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	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.		
	Introduction and literature review To include: outline of context (theoretical/conceptual/applied) for the question; analysis of findings of previous related research including gaps in the literature and relevant contributions; logical flow to, and clear presentation of the research problem/ question; an indication of any research expectations, (i.e., hypotheses if applicable).		
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	Results and Analysis ² To include: description and justification of data treatment/ data analysis procedures; appropriate presentation of analysed data within text and in tables or figures; description of critical findings.		
	Discussion and Conclusions ² To include: collation of information and ideas and evaluation of those ideas relative to the extant literature/concept/theory and research question/problem; adoption of a personal position on the study by linking and combining different elements of the data reported; discussion of the real-life impact of your research findings for coaches and/or practitioners (i.e. practical implications); discussion of the limitations and a critical reflection of the approach/process adopted; and indication of potential improvements and future developments building on the study; and a conclusion which summarises the relationship between the research question and the major findings.		
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CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY
Prifysgol Fetropolitan Caerdydd

CARDIFF SCHOOL OF SPORT

DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (HONOURS)

SPORT & PHYSICAL EDUCATION

**Reflective Practice: An exploration into reflection,
experience and coaching competence in male
football coaches.**

Coaching

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REFLECTIVE PRACTICE: AN EXPLORATION INTO
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN REFLECTION,
EXPERIENCE AND COACHING COMPETENCE IN
MALE FOOTBALL COACHES

Cardiff Metropolitan University
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ABSTRACT

This Investigation looks to evaluate reflective practice with regards to expert and novice football coaches. In summary, the aim of the study was to consider the benefits of reflective practice and if used, why and how has this use of this reflection assisted the coach's perceived development. Participants were chosen from Cardiff Metropolitan University, with expert football coaches (n=3) and novice football coaches (n=3) having to match up to the specific criteria stated. The data collection method was conducted independently by the researcher through semi-structured interviews and then transcribed to depict the views of the participants. Common findings were that expert coaches tended to utilise reflection both during and after practice, whereas novice coaches preferred to reflect afterwards due to their lack of knowledge and confidence.

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

Throughout the past decade, reflective practice has been increasingly discussed within the sport coaching domain (Knowles, Gilbourne, Borrie, & Nivel, 2001; Irwin, Hanton, & Kerwin, 2004; Knowles, Tyler, Borrie, & Eubank, 2006) and over the last few years, the importance of reflective practice for both personal and professional development has gained credibility (Cropley, Hanton, Miles & Niven, 2010). Due to the lack of coach-centred literature within football, this recognised importance and its developmental benefits are yet to be clarified with regards to expert and novice football coaches. As highlighted by Irwin, Hanton and Kerwin (2004), the level of a coach's knowledge and its application has a direct effect on the coaching process. Thus, a more knowledgeable coach could facilitate an improvement for their team by utilising essential, developed coaching skills. Therefore, by employing reflective practice, effectiveness could improve significantly for both coach and team alike. Nonetheless, research undertaken in the nursing field has established reflecting on an experience is an intentional and skilled activity requiring an ability to analyse practice actions and make judgements regarding effectiveness (Driscoll & Teh, 2001). So, in a sports coaching sense, this might imply a novice coach with limited experience may struggle to reap maximum benefits for their team and personal development.

Previous scholars have recognised that knowledge can be acquired through experiential learning (Knowles et al., 2001; Schön 1983, 1987; Kolb, 1984; Cropley et al., 2010) however an experience gained may not always be an experience learnt from. Although the importance of experience is widely acknowledged, the simple accumulation of experience does not guarantee coaching competence (Dodge & Hastie, 1993; Bell, 1997). Therefore suggesting it is the subsequent reflection upon that experience that can develop and improve coaching practice (Cropley et al., 2010).

Coaching experience and observation of other coaches have often been cited as the principle sources of knowledge for coaching (Gould, Giannini, Krane, & Hodge, 1990; Coaching Association of Canada, & Strachan, 1996) yet just obtaining that knowledge and actually using it to facilitate delivery competence could thoroughly

depend on the characteristics of the coach in question. Therefore to really understand, appreciate and utilize the benefits of reflective practice, perhaps the identification of strengths and limitations during practical delivery need to be analysed reflectively, without assuming individual experience alone formulates self-competence.

1.1 Insight into the Study

The success of an athletic team depends to a great extent on the quality of leadership and coaching skills of the coach (Wang & Straub, 2012, p.431). Wang and Straub (2012) identified how the coach is instrumental to a team's success. Nevertheless the gap in this area of research is apparent with most empirical research being centred upon performance of the team rather than that of the coach. As suggested by Nash and Sproule (2011), while it recognises the coach as integral to the development of performance, numerous investigations focus on the performers. During recent years, many studies with the focal point being reflective practice have been directed at the performers' and their personal reflection despite a few distinguished, insightful exceptions, i.e. Cropley et al. (2010). As a result, the lack of exploration into this area of study has allowed for a more specific, relevant and intuitive investigation to take place with regards to male football coaches and their thoughts on reflection.

1.2 Aim and Objectives

Consequently, the aim of this study was to examine if, why and in which way reflective practice is used by expert and novice male football coaches and, whether this use has assisted their perceived development as coaches.

In light of the aim and area of investigation three objectives were established:

1. To examine the relationship between learning from experience (informal), learning from education provision (formal) and how learning through reflection is necessary to improve coaching delivery.

2. To identify and understand the appropriate variables which affect a coach's choice on how they reflect (experience levels, decision-making and knowledge of reflection).

3. Using Schön's (1983) ideological viewpoint on the notion of reflection (reflecting in-action and on-action), identify which of these theorised techniques, if any, is more beneficial and used by expert or novice football coaches.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction to Chapter

The following section explores research relevant to this investigation. Together with the exploration of appropriate research, a discussion will commence examining the thoughts and ideologies of insightful scholars. This will enable a worthy rationale of the study to be identified and ultimately, recognise why utilising reflective practice is imperative in the development of a successful coach.

2.1 Contextual Background Overview

In line with the concept of reflection, the production of a competent coach depends on an assortment of variables which, if developed correctly, can significantly assist the application of what is known to be 'good practice'. Reflective practice as a beneficial tool has been previously discussed throughout a range of differentiating fields such as; education: (Ghaye & Ghaye, 1998); nursing: (Ghaye & Lillyman, 2001, 2004); and sports psychology: (Hanton, Cropley & Lee, 2009; Cropley et al., 2010). With the exception of more recent theorised publications, focussing upon reflective practice in sports coaching (e.g. Nash & Sproule, 2011; Rowley, Earle & Gilbourne, 2012), the predominant portrayal of the majority of reflective examinations have been towards education and nursing professions. Additionally, more recently scrutinized publications with regards to cognitive development within the field of applied sports psychology have prevailed, rather than that of sports coaching.

2.2 What does Reflection entail?

Through learning about reflection, utilizing its importance and subsequently maximizing its benefits as a coach, the development of coaching competency can prosper and result in influential outcome(s) for the subject in question. To help teams achieve wanted results, it is essential for a coach to understand the concept of reflection and be able to appropriately analyse experiences to enable positive development for the future. Although utilising reflective practice is not compulsory for football coaches', the significance of reflection and discussion alike has previously been supported by Gould et al. (1999) who reported a beneficial

outcome for the partakers in their Olympic environment investigation. They acknowledged both coaches and athletes could learn a lot from one another by simply “reflecting, processing and communicating about past performances” (p. 392). Loughran (1996) suggested the “purpose” of reflecting is to breakdown a hindrance or problem, or to “make more sense” of a situation which may seem confusing (p.13). Hence, the recognition of certain strengths and limitations within a sporting exercise is, without question, crucial with regards to overall improvement of a performance.

With football becoming progressively complex tactically as well as the intensity of competitive matches growing at a rapid rate, it is vital coaching staff are able to depict the positives and negatives exemplified during performance. An issue of concern when coaching, that has not already been addressed, could negatively affect forthcoming decisions made and this is where coaching experience levels hold importance. A football coach holding a greater level of expertise may prefer to take immediate intervention due to the knowledge and confidence they embrace. Similarly, Loughran (1996) acknowledged the complex nature of “teaching and learning”, concluding “resolution is not absolute”. He continued to propose that perhaps the use of Schön’s (1987) reflection on-action would also be influential in what both the “teacher-student” or, in this case, coach-athlete(s) learns (p.19). Therefore, seemingly suggesting retrospective reflection of an experience provides chances to increase clarity of previous practises and ultimately, develop an innovative or further understanding of that situation.

2.3 Reflection Practice: Influential Scholars

Gould (2004) recognised there has stood a flourishing interest in the philosophies of reflective practice and critical reflection over the last few decades. Encouraging practitioners to reflect upon practice is thought to create the opportunity for the exploration of good practice, the identification of areas for improvement and the formulation of ideas for change (Knowles et al., 2001). Although the concept and benefits of reflective practice are widely acknowledged, the models surrounding reflective practice and critical reflection have come under criticism in past times (i.e. Ixer, 1999). Smyth (1989) also suggested Schön’s initial concepts of reflection

had been looked at many years before, and even then, misperception was customary.

Nevertheless, the present paper is founded on the experiential differences of coaches and how reflection as a skill may be more beneficial when utilized with regards to levels of previous know-how. This idea of learning through experiences is not a recent finding. Memorably, Kolb (1984) conceptualized experiential learning through a four-stage framework which entailed; 1. Concrete Experience (CE) - feeling, 2. Reflective Observation (RO) - watching, 3. Abstract Conceptualization (AC) – thinking, and 4. Active Experimentation (AE) - doing. Grasping and transforming were the two modes of Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory. Grasping experience supports the initial CE (feeling) and AC (thinking) features of the framework. It could be assumed that 'feeling' the experience is trying to understand what has happened, therefore being able to create familiarity with the practice. Thinking about the experience creates a cognitive engagement, helping to develop ideas for improvement. Transforming experience supports the RO (watching) and AE (doing). Ultimately, appreciating what has just occurred and being able to reflect, replicate and improve upon it (Kolb, 1984). It is imperative to realise both modes touched upon do not stand alone but work in a cohesive structure, helping the practitioner to learn through reflection.

Kolb's (1984) experiential learning model provides the opportunity for gaining self-knowledge so that, as coaches, we may individualize the way we effectively coach (Turesky & Gallagher, 2011, p.6). This cyclical idea of grasping and then transforming experiences, if correctly understood, can offer a supporting approach to acquiring coaching knowledge.

Various authors have devised models, enabling the coach to comprehend reflection and understand what it means to 'reflect'. Subsequently, these models of reflection provide an insight into the scientific mannerisms of the likes of Schön (1983, 1987), as well as Kolb (1984).

The modern-day upsurge in reflective literature strongly relates to the work of Donald Schön (i.e. Argyris & Schön 1974; Schön 1983, 1987), particularly the

application of reflection in professional practice (White, Fook & Gardner, 2006). Schön helped to emphasize the importance of reflection and as indicated by White, Fook and Gardner (2006) further developed the idea into a model of reflective practice, empowering cognitive stimulation surrounding its benefits.

Additionally, Gibbs (1988) formulated a cyclical illustration (see Figure 1), with an emphasis on preparing the 'practitioner for action' (Knowles et al., 2001).

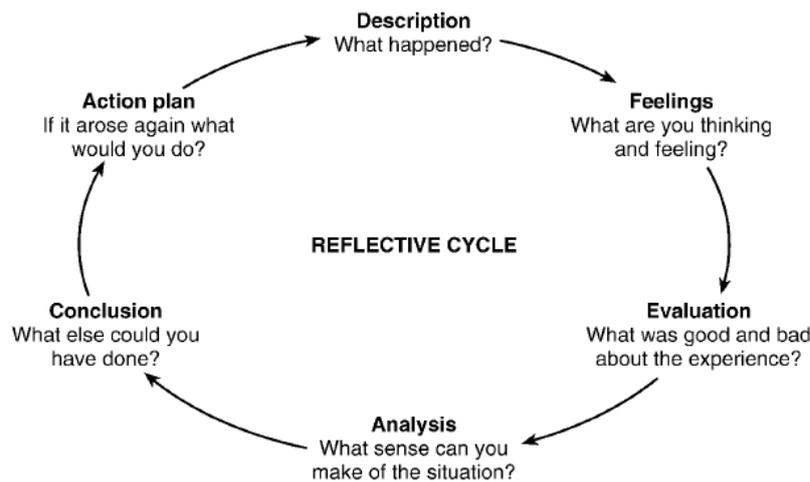


Figure 1. The reflective cycle (Gibbs, 1988).

The scheme behind the model of good practice may have been to help the practitioner prepare for the approaching sessions. For example, an action plan is situated at the ending stage of the cyclical process, and as described by Knowles et al. (2001) these conceptions suggest that reflective practice is deemed more of a procedure, rather than that of a research hypothesis.

Moreover, in an attempt to answer the third objective earlier stated, Schön's (1983, 1987) ideological viewpoint on the theory of reflection will assume importance. The theoretical framework supported two main concepts of reflecting as a coach. These were as follows: a) Reflection in-action and b) Reflection on-action.

Reflection in-action influences the decisions made during practice, with preference to immediate intervention rather than delayed reflection of an experience (Schön,

1987). The previous work of Van Manen (1991) reinforces this theory, who suggested reflecting in-action could be seen as an immediate decision-making procedure.

This indicates a coach would halt a certain activity or training task, suggesting alternatives to a visible limitation for the team; thus perhaps a highly experienced coach with knowledge from previous coaching scenarios may draw greater benefits by reflecting in-action. However, reflecting in-action may lead to discomfort or a decrease in confidence within performers as they could feel their efforts may be inadequate. This type of reflective practice could have negative effects on the athlete(s) or team, whereas the lack of knowledge held from previous sessions by a novice practitioner could promote a healthier response from the engaging athlete(s) or team. Contrastingly, this may be viewed as an enthusiastic, spontaneous approach to a hindered situation which might stimulate a new idea resulting in a beneficial outcome.

After the identification of reflecting in-action, Schön (1987) identified reflecting on-action. This conceptual element refers to the coach reflecting after the experience has finished. Defined as “thinking back” over an experience gained, this way of reflecting could be seen to assist a novice more, rather than an expert coach due to the lack of expertise and confidence a novice may hold when choosing what decision to make (Schön, 1987, p. 26). When discussing Schön’s (1983, 1987) theory of reflection, as well as its prominent use in a sports coaching context, his theory has been regularly acknowledged as a point of reference by researchers of education who investigated how teachers learn through experiences (Schön, 1991; Kruse, 1997; Clarke, 2006). Hereby promoting the value of these reflective techniques and recognising how for both a novice and expert coach, these modelled techniques could improve future delivery and overall coach development.

2.4 Individual Coach Development

Throughout all sports, in this instance football, it is crucial the social nature of coaching is considered just as imperative as the pedagogical processes that facilitate coaching capability. The sociology of coaching in this case could be reflecting individually or with others as more of a discussion exercise. The pedagogical processes which allow the coach to 'teach' involve educational assistance by means of formal coach education provision and experience gained through an informal matter – observation of the More Knowledgeable Other (MKO) (Vygotsky, 1978). The development of this social awareness together with educational assistance, whether it is a UKCC award qualification or experience, could be seen to be instrumental in helping coaches at any level, novice or expert.

Armour and Jones (2000) advocate the key to appreciating this observation is by the coach understanding how their personal identity, philosophy and ultimately their ability to coach others has been created as a result of their social and educational relationship. Developing such an awareness in coaches provides them with the ability to evaluate information from a range of sources, and the confidence and courage to take responsibility for their decisions (Cassidy, Jones & Portrac, 2004, p.7). In support of this statement and with regards to employing reflective practice, by engaging in both social and educational environments, a coach could enhance personal coaching qualities and characteristics through exercising reflective practice. Thus, improving coaching competency and hopefully resulting in team success.

This notion of reflective practice is not a new phenomenon. Insightful studies have been examined with various hypotheses illustrated and numerous effective variables considered, whether these benefit the learning process of a coach, or not. Nelson-Jones (2010), when examining the theory and practice of counselling, declared it is useful to identify that the practitioner is firstly a person, and at all times, the personal characteristics of the practitioner will direct how he/she practices. Therefore suggesting high levels of experience, arguably the most important characteristic held by a coach, could very well enhance coaching competency but to what extent is somewhat difficult to measure. Hanton, Cropley,

Neil, Mellalieu and Miles (2007) carried out an investigative study into what is meant by experience. It was revealed that experience is not only a product of accumulated years in competition, but also involves mental processes where knowledge is “acquired and adapted” so that “action, reflection, and learning” can arise from personally influential occurrences (Hanton, Cropley, & Lee, 2009, p.518). With this in mind, the approaching sub-category shall endeavour to explore the benefits of experience and how it allows for deeper and perhaps more beneficial coach reflection to take place.

2.4.1 Experience

Experience, as one of many traits, seems to be an appealing characteristic when categorising what is seen to be a knowledgeable, competent football coach. Coaches and athletes alike have acknowledged the significance of psychological characteristics in diverse sports and by recognising the important characteristics needed, they are able to discover ways to develop them (Gucciardi, Gordon, Dimmock, & Mallett, 2009).

When discussing player-centred experience, Cropley, Hanton and Lee (2008) suggested when conceptualising experience, the ‘number of years’ a person has been competing in sport would present an ‘accurate representation’ (p.518). Of course, it would seem appropriate to propose an individual with more experience, in any context, would be more knowledgeable as previous literature reinforce this theory i.e. Vygotsky’s (1978) MKO within the Social Development Theory. Nevertheless, it is an equally reasonable expectation that an athlete who has been competing for fewer years but at an international level would be more experienced than an athlete competing for a greater period of time but at a lower competitive standard (Cerin, Szabo, Hunt & Williams, 2000). Thus, experience in its entirety, is very difficult to measure. In relation to competency in sport, this ideological assumption could also refer to the role of a coach as well as that of an individual performer. Therefore, given the many factors that may confound the “experience/number of competitive years” relationship, time is unlikely to provide a suitable depiction of experience (Cropley, Hanton & Lee, 2008, p.518).

If time is unlikely to present an appropriate portrayal of experience, then it must be assumed utilising reflective practice will inevitably implement knowledge and promote experiential learning. Nash and Sproule (2011) investigated insights into experience of both an expert and novice swimming coach. It was believed “more attention” should be paid to the coaching trail followed by coaching personnel, in order to help develop the coaching skills of that personnel and ultimately “achieve effective coaching” (p.149). Without question it is important to understand the benefits of their findings, with the expert coach favouring adaptation of practice as hindering situations surfaced, whereas the novice coach imitated what she perceived to be ‘good practice’. Nevertheless it is also valuable to comprehend that the coaching process holds more of an ambiguous nature than a clear concept, and this could well suggest that pertinent variables such as experience (informal) contribute more in shaping a coaches delivery in comparison to proper coach education input (formal).

Previous reflective practice literature highlights how learning from experience is a developmental and beneficial process for a coach. With this in mind, early research by Kolb (1984) briefly identified reflection as an essential element of a dynamic and cyclical experiential learning spiral. In addition, Kemmis (1985) defined reflection to be:

A dialectical process: it looks inwards at our thoughts and thought processes and outward at the situation in which we find ourselves; when we consider the interaction of the internal and external, our reflection orients us for further thought and action. Reflection is thus “meta thinking” (thinking about thinking) in which we consider the relationship between our thoughts and action in a particular context. (p. 141).

Kemmis (1985) is hereby suggesting that expert coaches are more likely to be able to employ reflective practice during a coaching session in order to maximise learning of the athlete(s) whereas Boude, Keogh and Walker (1985), in contrast, proposed novice coaches will wait until the post-session scenario to reflect upon their limitations of the session. Subsequently held in thought, novice coaches will alter their forthcoming session with perhaps a more beneficial outcome. Here, confidence could play a pivotal role in the decision-making process of when a coach chooses to reflect.

2.4.2 Decision-Making

In light of the previous, decisions made by a coach at any time during a football performance can directly affect the subsequent outcome of the training session or competitive match. As competitive success becomes more important, this ability to make fast and appropriate decisions becomes crucial (Nash & Sproule, 2011, p.151), and choosing the correct decision could highly depend on the confidence in their own ability. Of course, any intervention by the coach will cause a state of change within performance; however whether that change is positive or negative could depend significantly on the expertise and decision-making ability of the coach.

When considering the cognitive processes that help define a coach, or better still, separate the good from the great, arguably a coach reflecting with greater experience is more likely to positively facilitate improvement for his/her team. Coaching, as proposed by Abraham, Collins and Martindale (2006), is essentially a “decision-making process” (p.549). Aside from Vergeer and Lyle’s (2009) account on coaches’ decision-making, empirical research with the focal point being decision making is known to be still exceedingly limited (Vergeer & Lyle, 2009). Surprisingly with sports coaching being a part of an ever-evolving continuum, it would be expected decision-making as a topic would be deeply investigated in an attempt to help resolve the arguable ambiguity of the coaching process and variables which create this uncertainty; however exploration into this area of interest is sparse.

Reflection and decision-making line up in a somewhat linear fashion. Reflective practice as well as decision making is an essential skill needed by a coach in order to advantageously adapt and both skills are seen as imperative to aid coaching delivery. A coach's interventions rest heavily on the level of knowledge they possess. This ideological assumption is reinforced by Abraham et al.'s (2006) findings on expert coaches. Vergeer and Lyle (2009) identified the expert-novice paradigm as a generally used approach, which concentrates on a comparison of developments and actions employed by "decision makers with different levels of expertise" (Westerman, 1991; Ste. Marie, 2003; Galanter & Patel, 2005; Vergeer & Lyle, 2009, p.432). The findings illustrated how expert coaches understood when intervention was needed, consequently intervening with confidence whereas novice coaches who held "limited experience", as suggested by Vergeer and Lyle (2009), had "limited overview of the consequences of their decisions" (p.432). It is therefore correct to assume the decision-making process employed by a coach could significantly affect the outcome(s) of their team, however the experience level held by that coach could in-turn create a positive *or* negative outcome. Once more, reflection embarked on by a coach could help develop learning from experiences and improve upon previous limitations in practice.

2.5 The Development of Coach and Experiential Education

Coach development of knowledge and practice remains largely based on experiences and the interpretation of those experiences (Cushion, Armour, & Jones 2003; Gilbert & Trudel, 2005; Cushion 2006). Within the UK, the coach education provision is jointly offered by National Governing Bodies (NGB) and Sports Coach UK (SCUK), formerly the National Coaching Foundation (NCF) (Nash & Sproule, 2011, p.150).

With regards to the coach education provision there is a debatable supposition that the education pathway teaches required and relevant information, yet supplies limited experiential knowledge when considering how every coaching scenario is different. In support of this, an investigation undertaken by Abraham and Collins (1998) suggested that the effectiveness of a coach will rarely improve due to simply attending a coach education course. In contrast, as stated by Nash and

Sproule (2011) coaches who attended a 12 hour coach education course dramatically developed their coaching efficiency. Yet, a coach's effectiveness could depend significantly on the way in which experiences are learned from; perhaps suggesting reflection of delivery is crucial to improve expertise. Knowles et al. (2005) explored the issues surrounding reflection in relation to coach education programmes and when considering the development of reflective skills, the study recognised that coach education programmes failed to offer structured support for coaches.

Without disregarding earlier literature (Abraham and Collins, 1998) dismissing conventional, formal coaching practice can be problematic (Cushion, Armour, & Jones 2003). Perhaps because coaches, more so novice, are increasingly likely to be seen staying with 'safer' traditional approaches that prove their knowledge and expertise, which have been established (Potrac, Jones, & Armour 2002; Coakley 2004; Jones, Armour, & Potrac 2004; Cushion, Armour, & Jones 2006; Cushion & Jones 2006; Potrac, Jones, & Cushion 2007; Cushion 2007), for example, structuring a coaching session the way they have been taught when undertaking football coaching qualification(s).

As recent research suggests, it would be naive to imply that coach education provision in the UK has not been beneficial over recent years; however learning from a coach with greater experience is still seen as a sound investment with regards to learning development. Coaches supporting credible experience within their sport can always learn from already acknowledged, successful coaches and ultimately, observing before doing may be central to understanding. This acquisition of knowledge has been more freshly recognized by Duffy (2005) and defined as an apprentice coach; a trainee coach who primarily observes a recognised, already established superior coach.

Following the previous point, Duffy (2005) suggested there are four individual coaching positions, and recommended each one be a stepping-stone to the other. These four roles were identified as: Apprentice Coach, Coach, Senior Coach, and Master Coach, however surrounding these four identifications is a somewhat misted clarity.

As proposed by Nash and Sproule (2011) experienced, knowledgeable and educated personnel require the appropriate education and training to meet the necessities of all partakers in sport at all ages and stages. Recent investigations such as Nash and Sproule's (2011) study take into account the coach education pathway, suggesting how this type of set criteria can perhaps enhance effectiveness of coaching delivery. On the contrary, also acknowledged by Nash and Sproule (2011), the reflections of experienced coaches suggested learning from already successful coaches is still perceived to be an "effective method" of accomplishing the "development of expertise", if not the best (p.150). Likewise, Wang and Straub (2012) documented examining experiences of established world-class coaches' could help other coaches to develop their expertise.

Nash and Sproule (2011) suggested apprenticeship is "learning from a more experienced and effective exponent" (p.150), however, recognised, although "knowledge, experience and craft of the coach" are vital when intending to build the expert coach, it is imperative to assume that "competence does not equate to effectiveness". The theory of apprenticeship is still well established within sports coaching, nevertheless this highlights how simply 'knowing' how to coach is not enough and perhaps more time invested by the coach would help to improve the athlete/team response, i.e. an impetus upon reflective practice.

CHAPTER THREE

METHOD

3.0 Rationale

The purpose of this chapter was to demonstrate the methodological process and procedures used in this study. As suggested by Thomas et al. (2005) the function of the methodology is to provide an in depth description of how to conduct the respective investigation, allowing any reader to replicate the study after reading the sections. To recap, the overall aim of the study was to examine if, why and in which way reflective practice is used by expert and novice football coaches and whether this use has assisted their perceived development as coaches.

In light of the investigative aim, a qualitative approach was preferred in contrast to a quantitative examination. Patton (2002) suggested although a quantitative approach could evaluate reactions from a large number of participants, a qualitative approach typically fashioned “a wealth” of in depth information about a significantly smaller number of participants (p.14). Ultimately, this increases the detail and understanding of the subsequent thoughts of the participants researched. For that reason, 6 interviews took place comprising of 3 expert football coaches and 3 novice football coaches, in relation to the earlier stated criteria within the introductory paragraph 1 which will be duly explained.

3.1 Instrumentation

3.1.1 Interviews

“If rich qualitative data is required, or you are looking for explanation, rather than description, then interviews are likely to be an appropriate method.” (Gratton & Jones, 2004, p.141).

Patton (2002) believed the purpose of interviewing is to make someone else’s thoughts explicit, identifying what is in their mind and to gather their stories. Nevertheless, Fontana and Frey (2000) suggested within the interviewing world, credibility may become scrutinized due to consistently poor interviewing taking place. Thus, before the initiation of the interviews it was deemed appropriate to send out an interview guide via email in order to gather wanted, interesting and

suitable data with regards to the aim and objectives (Appendix A). The complete interview guide began with an informative introductory paragraph before being separated into four specified sections. The introduction to the interview identified the aim of the study and suggested how the data collected may benefit future research within the specific area of interest. Firstly, section one helped to provide coaching-specific and football-specific background information of each participant. Subsequently, section two was the exploration of experience and education of expert and novice coaches. Reflective Practice was prioritised as the third section, allowing the researcher to recognise the relationship between reflective practice, experience and education as a triplet. The questions were developed in accordance with Schön's (1983, 1987) theoretical framework of reflection. Both reflection in-action and on-action were involved in an attempt to explore fully the methods of reflection and learning experienced by each coach. Finally, a concluding group of questions were provided in section four to summarise individual thoughts and reasoning behind the responses given.

As stated by Patton (2002), an interview guide holds advantages in the research process, i.e. makes certain the interviewee can utilize their time wisely, being able to systematically interview participants and better comprehend responses by restricting issues which may need exploring. Hereby suggesting the information needed can be gathered efficiently by avoiding hindering occurrences, ultimately allowing the interviewee to gather needed information precisely. Nonetheless, gaining data through interviewing does have its limitations and both the time and cost may be considered problematic. Essential resources such as a Dictaphone (audio-recording device) are needed to collect the data, as well as mutually agreeing a time and place to hold the interview itself. In addition Gratton and Jones (2004) suggested whilst interviewing a participant, the questions asked may be misunderstood which could lead to incorrect, invaluable responses. This could therefore be considered a limitation with regards to the quality of the data collected.

As stated by Wengraf (2001) semi-structured interviewing supports an emphasis on open questions and due to the exploratory nature of the study, semi-structured interviews assumed importance. Open questions were used to trigger thoughtful, detailed responses. The semi-structured approach allowed the researcher to steer the conversation without directly influencing the participant's responses to each question. This helped to engage the interviewee being questioned. It allowed their answers to hold important, valuable information which they assumed was relevant without necessarily supporting the same opinion as the interviewer. In line with the use of open questions, probing was introduced. "A probe is where the researcher can gain additional information... through using particular techniques." (Gratton & Jones, 2004, p.147). This interviewing technique was utilised to help provide the interviewee with specific information needed, and also to promote a healthier response from the participant. On the odd occasion, clarification probes were used to help the researcher understand specific points being discussed although elaboration probes were more frequently employed. For example, 'could you elaborate?' and 'any reasons for this?' encouraged the participant to provide an increasingly detailed response about a particular point, again promoting the trustworthiness of the study.

Before the commencement of each interview, the investigative aim was clarified to enable each participant to understand the purpose of the study. Additionally, the option to withdraw from the study if felt necessary was given as involvement was not compulsory. Subsequently, all 6 coaches agreed to partake in the study voluntarily and the recorded interviews were transcribed first hand by the researcher. The length of each interview was flexible being between 15 and 30 minutes. The 6 interviews lasted approximately 25 minutes each, which was enough time to gather the wanted information.

3.2 Participants

The nature of the investigation focused on the use of reflection in specific regard to experience levels in male coaches (i.e. expert and novice). It has been previously documented by both Bell (1997) and Martens (1997) that reflection is only apparent in certain types of coaches. Therefore the coaches' chosen must have held the specific criteria necessary to engage in the study. Therefore, a purposive sampling technique was employed, for example: a) when defined as expert or novice, what qualification(s) that coach held; and b) the regularity of coaching during a typical week.

Participants (n=6) were selected from Cardiff Metropolitan University. It was imperative that the expert coaches (n=3) had been regularly coaching for over 2 years and the novice coaches (n=3) had not yet exceeded the 1 year of regular coaching. The 'regular coaching' criteria identified were defined to show a significant difference in experience levels and to promote the trustworthiness of the study. A defined expert coach must have been coaching for a minimum of 4 hours per week, whereas a defined novice coach must have been coaching for a minimum of 2 hours per week. The expert coaches (n=3) must have held a F.A. UKCC/UKCCW level 2 football coaching qualification as a minimum. Contrastingly, it was not compulsory the chosen novice coaches (n=3) held a F.A. UKCC/UKCCW coaching qualification in football.

These conditions used to define an expert coach were due to one main reason. The belief that a coach with a UKCC/UKCCW level 2, who had been coaching over 2 years for 4 hours per week would be familiar with reflective practice and therefore would be able to utilize the skill to enhance delivery competence. Whereas, a novice coach would not hold the appropriate amount of experience to gain maximum benefits from engaging in reflective practice.

3.2.2 Pilot Study

The initial interview process was piloted to identify any limitations or problematic issues with the questions developed (Appendix B). The pilot testing commenced a week prior to the formal procedure which helped to illustrate the difficulties which may arise and ultimately, this helped to suggest alterations to the questions and provide clarity where necessary (Vegeer & Lyle, 2002).

Following the piloting procedure, certain types of questions asked were identified as limitations to the data collection process and ultimately, these were addressed resulting in redefined questions. By modifying the questions necessary the study saw an increase in validity, as the questions were directed toward the right areas in order to gain the response required from the participants. It was imperative the interviewing process instigated valuable responses from the participants in order to address the stated objectives and overall aim of the investigation. As advocated by Gratton and Jones (2004), piloting allows the researcher to develop techniques which may become useful when interviewing, promoting the chance of increased quality replies from the participant in question.

3.3 Procedure

To begin, ethical approval was granted by Cardiff Metropolitan University. As all 6 partaking coaches were of 18 years or above, it was only necessary to obtain their consent before the interview process could commence.

Initially, each participant was contacted by means of a telephone conversation. Once an agreement had been made to partake in the study, an email was sent to each participant individually. The email included both the interview guide and consent form (Appendix C) which enabled each coach to understand their rights, what would be expected from them and that, at any time, they were able to withdraw from the study if needed.

For obvious reasons, the consent form was necessary to allow the partaking coaches to understand the code of behaviour and rules and regulations of the proceeding meeting. Additionally, the interview guide sent prior also developed each coach's understanding of what was expected, helping them to prepare for the types of questions involved and allowing suitable time to plan their personal response.

3.4 Data Analysis

As suggested by Gratton and Jones (2004) inductive explorations tend to be associated with qualitative studies, with the interpretation of patterns resulting in either a theory or explanation. Therefore, an inductive content analysis prevailed in an attempt to address all 3 stated objectives and identify common emerging themes.

Data gathered via the semi-structured interviews were examined independently by the researcher. This allowed for a focussed and detailed inspection of the participants' responses with an aim to recognise these common themes which emerged and formulate ideas accordingly.

After discovering common emerging themes within the results, the identified key themes were presented as main headings. In addition to these key themes, underlying categories were also identified through the data analysis and were subsequently illustrated as sub-headings. The sub-headings were then presented under the key theme which they related to. Once recognised, only the most appropriate and relevant key themes and sub-headings were illustrated. These acknowledged themes were then cross-referenced with previous appropriate literature and categorised (Greenbaum, 1998), as well as checked with each participant to confirm what was discussed with the participants was correct (Patton, 2002) (Appendix D).

Gratton and Jones (2004) further identify two traditions of research, categorising quantitative and qualitative key points. One key point identified when using a qualitative approach was, for example, that it “follows a flexible research design that may be continually adapted” (p.27). In light of this, the flexibility of an inductive approach allows for the adaptation of questions during the course of the interview, with intent to producing the answers wanted from the participant. If successful, participant responses can help explain reasoning behind theories or develop new theories which can then be further researched through additional data collection (Gratton & Jones, 2004).

During the results and discussion, quotations were chosen from all 6 transcripts and used collaboratively to explore the findings and ultimately examine what had been found in relation to the main aim and three objectives. This allowed the reader to understand the views of the participants, and consider the relationship the findings had with previous reflective practice literature.

3.4.1 Trustworthiness

The trustworthiness of a study refers to the overall quality of the data collected. Lincoln and Guba (1985) proposed specific criterion supporting four main points of reference, with regards to the “naturalistic inquirer” (Lincoln & Denzin, 2003, p.172), and these were; a) credibility, b) transferability, c) dependability, and d) consistency.

Credibility, as suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985), is traditionally discussed by means of validity and reliability. The reported data was to match the constructed realities of each respondent. Therefore to enhance the credibility of the study and consistency of the results, “member checking” assumed importance (Gratton & Jones, 2004, p.189). The completed transcript from each interview was sent back to the participating coach for them to confirm consistency, accuracy and correctness.

To improve the reliability of the study further a Sony Dictaphone was used. This helped to ensure clarity of each recording. In relation to the Sony Dictaphone, an internet programme was downloaded via the Sony website which enabled the pace of playback to be altered if felt necessary by the researcher. Consequently, this allowed for information to be transcribed verbatim. Also, transferring the recorded interviews onto a computer was made easy due to the sophisticated technology, which was done via a USB connection. By utilising the audio-taping device, each interviewee's response could be listened to as many times as necessary, and reviewed for clarity when transcribing.

CHAPTER FOUR
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction to Chapter

The present section provides both the results and discussion combined in order to cohesively address the aim and objectives identified. The results are illustrated in quotation form to provide an insight into the participating coaches' thoughts and are duly explained with reference to relevant, supporting literature. The quotations included throughout the present section are only a segment of the full interviews recorded.

When providing quotations to express the thoughts of the coaches', all coaches can be recognised by a letter allocation in accordance with their coaching status and a number allocation in relation to each transcript. For example: Expert Coach one – E1; Expert Coach two – E2; Expert Coach three – E3; Novice Coach four – N4; Novice Coach five – N5; and Novice Coach six – N6.

4.1 Introduction to Discussion

When conceptualising reflection, early theorists suggested that reflection is the process that promotes experience and knowledge, and consequently is the focal point of all experienced-based learning theories (Schön, 1983; Kolb, 1984). Schön identified how reflection is likely to be visible in an environment where there is “a high priority on flexible procedures” and where complex processes are evident (p.338). This is mirrored in the coaching environment, where the process has been considered ambiguous and the procedures messy (Cassidy, Jones & Portrac, 2004). Nonetheless, it is important to understand the influence of coaching philosophies and a coach's decisions are an expression of the beliefs that underpin their philosophy.

It could be argued that the coach education system is too rigid and taught through a process which fails to adhere to the ever-changing environment of a coach's setting. Thus, Nelson and Cushion (2006) suggested reflective practice and coach education could work together helping to link “knowledge gained from professional experience, observations, coaching theory, and education” (p.175), with an aim to improving coaching competence.

Following this assumption, a combined exploration will take place. In light of the first objective, the current coach education system and whether it is beneficial will be subsequently discussed, as well as identifying how learning from practical experience is perhaps more beneficial with regards to utilising reflective practice. Secondly, the researcher will provide an insight into the variables which may affect a coach's choice on how reflection is utilised. Furthermore, the researcher will demonstrate how expert and novice football coaches utilise reflection and in relation to Schön's (1983, 1987) theorised reflective techniques (reflection in-action or reflection on-action), identify which, if any, is more beneficial for the development of coaching competence. Ultimately, these will attempt to answer the second and third objectives and achieve the aim of the study.

4.2 Exploring Educational and Experiential Learning with regards to Reflection

During the interview procedure, the coach education system was extensively discussed. The participating coaches were asked if they felt the coach education system was beneficial in terms of gaining valuable experience. E1, E2 and E3 all suggested it was beneficial, but to varying degrees as exemplified in E1 statement below:

I do believe that the coach education system is beneficial, to a degree, but I still feel, if you don't have the experience of what coaching entails during the practice, then you'll never be able to adapt or make the correct decision...

To an extent, this response promotes the study by Nash and Sproule (2011) who recognised that the coach education pathway can have a positive effect on the delivery of a coach. However, E1 continues to suggest, supporting the appropriate experience of what practical coaching involves will enable a coach to assess the situation and accurately decide what is best for the team, which again, supports the work of Nash and Sproule (2011).

When discussing reflections of experienced coaching personnel, findings recommended that to develop coaching expertise, gaining knowledge from already successful coaches was a valuable method if not the most effective. This view favouring practical experience was reinforced by E2 and E3. However both coaches acknowledged there were benefits to the systematic approach to coach education, for instance E2 proposed “Level 1 gives you a broad understanding of coaching...” as well as how to coach a single session and E3 suggested “Level 3 definitely increases your knowledge of the sport”. Nonetheless, E2 recognised how the UKCC Level 1 “...doesn’t provide much experience”. Thereby promoting a wealth of previous research which stresses the importance of learning through experience (Cushion, Armour, & Jones, 2003; Gilbert & Trudel, 2005; Cushion, 2006; Cropley et al., 2010; Turesky & Gallagher, 2012).

E3, the highest qualified coach (UKCCW UEFA ‘B’/ UKCC Level 3), suggested how coach education badges only provide recognition to others. This recognition, however, may open doors to better job opportunities for a coach. This thought is supported by E2, who explained how being a certified UKCC Level 2 coach allowed him the opportunity to get the job as an academy coach: “They [coaching certificates] enabled me to get the academy job, which allowed me to gain that valuable experience”. This perhaps suggests a qualified coach may be seen as more valuable due to the certified recognition; however they may not necessarily be as skilled in practice as a coach with more experience, i.e. supporting awareness of the coaching process and the messy reality of the coaching environment (Cassidy, Jones & Potrac, 2004). Werthner and Trudel (2006) stated though the identification of coaches’ learning sources is valuable, it may be argued that the research should not end there but actually look to identify which sources are more central to a coach’s development (Irwin et al., 2004). By identifying these influential sources, reflective practice may be further recognised as influential to the development of coaching competence, perhaps supporting the reason why the importance of reflective practice has been highlighted over recent years (Cropley, Hanton, Miles & Niven, 2010).

N4 and N5 were also in agreement with all three Expert coaches when considering the experiential benefits of coach education. N4 said it was essential for a coach to have knowledge of the sport and the basics to be able to coach it to your subject(s) i.e. when coaching the team and/or individual athlete. N5 agreed, more prominently suggesting “In terms of do I think it’s going to better me as a coach, I think undoubtedly it will, yes”. As N5 had not obtained any coaching qualifications and had only been regularly coaching at a recreational club, this could be seen as a naive assumption due to the lack of experience he previously held. Perhaps coaching competence would improve significantly if reflective practice were to be increasingly involved within the coach education curriculum, supporting the research by Knowles et al. (2005) who recognised that coach education courses fail to exploit the opportunities that reflective practice may offer a novice coach.

Nevertheless, both N4 and N5’s response again supports Nash and Sproule’s (2011) findings which recognised how attending a coach education course could significantly increase a coach’s delivery competence. In contrast, and in light of Turesky and Gallagher’s (2012) research on how learning from experience is imperative, N6 suggested there were no personal benefits gained from the Level 1 course whatsoever, proceeding to state: “It’s an idiot-proof crash course in how to do passing, dribbling, turning, and shooting... It’s a far cry from the actual reality of what you would do”.

The utilisation of reflection during the Level 1 course was not identified by the participant coaches. Level 2 was noted to be more specific to the development of expertise as a coach. N2 exclaimed: “They sent us away and we carried out a 6 weeks session plan, taking 12 sessions with 1 particular team. This enabled us to gain vast experience on how to develop specific sessions for the needs of the participant”. N2 suggested, by Level 2 helping to enhance coaching competence, developing sessions specifically to improve the team or individual can be more easily achieved. This adds further evidence to Loughran’s (1996) acknowledgement that the process of teaching and learning is complex. Loughran (1996) identified that resolving a problem once, does not guarantee its eradication. Therefore, implying reflective practice should not be used at a coach’s disposal

but recycled. Maybe suggesting it should be utilised wherever necessary to stimulate the development of new ideas and improve the ability to adapt. When employing reflective practice, it is crucial coaches recognise the good points as well as the limitations in practice. Focus tends to favour reflecting on situations determined as negative or disruptive. Yet, positive incidents are equally important situations for reflection. It can help to maintain and positively develop these factors for the future (Cropley et al., 2010).

Furthermore, E3 suggested that: “The UKCCW Level 3 stimulates more ideas about trying different things... therefore you feel you have more in your personal armoury of what to coach, that’s going to increase your confidence”. This response suggested once a coach has surpassed the UKCC Level 1 and 2, reaching that third stage allows for promotion of additional ideas when coaching. E3 identified how having more knowledge and experience can enhance confidence as a coach, and if that gained expertise is subsequently reflected upon, coaching competence can be enhanced improving delivery.

The conclusive belief was that the current coach education programme helps to teach the basics of football coaching. The structured environment allows for the development of fundamental knowledge, “your bread and butter...” as stated by N5. However the system only briefly addresses the importance of reflection during the Level 2 course; more identifiably during the UKCCW UEFA ‘B’ (Level 3) course. E3 stated “When you do your coaching badges, particularly the Welsh FA, they use the ODFDR technique, so you observe what’s going wrong, then diagnose the issue, those are the two reflecting parts.” E3 also recognised “Sometimes I’ll write it down: for the coach education courses you’ve got to write them down, sometimes”. This suggests when enrolled on the higher level course (Level 3), the reflection aspect of the course is deemed more important. The course initiated the use of Schön’s (1983, 1987) reflection in-action and on-action techniques, proving their worth when contributing to the development of coaching competence. In addition, E3 made an insightful suggestion when considering how experiential learning is an on-going process: “...once qualifications have been obtained the learning process should not stop there. It’s like... a test at school,

there's no point in doing the test really well if you can't actually do the subject afterwards.”

Subsequently, to develop coaching competence, perhaps reflective practice must be willingly exercised not just to overcome an obvious limitation, or just to recognise an obvious strength but on a regular basis in order to achieve regular success.

4.3 Learning through Observation

During the interviews, the idea of observational learning was highly acknowledged and identified as an influential way to positively develop as a coach at any level. Both E1 and E3 suggested in terms of gaining experience, learning through observing already established, competent coaches can be extremely beneficial. E1 suggested by watching experienced coaches, “I could replicate their session to tailor the needs of my team, and ultimately develop and improve my athletes”. This proves the worth of Wang and Straub's (2012) documentation which suggested the observation of already recognised coaches could help other coaches develop their level of expertise. So, by developing coaching knowledge through modelling recognised practitioners, a coach could view the reflections of that practitioner and ultimately increase understanding of the importance of reflection.

Again, during the exploration of experiential learning, N6 agreed with both E1 and E2, however wording his response slightly different. “It might not be experience of coaching. It might be experience of being involved in that coaching set-up, that environment and learning from more experienced people”. N6 implied merely being involved in an experienced coaching environment can improve an observing coach's effectiveness when delivering. Once more, acknowledging the recent investigation by Nash and Sproule (2011), who recognised learning from already successful coaching personnel is still seen to be an efficient way of acquiring a high level of expertise if not the best way.

Moreover, N5 suggested: "It's hard to measure your personal development sometimes and if you're the only one who's taking the session for example, possibly you don't see your own improvement". Thus, N5 proposed that if surrounded by other coaches, it will be easier to identify what the strengths and limitations of personal delivery are for a coach. Here, reflection needs to be recognised as pivotal with regards to a coach's development and delivery enhancement. To individually recognise these strengths and areas for improvement, a coach must utilise reflective practice honestly when critiquing personal delivery. N5 identified honesty when expressing his feelings on reflection as a coach. "I think honesty is massive, really crucial... you have to recognise it's not all down to the players, essentially they're doing what you tell them to do". Therefore, if a coach carries out an honest assessment of practical delivery when reflecting, weakness identification can be addressed effectively, with a view to improving future sessions for the team.

In light of this, all 6 coaches interviewed were in agreement experience-based learning through an informal coaching process is more beneficial than that of a formal coaching structure. The overall view is summed up by E1 who stated "The experiences that you acquire and learn from as a coach are more desirable than anything; as well as applying it in practice", and this is evidenced by ranging theorists, who noted the development of knowledge and practice is mainly comprised of experiences and the interpretations of them (Cushion, Armour & Jones, 2003; Gilbert & Trudel, 2005; Cushion, 2006).

4.4 Considering Effective Variables

Reflective Practice has been recognised by Cropley et al., (2010) as a way of "being", suggesting the skill of reflecting is not an overnight occurrence (p.17). Quality time must be invested and emotional intelligence involved. This literature supports the present study, promoting the necessity of examining the variables which affect a coach's choice of reflection, and the effective variables identified by the participants will be discussed in light of the aim and second objective.

4.4.1 Confidence and Decision-Making

A primary target for a coach is improving an individual or team's success (Wang & Straub, 2012). However, it could be suggested, the ability to achieve that success rests heavily on the choices made during practice. When discussing the skill of reflection with both the novice and expert coaches, it was agreed in majority that confidence is an essential part of the decision-making process. E2, E3 and N6 suggested that confidence will shape the way a coach applies practice and will shape the decisions made. This view is supported by Nash and Sproule (2011) who suggested, as success in the competitive environment becomes increasingly important, the ability to make the correct decision becomes vital. Abraham, Collins and Martindale (2006) also suggested coaching is essentially a process which relies on the coaching decisions made. Thus, it may be argued that to positively develop the decisions made by expert and novice coaches', reflective practice should assume precedence in both an informal and formal environment.

N6 stated, for him "confidence is the one". N6 continued to suggest a rationalistic viewpoint of a novice coach would include sticking to the planned session as coaches tend to feel safe in the environment they are familiar with. This promotes Vergeer and Lyle's (2009) study which identified novice coaches with minimal experience could not fully account for the consequences of their decisions made. N6's response further compliments the work done by Vegeer and Lyle (2009) implying highly experienced coaches would understand the reasons why there were limitations to the practice through reflecting upon the session. Therefore, the ability to make a 'correct' decision with a beneficial outcome highlights how confidence flowers from the stem of experience, and how engaging in reflection could improve a novice coach's awareness in decision-making. Therefore, acquiring that confidence necessary to facilitate the decision-making process could take some time. The accumulation of beneficial experience may be a result of quality time invested in utilising reflective practice and the coaching process. In turn, this may develop a coach's confidence and allow helpful, educational decisions to be made in order to assist the team/athlete(s).

N4 stated "...more experienced coaches would have more confidence... to make the correct decisions there and then". This mirrors the belief of N6, who also suggested that during a coaching session "...if I thought 'Right! I should probably change that now and don't, then I'm not affecting the session the way I should be". This however, could come down to the knowledge of reflection; how to best employ the skill to maximise personal and professional development, as well as development of the athlete or team. Thus, if utilised correctly, regularly and concisely, reflection can be seen to improve the decision-making process as suggested by E1: "...reflective practice has helped me to improve because it's provided me with competence to see where the limitations are in our practices and where the errors are made and how I can rectify that". Nevertheless, as valuably stated by N6, it is crucial to remember that sometimes it may be easy to see the positives and negatives when coaching a session, "...but if you don't consider the implications these have then is it [reflective practice] beneficial, really?"

4.5 Reflective Practice: An Introduction

This section will attempt to answer the third stated objective in light of the overall aim of the study. To reiterate, the aim of the investigation was to examine if, why and in which way reflective practice is used by expert and novice male football coaches and, whether this use has assisted their perceived development as coaches.

A recent study undertaken by Cropley, Neil, Wilson and Faull (2011) focussed on the interventions of semi-professional football coaches, and identified how the development of reflective skills had a beneficial impact on practice. A key message to support their investigation was recognised in an earlier investigation done by Cropley et al. (2010) which suggested there was a common misconception surrounding the use of reflective practice: Although people believe they are engaging in reflective practice, in many cases they are actually engaging in other cognitive modes and therefore fail to reap the recognised benefits. Thus, it could be argued a more experienced coach, in this instance an expert coach, may be able to employ reflective practice more easily in contrast to a less experienced coach, in this instance a novice.

4.5.1 Discussing Reflective Practice

When discussing the reasons behind using reflective practice and its benefits, E1 stated “I think learning through reflection on practical experience is paramount” and all participating coaches supported this view. A wholesome key point raised suggested although reflection was needed to develop a coach’s competence, sometimes recognising the issues which arise is difficult to do. In light of this, N5 declared “...I think it comes back down to the knowledge of the sport”. E1 also stated “A novice coach will be less able to apply reflective practice because they haven’t had the experience compared to an expert coach”. This supposition echoes the findings of Hanton, Cropley and Lee (2009) who suggested, for “action, reflection and learning” to arise, knowledge must be obtained and tailored for the needs of the participant or in this case team (p.518). This implies a more experienced coach with superior knowledge i.e. an expert coach, would support the widespread knowledge necessary to utilise the skill of reflection and learn from past experiences to facilitate improvement for their team. Referring back to early scholars, this also highlights the relevance of Vygotsky’s (1978) Social Development Theory where the MKO is viewed as superior due to the level of expertise held.

N4, to some extent, reinforces the statement made by E1. N4 stated: “I personally can’t say I’ve really used it myself... although, I might have done it subconsciously”. As N4 only holds a UKCC Level 1, this statement reinforces the previous identification that perhaps in the early stages of coach development, more impetus needs to be placed upon the importance of reflective practice. When considering how to build the expert coach, Nash and Sproule (2011) recognised although awareness, experience and coaching expertise were crucial for a coach’s armoury, competence does not equal effective practice. Hence, possibly stressing the significance of reflection during the first stage of coach education programmes could improve the awareness of a novice coach. This could hopefully result in an improvement of apprentice coaches’ delivery competence and highlight to them the importance of reflecting upon experiences for personal development.

4.6 Employing Reflective Practice: If, Why and How?

When discussing the use of reflection in practice, E1, E2 and E3 all stated they did use reflective practice during their coaching sessions. Schön (1983, 1987) developed a theory of reflection, known as a “reflective conversation” (Gilbert & Trudel, 2001, p.7). This conversation supported the two features of the theoretical framework which were reflecting in-action and reflecting on-action, as earlier identified (see Chapter Two). E1 stated “I use both...”, before admitting “previously I just focused on reflection on action... but now, as I’ve gained more experience and confidence I feel that reflection in action is as important, if not more important than reflection on action”. This promotes the work done by Gilbert and Trudel (2001), who suggested to mature and positively develop from experience, reflection in-action and reflection on-action must be employed in times of confusion or uncertainty. Similarly, E2 identified that both types of reflection were needed in order to achieve maximum benefits. E2 recognised that “both have their benefits”, but continued, suggesting that “...because of my experience as a coach and because I’ve coached at quite a high level now for a number of years, it’s given me the confidence to intervene in the session”. E2 is suggesting here that confidence is crucial when reflecting in-action, and this belief is evidenced by N4, who said “...my main fear is that I don’t have the experience, knowledge or the expertise to reflect in-action”. This again supports the investigation undertaken by Vegeer and Lyle (2009) who suggested decisions during practice were more regularly exercised by a coach holding high levels of experience, and could be seen more reliable than a coach with lower levels of experience.

However, E2’s thoughts contrast the views of Cropley, Hanton and Lee (2008) who advocated that time is unlikely to be an appropriate representation of experience. Perhaps suggesting experience depends more significantly on the quality time invested rather than the quantity and therefore as a coach, reflective practice must be utilised effectively to facilitate the learning process. It is also vital to apprehend that acquiring multiple experiences may not always develop coaching expertise and arguably, it is the subsequent reflection undertaken which instils knowledge.

In relation to how and why reflection was used, N4 and N5 suggested reflecting on-action was more beneficial for their personal development as a coach. N5 stated “More on-action afterwards... I can get a greater depth and understanding of what I’ve done once the event has finished”. Unsurprisingly, this statement reflects the novice status of the coach, suggesting he does not have the expertise to reflect during practice or the confidence to know what decision to make. This assumption is supported by N4, who believed he did not hold the necessary knowledge to benefit from reflective practice, and would have to wait until the post-session scenario to think about how to improve.

CHAPTER FIVE
CONCLUSION

To conclude, the common shared belief was that the coach education system helped to promote the fundamentals of football coaching and teach the basics of coaching throughout. However, as generally recognised, the courses fail to actively promote the importance reflection of practice for personal development.

Moreover, the novice coaches who actively engaged in reflective practice recognised its benefits. Although N4, N5 and N6 identified the use of Schön's (1983, 1987) reflection in-action to be helpful for improvement of personal coaching competence and team development, all three stated the preferable use of Schön's (1983, 1987) reflection on-action. It was visible reflecting post-session helped inexperienced coaches to gain an increased, in-depth understanding of certain strengths and limitations in practice. Thus, novice coaches were able to enhance their knowledge of expertise, build confidence and increase awareness of how to employ the correct decisions.

To summarise the views of the expert coaches, reflective practice was seen to help practice at any level, and therefore it could continue to assist development of competence throughout a football coaching career. One expert coach suggested his preferred use of reflection was during practice, simply due to his level of experience previously gained and the confidence it had given him with regards to his personal delivery. Yet, it was recognised that the combined use of reflective practice techniques could ensure development of coaching competence, team development and improvement of future sessions. Nevertheless, as previously stated, certain novice coach's felt the employment of immediate intervention during practice would not be personally beneficial due to the current lack of knowledge and confidence they held.

To add to already existing literature and further investigate the use of reflective practice within coaches holding differentiating experience levels, the employment of reflection within coach education could be looked at. Ultimately, as a result, this could develop novice coaching awareness and understanding of the importance of reflective practice. With reflective practice becoming increasingly recognised as an assistant to coaching delivery, perhaps other areas of interest could be further examined in order to identify the reasoning behind why expert and novice coaches reflect in different ways. Of course, the present study has attempted to state those differences, nevertheless researching the utilisation of reflective practice with in football coaches could help to develop coach's delivery and improve future coaching sessions.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
INTERVIEW GUIDE

Interview Guide:

Name: Matthew Tovey
University Number: ST10001141
Dissertation Supervisor: Dr. Kerry Harris

Cardiff School of Sport
Cardiff Metropolitan University

Interview Guide

Brief Introduction

To start, thank you for partaking in this interview and investigation.

The aim of the study is to examine if, why and in which way reflective practice is used by expert and novice football coaches and whether this use has assisted their perceived development as coaches and if so, how?

Hopefully the subsequent abundance of questions will be able to assist coaching competency, whatever level, and help clarify why reflective practice is utilised by both expert and novice coaches which can perhaps improve coaching ability. Also, the following interview may be able to stimulate ideas to benefit future research within this area of interest.

Background

1. If we could start with some background information:

So, how many years have you been coaching?

How did you initially get involved in coaching football?

What age group or groups do you currently coach?

What is the football level of the team(s) you coach?

What coaching qualifications do you currently possess?

Have you ever or do you still play football?

- To what standard?

Exploration

2. Experience and Education

To you, what defines experience for a coach? For instance;

- Qualifications?
- Practical application (taking sessions)?
- Why do you believe this?

What characteristics do you feel are vital to hold when being considered an expert coach?

- Previous experience? Confidence? Decision-making? Knowledge of the sport?

The coach education system throughout England and Wales offers a framework for inexperienced and experienced personnel as well as those who may already coach, to enhance their competency in football coaching and gain recognised qualifications. **However**, opinions differ with regards to whether this framework actually improves a coach's competency for example; variables like experience and decision-making. It has been argued experience through coaching (informal education) is more beneficial than the qualification courses being taught (formal education).

Therefore, do you believe the coach education system is useful?

- If so, why? Please elaborate...

Has the coach education system benefitted you personally?

- Confidence? Decision-making? Knowledge of the sport?
- If yes, how? Why?
- Examples?

3. Reflective Practice

Are you familiar with the term Reflective Practice (RP)?

- If yes, what is your understanding of reflection?
- If not, I will explain what RP is.

-

Reflective Practice is identifying a weakness or limitation within your coaching session, learning from what has been found, and changing to positively adapt for the future session or sessions. Ghaye and Lillyman (2000) stated reflective practice is about learning from experiences.

How do you think RP is developed?

- Through experiential evaluation?
- Honesty?
- Why do you think this is?

Do you think a coach with significantly more experience (an expert coach) could more easily employ reflective practice?

- Why do you believe this?

Are you familiar with Schön's framework of reflection?

- If not, I will explain what both reflection in and on action is.

Reflection in-action refers to immediate intervention rather than waiting until post-session to evaluate and alter a limitation which has occurred during performance.

Reflection on-action refers to waiting until the coaching session has finished before identifying the limitation that occurred.

Schön identified both types of reflection as a model to go by, in order to adapt and learn from experiences.

With reference to Schön, do you use RP?

- If not, why?
- If yes, how?
- Due to personal preference (in-action or on-action or both), why is this?

Summary

4. Concluding thoughts

Do you think RP has helped your perceived development as a football coach?

- If yes, how? And why do you think this?

What is more personally beneficial, reflecting in-action? Or reflecting on-action? Or a combination?

- If any, Why?

What do you believe is more beneficial for the expert development of a coach, coach education provision (i.e. gaining coaching badges, football levels) or learning through reflection upon practical experiences?

- And reasoning for this?

Would you agree with the statement “Coaches delivering at any level, expert or novice, need to engage in RP in order to improve the level of their delivery?”

- What are your reasons for this

APPENDIX B

Appendix B

Pilot Study:

Name: Matthew Tovey
University Number: ST10001141
Dissertation Supervisor: Dr. Kerry Harris

Cardiff School of Sport
Cardiff Metropolitan University

Interview Guide

So, how many years have you been coaching?

How did you initially get involved in coaching football?

What age group or groups do you coach?

What is the football level of the team(s) you coach?

What coaching qualifications do you currently possess?

Have you ever or do you still play football?

- What standard?

To you, what defines experience for a coach?

- Qualification
- Practical application (taking sessions)?

Do you believe in the coach education system?

- If so, why?

Has the education system benefitted your understanding or coaching?

- If yes, how?

Are you familiar with the term Reflective Practice (RP)?

Are you familiar with Schon's framework of reflection?

- If not, I will explain what both reflection in and on action is.

Do you use RP?

- If yes, with reference to Schon (1987), how?
- Due to personal choice (in-action or on-action or both), why is this?

Do you think RP has helped your perceived development as a football coach?

- If yes, how?

What is more personally beneficial, reflecting in-action? Or reflecting on-action?

- If any, Why?

What do you believe is more beneficial for the expert development of a coach, coach education provision (i.e. gaining coaching badges, football levels) or learning through reflection upon practical experiences?

APPENDIX C

Current football coaching qualifications held		UKCC: Level 1 & 2	UKCC: Level 1 & 2	UKCC: Level 1 & 2 UKCCW: UEFA 'B' (Level 3)	CSLA Leaders Award UKCC: Level 1	None	UKCC: Level 1
Football level of the team(s) being coached		Professional Academy: U13's & U15's Development	Professional Academy: U12's & U14's Development	Professional Academy: U10's - U16's Development	Recreational	Local Club Level/ Sunday league	Professional Disability team: U18's Local Club/ Sunday league
Key Themes	Categories	Expert Coach 1	Expert Coach 2	Expert Coach 3	Novice Coach 4	Novice Coach 5	Novice Coach 6
Experiential Learning		I think it's more beneficial to have subject knowledge and not necessarily qualifications. The experiences that you acquire and learn from as a coach are more desirable than anything; as well as applying it in practice.		The different situations you place yourself in... Helps you to gain ranging experience. It's vital that you face new situations, new challenges... ...once qualifications have been obtained the learning process should not stop there. It's like... a test at school, there's no point in doing the test really	...coaching the sport means I have that knowledge and the more I coach and the more I'm in that environment, the more I improve...		I'd rather be taught how to reflect and learn based on that, than be taught through a structured coach education programme.

				well if you can't actually			
	Learning	If someone		do the subject afterwards.		I think whatever	
	through Practical Application	else does a session and I watch them, I can identify the strengths and limitations of that session. I could replicate that to a better standard to improve my athletes. ...you could talk a good game, but when you're out there it's a totally different matter...		in terms of experience, most of that is going to be gained while taking sessions... I also encourage the players to reflect on their own sessions and games as well... what they've done well etc. Sometimes if you just do lots of experience I think you can lead yourself down the wrong track... You might get experience, but you're experienced in the wrong the things.		standard you're coaching, elite or novice... There's no such thing as a perfect session.	

	<p>Learning through Observation</p>	<p>Through observing competent coaches, I could replicate their session to tailor the needs of my team, and ultimately develop and improve my athletes.</p> <p>I think reflective practice is developed through personal experiences in practice and I feel that if I was watching another coach, then I would be looking at reflective practice for myself as well.</p>		<p>From an experience point of view... observing other peoples sessions can be extremely beneficial, not just taking your own.</p> <p>...if you coach on your own you're not necessarily going to be able to see other people's sessions, so you're not going to improve yourself.</p>		<p>Its hard to measure your personal development sometimes and if you're the only one who's taking the session for example, possibly you don't see your own improvement.</p>	<p>It might not be experience <i>of</i> coaching. It might be experience of being involved in that coaching set-up, that environment and learning from more experienced people. But conversely, if you had been in a club which maybe wasn't so great, the coaches might not modify limitations, so when you come to coach, you ...might not really change it. So just merging into your surroundings and absorbing their values.</p>
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<p>Utilising Reflective Practice</p>		<p>A novice coach will be less able to apply reflective practice because they haven't had the experience compared to an expert coach.</p> <p>The tool of reflective practice has helped me to improve because it's provided me with competence to see where the limitations are in our practices and where the errors are made and how I can rectify that.</p> <p>I think learning through reflection on practical experience is paramount.</p>	<p>You need experience... without experience you wouldn't know what certain things to look at.</p> <p>For example, id doing a crossing session and they score 8/10 chances from those crosses, a novice coach might say 'Yes, great session.' However, I'm looking at those two crosses we've missed and seeing how we can improve them so we're scoring 10/10.</p> <p>When reflecting on-action, I always put improvements down; I think that's vital for</p>	<p>I use reflection both for myself, on how a session went and how I can improve myself... not necessarily formally, sometimes it'll just be a review in my head...</p> <p>Sometimes the harder ones are to recognise that 'Yes, that actually went well, so we'll do that again'.</p> <p>I know all coaches don't do it... it can be laziness I think.</p> <p>...to get to a higher level you've got to reflect more... doing more observations of other people... that's where you</p>	<p>I personally can't say I've really used it myself... Although, I might have done it subconsciously.</p> <p>Mainly, because it's kids I am coaching... I'm just trying to help them to continue playing the sport.</p>	<p>You'll have good experiences and bad ones and if you're able to pick out and understand why they went well or why they went particularly badly, obviously you're going to build on your experiences and get better, hopefully.</p> <p>I think honest is massive, really crucial... you have to recognise it's not all down to the players, essentially they're doing what you tell them to do.</p> <p>I don't think reflecting in-action is something you do all the time, consciously.</p> <p>I don't think confidence is</p>	<p>It's easy to look at the positives and negatives in coaching, but if you don't consider the implications these have, then is it beneficial, really?</p> <p>If a coach wants to improve the level of their delivery they would have to reflect ...it just becomes more essential depending on where you're coaching and how important you perceive the coaching environment you're in to be.</p>
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		<p>Either a session goes really badly or really positively; it doesn't really matter, but unless you learn from those mistakes you won't be able to adapt it if it comes up again.</p>	<p>reflection.</p> <p>I think it's just as easy for a novice to reflect as well as an expert coach... but they could be different reflections. Novice – the way he addresses the participants, expert – technical aspects of a progression. I feel it's developed me better as a coach and as a person as well.</p> <p>I think definitely possessing the ability to reflect on your own experiences is vital, otherwise you won't be able to improve.</p>	<p>gain your experience as well.</p> <p>In terms of experience, an expert coach would know what's going right and wrong from before, having that bank of knowledge.</p> <p>Discuss things with other expert coaches. Sometimes I'll write it down: for the coach education courses you've got to write them down, sometimes.</p>		<p>the issue, I think it comes back down to the knowledge of the sport. I was walking home thinking</p> <p>"Hmm, that didn't go too well"...I think there is scope in reflecting straight after, when the emotions are fresh and you have a clear recollection of what happened</p> <p>...once you've finished and deconstruct it and think "Could I have handled that better?"... Then come up with a plan of how you're then going to deal with that next time.</p> <p>If you reflect effectively, then</p>	
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						hopefully, as a result your session is going to run smoother.	
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	<p>Personal Philosophy</p>			<p>The key part of this is being able to reflect honestly.</p> <p>...what's working right, because that's important as well, rather than just slating yourself all the time.</p>		<p>If you're able to look honestly and inwardly at yourself I don't think employing reflective practice necessarily comes down to your status as a coach. It's more knowing yourself.</p> <p>You've got to do it (reflect) properly and if you're not honest with yourself... you're going to end up blaming others.</p> <p>If you reflect in the right way and you can look at yourself critically and think "Could I have done this better?" then yes, it's really useful.</p>	<p>I think the development of it (reflective practice) is first of all down to the individual.</p> <p>Your session plan shouldn't be too rigid.</p>
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	<p>Personal Preference</p>	<p>I use both, but previously I just focused on reflection <u>on</u> action, which is after the session, but now, as I've gained more experience and confidence I feel that reflection <u>in</u> action is as important, if not more important than reflection on action.</p> <p>During the session, if it was needed I would use reflection in action, but I would always consistently use reflection on action in evaluating a session after the session has finished and focus on the limitations of the practice.</p>	<p>Each session I always reflect on what's gone well, what participants have struggled with... If I repeat the session, I look at my notes and plan around that.</p> <p>Throughout the session as well, if participants are struggling.</p> <p>Both have their benefits, but because of my experience as a coach and because I've coached at quite a high level now for a number of years, it's given me the confidence to intervene in the session.</p>	<p>I think they're both important, but I think they're used for different things.</p> <p>I think to reflect in-action, you've got to be confident... you've got to know what you're on about... if you don't have the experience, you can't do it.</p> <p>To be a good or better coach, you've got to be able to do it in-action... I think in-action is where you're pushing yourself.</p> <p>To develop me, over a longer term – on-action; so after the event is definitely more</p>	<p>Personally I don't feel I have the necessary experience to use reflective practice in a beneficial way, really.</p> <p>...I'd have to wait until the end of the session and think about... how I could improve. That's how I'd reflect and how I'd adapt.</p> <p>I do reflect on action... I don't think I have the confidence that expert coaches would have to stop and make the correct decision there and then.</p> <p>...my main fear is that I don't have the experience, knowledge or the expertise to reflect in-action.</p>	<p>More on-action afterwards... I can get a greater depth and understanding of what I've done once the event has finished.</p> <p>...the reason I don't act on my subconscious reflection-in-action is because I don't know how too.</p>	<p>I think people reflect more without writing anything down, they think about it on their way home... "What could I have done better?"</p> <p>For me reflecting at the time is important.</p> <p>I'm a massive believer of changing it at the time.</p> <p>...I would say 'in' is more important because you can have an immediate effect at the time.</p>
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				important... you can go into more detail. ...In-action is more of an emergency method...			
The Coach/Athlete Relationship		With the qualifications I've attained, the players respect me and the practices that I apply in the session are beneficial for them.	If it is clear the athletes don't like the coach, it is very difficult to get your point across. They trust me... they know how I go about things. The more positive the coach/athlete relationship is... the more positively the athletes are going to develop.		The higher you get, so when considering an expert coach, interpersonal skills I feel are important to enhance the quality of interaction.	...you have to understand the players collectively and as individuals I think, which is a massive part of coaching. By reflecting you become more self-aware of the things you do; the warm- ups, the way you act with your athletes, the way you talk to them, the way you deal with discipline.	

<p>Effective Variables</p>	<p>Essential characteristics</p>		<p>...because the participants acknowledge my experience and my ability to coach, they trust my decisions.</p>	<p>The UKCCW Level 3 stimulates more ideas about trying different things... therefore you feel you have more in your personal armoury of what to coach, that's going to increase your confidence.</p> <p>I wouldn't really say the coach education system has helped my decision-making too much, that's probably come through experience...</p>	<p>For an expert coach delivering at a high level, the personalities of the players change, they are a lot higher maintenance... you're going to have to be more confident than you would have to be with kids.</p> <p>As an expert coach, you're trying to improve your professional athletes. So you need to have confidence in yourself and you need to put that across to the players so they have the confidence in you to help them improve.</p> <p>...more experienced coaches would have more confidence... to make decisions there and then.</p>	<p>If you change positively for future sessions... the guys you're coaching are going to respond a bit better and buy into what you're doing... as a result your confidence grows.</p>	<p>Confidence is the one, I think a rationalistic view would be: This is my session. Let's stick to it. This is what I've planned. You feel safe in the environment. However, I think the best coaches will really notice what's going wrong... It comes with experience and knowledge.</p> <p>If I thought 'Right! I should probably change that now' and don't, then I'm not affecting the practice the way I should be. Why didn't I do it there and then, if I knew? Why wait?</p>
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		I think subject knowledge is essential.	<p>I'd say experience... the participants have that confidence in you that you know what you're talking about. If they listen to me for example, they will improve.</p> <p>Also, confidence in what you're saying. By instilling confidence into your participants, that will help you to be a better coach.</p>		<p>Although qualifications will get you so far, I think practical experience is key.</p> <p>Mainly knowledge of the sport... the better the coach they are is mainly down to experience.</p> <p>Interpersonal skills... Social interaction.</p>	In terms of experience, obviously you learn from pretty much every coaching session you have, every training session, every game you're involved in.	<p>How many years you've actually been coaching for... it's got to be the quality of those years.</p> <p>I think you've got to make the correct decisions. It's as simple as that.</p> <p>Consistent</p>
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<p>Exploring Coach Education</p>		<p>I do believe that the coach education system is beneficial, to a degree, but I still feel, if you don't have the experience of what coaching entails during the practice, then you'll never be able to adapt or make the correct decision...</p> <p>I don't think the coach education courses, especially the FA Level 1, wholesomely apply to a real coaching setting.</p>	<p>Level 1 gives you a broad understanding of coaching and how to take a single session maybe. But doesn't provide much experience.</p> <p>The coaching badge level 2 was based on 2 separate workshops over two days, with a tutor teaching us how to coach and develop our basic knowledge we learned from level 1.</p> <p>They sent us away and we carried out a 6 weeks session plan, taking 12 sessions with 1 particular team. This enabled us to gain vast experience on</p>	<p>...just give you recognition ...to show other people.</p> <p>Level 3 definitely increases your knowledge of the sport. Level 1 and 2 were, sort of, what I already knew.</p> <p>When you do your coaching badges, particularly the Welsh FA, they use the ODFDR technique, so you Observe what's going wrong, then Diagnose the issue, those are the two reflecting parts.</p>	<p>I have found the coach education system useful, to an extent. As a coach you need the knowledge of the sport, the basics to be able to coach it.</p>	<p>Certain knowledge and expertise, whether that be technically or tactically, makes you a grade above a coach who perhaps does not possess those qualities.</p> <p>In terms of do I think it's going to better me as a coach, I think undoubtedly it will, yes. Coaching badges give you that football expertise, if you like... your bread-and-butter... which provides a base for your knowledge and understanding on a football level. But I think the reflection... compliments the football qualifications. I don't think you can have one or</p>	<p>A bit rigid</p> <p>...if you apply for a job, Level 1 versus UEFA "B", UEFA "B" is probably going to be in better stead. But they might not be a better coach, by any stretch of the imagination.</p> <p>I don't think it has benefitted me at all.</p> <p>It's an idiot-proof crash course in how to do passing, dribbling, turning, and shooting... It's a far cry from the actual reality of what you would do.</p> <p>I felt that from experience I'd done more complex drills which I could replicate than what they taught me on that</p>
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			<p>how to develop specific sessions for the needs of the participant.</p> <p>Useful... but not in terms of developing necessary experience.</p>			the other.	course.
	<p>Qualifications: Are they necessary?</p>	<p>They provide a sort of framework, yes but I don't feel qualifications necessarily help to enhance experience as a coach.</p> <p>I wouldn't say the FA Level 1 has, because it was all about encouragement and enthusiasm and motivation for the players to learn the fundamental skills; but</p>	<p>Having a higher level of coaching qualification allows you to gain more experience in the higher skilled areas of the sport.</p> <p>They enabled me to get the Academy job, which allowed me to gain that valuable experience. My employers therefore recognised I was a competent coach.</p>	<p>...you know someone else has said you are good enough to coach. It gives you extra confidence and proper belief.</p>	<p>The level 1 qualification is maybe more important for people who don't participate in football as a sport, whereas for people who actively participate in the sport it's not essential.</p>	<p>I think you need a certain degree of knowledge to be able to operate within your environment... in terms of getting that expertise, in order to be a competent coach, you've got to have a certain base level.</p> <p>Important, but not essential.</p>	<p>I think it's useful... to enhance content knowledge.</p> <p>On-the-job experience counts for a lot more.</p>

		because I've stepped away from the younger age groups and now focus on the academy side, it focuses on more functional practices and more on the principles of play, which are adapted to the Level 2.	Level 2 makes you more independent... sorts the men from the boys.				
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