropolitan University
CF236XD, United Kingdom

Email: ST10004094@outlook.uwic.ac.uk

APPENDIX B

Participant certificate of consent

I _____ have been invited to participate in research exploring why there is proportionally fewer female football coaches than male football coaches, although there is a considerable increase in women playing football

I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet dated _____ for this research study. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have had these answered satisfactory.

I understand that my participation in the study is entirely voluntary and that I can withdraw from this research at any time.

I give consent to be audiotape recorded with a Dictaphone and understand the interviewer will be taking notes if and when necessary during the interview.

I understand that information from the study may be used for reporting purposes.

I have read the foregoing information, or it has been read to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study

Name of Participant (Printed) _____ **Date** _____

Signature of Participant _____ **Date** _____

Person taking consent (Printed) _____ **Date** _____

Signature of person taking consent _____ **Date** _____

APPENDIX C

LIFE HISTORY INTERVIEW GUIDE

The following are guidelines that provide examples of the types of questions used within the life history interviews. The researcher aims to guide the participant onto exploring different stages and concepts throughout their lived experiences in playing football, and becoming and being a female football coach.

Life history interview- Part 1

Main research question:

Looking back at your playing career, tell me about your experiences and concerns as a female football player.

1.0 Narration of playing overview

Firstly can you tell me how you got into playing football and give me a summary of your football performance?

- How did you feel about playing football?
- What got you into playing football?
- Who supported or influenced you (family/peers or relations)?
- Why did you enjoy playing football so much?
- Favourite aspects?
- What were the most positive experiences of playing football?

2.0 Positive and negative experiences/feelings, and opportunities

What positive experiences/ feelings have you had towards playing football?

- Can you recall any incidents where you received positive remarks about playing?
- Who made these comments? (Relatives/peers or relations etc.)
- What influence did these comments have on you?

What negative experiences/feelings have you had playing?

- Can you recall any experiences where you received negative remarks?
- When was this in your playing career?
- Describe how these comments made you feel?

I am mostly captivated with statements that made judgments or assumptions.

How would you describe the opportunities you had as a female footballer?

- What benefits did you receive to things such as training, facilities, coaching and finance?
- Do you recall any incidences where opportunities affected you?
- How would you refer to men's opportunities and women's?
- How did you feel about men's opportunities and women's?
- Have there been difficult events or periods you experienced that stand out? (Probes – Coping strategies, channels of support e.g. relatives/friends/relations)
- What opportunities did you have to develop?
- How do you think opportunities have evolved for women in football now?

3.0 Significance of female football participation

How do you think women's football is valued compared to men's football?

- Did you feel women's football was seen differently to men's?
- How did this affect your participation?
- Were there times where you felt there was and/or wasn't an equal playing field?
- How do you think this has changed?

4.0 Role Models

How do you think female role models in football impacted on your playing experience?

- What did you think about the representation of female football players?
- Do you think this has changed?
- How did role models inspire you to continue participating?
- What affect do you believe role models have on females now?

5.0 Stereotyped and gender discrimination

How do you think people see women footballers and do you think this is changing?

- Has stereotyping affected you?
- Can you recall any incidents of discrimination?
- Do you feel women need to confirm their female identity?
- Were there any times you felt attractive or unattractive in football?
- What influenced this?
- Can you recall any incidents where you felt playing football was inappropriate?
- Has male discrimination affected you?
- Can you recall any negative connotations regarding your sexual orientation?

6.0 'Self' identity disputes

How do you think football affects the way you and others perceive your body?

- What do you believe is the ideal female body?
- How did you feel about your body when you were playing?
- Can you describe any issues that surrounded your body identity when playing?
- How has playing football impacted on your self-image? On your body image?

Life history interview - Part 2

Main research question:

Can you narrate your experiences and/or concerns of becoming and being a female football coach?

7.0 Breakthrough into coaching

Firstly can you tell me how you got into football coaching and give me an outline of your coaching performance so far?

- How has previously playing football helped you advance into coaching?
- Have you always wanted to be a football coach?
- Who supported or influenced you (family/peers or relations)?
- How do you feel about coaching football?
- What coaching qualifications have you gained along the way?
- Why do you enjoy coaching football so much?
- What are your favourite aspects?
- What is your team's biggest success?
- Can you recall any difficulties when you started?
(Probing – Coping strategies, channels of support)

8.0 Positive and negative experiences/feelings, and opportunities

What positive experiences/ feelings have you had whilst coaching football?

- Can you describe any positive remarks you have received about your coaching in football?
- Who made these comments? (Relative/peers or relations?)
- What influence did these comments have on you?

What negative experiences/feelings have you had during your football coaching career?

- Can you bring to mind any negative remarks you have received?
- When was this?
- How have these comments affected you?
- Can you recall a time when you've had negative feelings about continuing to coach?

I am mostly captivated with statements that made judgments or assumptions.

How would you describe the opportunities you had as a female footballer?

- What privileges do you receive to training facilities, equipment, coaching courses and finance and how has this changed?
- Can you recall any incidents where the opportunities available have affected you?
- How would you describe men's opportunities to football coaching and women's?
- How has this changed over time?
- How do you feel about men's opportunities and women's?
- Have there been difficult events or periods you experienced that stand out? (Probes – Coping strategies, channels of support e.g. relatives/friends/relations)
- Do you feel you've had adequate opportunities to develop as a coach?
- How do you think opportunities have evolved for women in coaching now?

9.0 Role Models

How do you think female coaching role models in football impact on your coaching experience?

- Have role models inspired you to continue coaching? How?
- How important do you think it is to have female football coaching role models?
- What affect do you think these role models could make?
- What do you think about the representation of female football coaches?
- Do you think this is changing or could change?

10.0 Undervalued and rated

How do you think women coaches in football are valued compared to men?

- What would you describe a valued and appreciated coach as?
- Do you feel women coaching football is seen differently to men coaching?
- How has this affected you whilst coaching?
- Has your skills and abilities to coach football ever been challenged?
- How do you think this has changed?
- How did you gain confidence in your coaching?

11.0 Glass ceiling

What barriers do you think you have faced as a female coach compared to men?

- Have there been barriers that limited your advancement in coaching?
- Do you think women face more challenges to advance within the hierarchy of a football organisation?
- Do you recall men ever gaining high performance positions over yourself?
- How has this affected you?
- How secure do you feel in your position as a female compared to men?

12.0 Stereotyped and discriminated

How do you think people view women football coaches and do you think this is changing?

- Has stereotyping affected you?
- Can you recall any incidents of discrimination?
- Do you feel women who coach football need to confirm their female identity?
- Have there been any times you felt attractive or unattractive when coaching?
- What influenced this?
- Do you ever feel coaching football is viewed as inappropriate?
- How does this make you feel?
- Have males discriminated against you?
- Can you recall any negative connotations regarding your sexual orientation?

Is there anything else you would like to add that we may have missed during the interview or you think may be of relevance to this study?

APPENDIX D

EXAMPLE INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTIONS

Name of interview: Kelly (Pseudonym)

Q: Do you feel you've had adequate opportunities to develop in your career?

A: You have to create those yourself. If opportunity doesn't knock, then you build a door and that's exactly what I've done and I'm well aware that, as a female coach, you're going to have to work a lot harder; you are going to have to prove yourself and, as I said, I wasn't an exceptional player, so I couldn't fall back on that. I was OK, I was experienced, I'd played at the highest level that was available, but you look at some of the players we've got now, and as I said, they're much better. But I **had** to prove myself through gaining qualifications, gaining the edge, achievements and so on, but that's the same in any occupation I think. And I've also had to have a very loud voice and bang the UWIC Women's Football drum every time I need to. (52.50)

Q: How do you think the opportunities have changed over time for women in coaching? Do you think more women go into football coaching?

A: I think they can go into football coaching but I'm afraid the opportunities are few and far between. Opportunities to work with a high calibre of player are few and far between; certainly in Wales, there just aren't a lot of full-time positions unless you go through the national governing body and work for them, but on a club level I don't think there are any, other than us, where people are employed as a football coach or football academic or coaching academic or whatever you want to call it, which is why I value where I am now and I feel very privileged in that respect. (53.45)

Q: Do you think they are trying to change this, because it was interesting, the other day I had an email, they're doing a women only football leaders course.

A: Yes, again I have issues with why are we differentiating, we're almost shooting ourselves in the foot, if somebody wants to be a coach, you pay for it like everybody else does. You're inviting criticism; you're inviting other male coaches to jump all over that! I can see why they would do it, but I had to go through my badges on mixed courses and I think you're almost capping the amount you can

learn there. I learned off the tutors but the majority of what I learned was through being on the same course with good male coaches, with different experiences and so on, and the majority of those female coaches at Leader's level are probably going to have the same experiences, and I think you learn from interacting with others and you'll shoot yourself in the foot by sectioning off exactly who you can interact with on these courses. (55.05)

Name of interview: Abby (Pseudonym)

Q: What negative experiences or feelings have you experienced during your football coaching career?

A: The main ones really, not just the parents, but because they see a female coach, obviously their generation were probably fairly limited, I think it was generally the Dads who'd shout and this was probably because they thought that I didn't know what I was on about. So I did feel a bit intimidated by the parents, purely because it was the males shouting. But I think that was because I was a girl; I know for a fact if I was a boy they wouldn't have shouted at him. But I think it's just that stereotyping again. (40.20)

Q: How would you describe the opportunities you've had as a female player turned coach?

A: I think I was lucky that . . . was a girls' team, because I probably wouldn't have been asked to do it if it had been a boys' team. So I think they thought if they had a female team, they wanted a female coach, so I was really lucky. With . . . , as well, obviously as a player, being there, I was lucky to get that job, obviously because when I was injured they wanted me to start coaching as well, they knew I had a previous history of coaching. So I've been quite lucky in my opportunities and I've never really looked further for a permanent coaching job, as such, as yet. Obviously, so I'll carry on playing as well. (41.10)

Q: What privileges do you receive in terms of training facilities, any equipment, coaching courses, or finance etc?

A: We did get the opportunity to go on an all-girls training opportunities which the FAW run, so we could have gone on those. I'm lucky through my job, they put me on my "C" Licence and paid for it and so on; again, it's expensive so I'm grateful for the help. But I think the opportunities now, again I would never have had opportunities before to go on it all paid for, nothing like that. And to be there if you look at the registers from the previous ten years of people doing "C" Licences, there would be a very limited number of female. But now I think there are more and more girls wanting to take up the coaching role, even if it's doing the local sides. Out of the team I'm in, at least 4 of the girls have got "C" Licences already; whereas when I first started playing, nobody had any qualifications in football, at all. So they are trying to push the girls a lot more with the qualifications. (42.25)

Q: *Do you recall any instances where opportunities that have been available to you have affected you?*

A: Again, they always put the "C" Licence on a Sunday purely because the males play on a Saturday, now for me as a player, or an ex-player, I couldn't do that, so I've had to wait until I could take a few years out of football to do my badges, purely because I couldn't attend on a Sunday, because I had games myself. Now they knew the reason they're on a Sunday is because the men; so the opportunity for the females then, unless they wanted to give up their own playing time, they couldn't do it. Or they had to pay double to go on a crash course. So, I would have done it four years ago. It was just really disappointing when I found it was on a Sunday and I couldn't do it.(43.25)