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COACH LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOUR AND TEAM COHESION IN A UNIVERSITY NETBALL TEAM
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ii) Abstract

The purpose of the current longitudinal study was to investigate team cohesion in a female University netball team, specifically in relation to coach leadership behaviour. The participants included three female players (Mean age: 20, Standard Deviation: 1) and a female coach (Age: 31). Semi-structured interviews were used over a nine week period during the competitive British Universities and Colleges (BUCS) season. The analyses indicated that player and coach perception of team cohesion was high and maintained throughout the respective time period. Emerging themes indicated that awareness and attainment of a common goal, adopting a task and social-focus, and the perceived existence of a relationship between performance and cohesion all contributed to the high levels of cohesion that were experienced by players and the coach. In addition, an important relationship between coach and players was reported and leadership behaviour varied with time. Players generally preferred high levels of training and instruction and democratic style in coach behaviour. Additionally, differences were apparent between the coach and players; the players suggested that they needed direction and focus from the coach throughout the three time phases, whereas the coach believed she was being pushed out of the group due to the high levels of cohesion present within the team during the second time phase. The current study highlighted a number of important conceptual aspects that have been consistent across the cohesion literature and important for applied practitioners alike in order to develop and maintain cohesion over time.
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION
1.0 Introduction

Historically, cohesion has been identified as the most important small group variable (Golembieski, 1962; Lott and Lott, 1965, cited in Carron and Brawley, p 89). Often the terms cohesion or cohesiveness are used to describe a group ‘in which all the members of the group work together for a common goal, or one where everybody is ready to take responsibility for group chores (Cartwright, 1968, p70 cited in Cartwright and Zander, 1968). It is important to address the connection between leadership and group cohesion as research has suggested that both the leader’s behaviour and the decision style can affect the development of cohesion (Paskevich et al, 2001). In addition to this, Terry (1984) suggested that personality and leadership of a coach has an important influence on both the team and individual athlete; however within the current literature the coach’s style of leadership has not been investigated in relation to a teams cohesion levels.

Therefore, it is important to consider the way in which coaching leadership behaviour can have an affect on a team and consequently how the team becomes cohesive and maintains cohesiveness. The link between cohesion and coach leadership behaviours has been illustrated by a number of researchers (Carron, 1978; Carron and Chelladurai, 1981a; Chelladurai, 1984a; 1984b, Gardner, Shields, Bredemeier and Bostrum, 1996; Schriesheim, 1980; Spink and Carron, 1994; Westre and Weiss, 1991; Widmeyer, Carron and Brawley, 1993). It is apparent that both aspects are important to the development of a group and the way in which a coach can promote high levels of cohesion can have a positive effect on the way a group operates together.
There a number of researchers that have investigated the relationship between team cohesion and leadership in various sport settings; findings showed that higher levels of training and instruction behaviour, social support, positive feedback and a democratic style were associated with higher levels of task cohesion in the players (Westre and Weiss, 1991; Kozub, 1993). Whereas other researchers later discovered that athletes with more involvement in the goal setting process had a stronger concept of task and social cohesion (Brawley, Carron and Widmeyer, 1993).

The importance of studying the relationship between leadership behaviors and group cohesion has been highlighted in the literature (e.g., Hacker and Williams, 1982; Patterson, Carron and Loughead, 2005). Specifically, group cohesion has been identified as an important influence on group performance and so those responsible for the group (i.e., leaders) become an important consideration. Indeed, leadership has been reported to be an important antecedent of cohesion as “the coach is probably in the best position to influence change in team cohesion” (Williams, 1993, p120). However, the relationship between leadership factors and team cohesion has received little empirical attention.

Therefore, the purpose of the current study was to examine coach leadership behaviours and its affect on team cohesion in a university netball setting. A substantial amount of pressure and demands have been placed on the team who train once a week together and play matches twice a week, other commitments outside netball have influenced this since the majority of the team train with the Welsh Academy. The coach and players were involved in three in-depth interviews over a period of nine weeks during the season.
3.0 Methodology

Loughead and Hardy (2006) reported that team cohesion research has focused mainly on a scientific (quantitatively) paradigm, and that the use of qualitative investigative methods would provide novel insights. Recent research within the area of team cohesion has employed qualitative methods such as focus groups and interviews to better understand the team building process from the coach (Bloom et al, 2003) and athlete perspectives (Stevens and Bloom, 2003). The current study therefore adopted a qualitative approach to data collection in order to gain a deep understanding of the concept of cohesion in relation to coaches and players.

3.1 Participants

Participants were three female players (n=3, Mean age:20, Standard deviation: 1) and a female coach (n=1, Age: 31) who represented the University of Wales, Institute Cardiff (UWIC) first team during the 2008/2009 British University College Sports (BUCS) season. The players were chosen due to their knowledge and understanding of netball and their playing experience. The players play for the Super League Team Celtic Dragons, Wales U21’s, and two players represent Wales’ senior squad and one has participated in the World Youth Championships.

The coach had a vast amount of experience as a player; playing for Wales from U16 through to U21’s as captain and then gained 26 Welsh caps and played in European, Commonwealth and World Championships. Previously she was a coach of a university netball club for four
seasons, and then became a player-coach for a team in Cardiff netball league before becoming coach for Wales U17’s. Currently, she is Head Coach of a netball academy in Bridgend, Wales.

3.2 Interviews

Semi structured interviews allowed participants to talk about their personal experiences and to further elaborate on important areas of cohesion (Gratton and Jones, 2004). There are several strengths of the semi structured interview as it facilitates a strong element of discovery, while its structured focus allows an analysis in terms of commonalities, the amount of flexibility the interviewer has to observe the subject and the interviewer is able to control the sequence of the items (Gillham, 2005; Burns, 2000). Indeed, Gillham (2005, p70) has argued that the semi structured interview is the ‘most important way of conducting research interview because of its flexibility balanced by structure and the quality of data obtained’.

Patton (2002, p343) has suggested ‘an interview guide is prepared to ensure the basic lines of inquiry are pursued with each person interviewed’ which allows the interviewer to make use the limited time available during an interview situation. The interview guide was based on a critical review of the cohesion literature and was structured into three sections. The sections within the interview were based on group cohesion where the cohesion levels within the team were discussed as well as the influences this had, the cohesion and performance relationship as researchers (Paskevich et al, 2001) believe that team cohesion is related to performance success. The third section was based on leadership and player’s experiences were discussed
as leaders work through interpersonal relationships and by providing direction, goals and structure to their team (Weinburg and Gould, 2003, p203). (See Appendix A).

The questions within each interview were broad, which therefore allowed the players and coach to discuss their own opinions on the topic areas, that kept in line with Fetterman (1989, p130) who stated ‘extremely general statements are best’. Once the questions had been finalised a pilot study was conducted. Gratton et al., (2004, p 127) suggested ‘your pilot study should be carried out in the conditions as close to the main survey [interview], and with similar a sample group as possible’. Therefore the researcher used and practiced with the equipment (digital dictaphone) prior to interviewing the chosen participants for the study.

Although the questions were suitable within the interview guide, it was decided additional probes were to be used ‘to deepen the response to a question, increase the richness and depth of responses and give cues to the interviewee that is desired’ (Patton, 2002, p272). Therefore from conducting the pilot study, the researcher knew what to look for in the interview and listened carefully to what was said and not said which aided the process of creating additional probes within the interview guide (Patton, 2002).

3.3 Procedures

The researcher already had a position within the club and Gratton and Jones (2004, p178) have emphasized within their research that ‘time is needed to gain access, develop trust with those being studied, and to develop an understanding of what is really going on within the
group’, and this aspect has been achieved through personal experiences as a player within the squad which occurred after the author’s first season playing netball at UWIC.

The participants were contacted prior to commencing the study in the training session a week before and the participants’ contact numbers were noted for contact purposes. Informal conversations prior to each interview took place so that each participant was aware of the intention of the study, in addition they were informed that all information within the interview would be confidential as pseudonyms were used to avoid naming subjects. Therefore each of the participants signed a consent form to keep confidentiality upheld throughout the investigation; in addition it was evident that the participants were compliant with the study (see Appendix B). As a result, it was anticipated that by maintaining confidentiality, the players and coach would provide significant data regarding the research area when they were interviewed, since the situation was made clear and the participants were informed and consented in taking part (Burns, 2000). Furthermore, the participants were made aware that they were free to withdraw from the investigation at any time, did not have to answer any questions and were able to stop the interview if they wished to do so.

Once the pilot study was completed with one of the participants, it was possible to change and validate the interview guide although this was not necessary as there were no issues with the chosen questions and content within the interview guide. Therefore it was possible to start interviewing almost immediately which improved the validity of the investigation since it was essential the team had not already become too cohesive.
All of the participants were made aware of the role of the researcher and were fully informed in relation to all of the research that was carried out. The data was collected using semi-structured interviews completed over a nine week period of the season. Each participant had an interview every three weeks ranging from thirty to fifty minutes long within a few days of matches and training. The interviews took place in an office on the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff campus since this upheld the clarity of the interview being recorded and avoided distractions. Each interview was transcribed and analysed so that themes between the players and coach could be established.

3.4 Data Analysis

The analysis comprised of analysing interviews over a period of nine weeks to account for the temporal aspect of cohesion. Corbin and Strauss (1990, p795) stressed that ‘the technique of interviewing is a core data collection procedure within qualitative inquiry in sport’, which is therefore why it was used within this study. Once the data had been transcribed, content analysis was used to ensure that ‘coherent and important examples, themes and patterns emerged from the data’ (Patton, 1987, p149).

The analysis adopted an inductive approach although underpinned by a deductive framework. Inductive analysis helps to discover patterns, themes and categories in the data through the interaction with the data. Deductive analysis enables the examination of data according to an existing framework (Patton, 2002). Therefore in the current study, the interview guide was developed as a result of an understanding of the cohesion and leadership literature (i.e.: deductive) and new patterns and themes and understanding of these were examined in
relation to the interviews (i.e.: inductive). Once this process had been completed the interviews were coded, Miles and Huberman (1984, p63) stated ‘coding is not something one does to get data ready for analysis, but something that drives ongoing data collection. It is in short, a form on continuing analyses’. Charmaz (2006, p 46) suggested that ‘coding is the pivotal link between collecting data and developing an emergent theory to explain the data’.

Through coding is possible to define what is happening in the data. Consequently, ‘line by line’ (Glaser, 1978) coding was carried out with all of the interviews, and themes began to emerge between the players and coach in relation to the previous literature on cohesion and leadership; Glaser and Strauss (1967) stressed that in most cases, theory emerges from the data within interviews due to the questions that have been asked and this was termed as grounded theory. With reference to this finding, ‘grounded theory seeks not only to uncover relevant conditions, but also to determine how the actors respond to changing conditions and to the consequences of their actions. It is the researcher’s responsibility to catch this interplay’ (Corbin and Strauss, 1990, p5). Once the relationship between the previous literature had been addressed in relation to the categories and patterns evident within the data, the researcher was able to evaluate the plausibility of the hypotheses, which could be tested against further data’ (Burns, 2000, p434) on coach leadership behaviors and team cohesion.

3.5 Reliability and Validity

The access that has been gained has facilitated the opportunity to acquire a comprehensive understanding of the positives and negatives of the present situation, therefore making reliable and valid information available. Due to the pre existing position within the squad
prior to the research process allowed a comprehensive understanding of the particular netball squad which would have been unknown to researchers who were not part of the club itself; therefore it was possible to gain an insight into the relationships within the club which was considered to be a vital part of the research process.

3.51 Reliability

Gratton and Jones (2004, p85) stated that ‘reliability generally refers to the consistency of the results obtained’, therefore to maintain reliability within this study a set of guidelines were followed. Subject bias, where participants respond as they think the researcher wants them to answer, in other words trying to provide the correct answer however reminding the respondents that there is no right or wrong answer is imperative (Gratton et al., 2004); this was a concern in relation to reliability. In addition to this, the research was carried out from a player’s perspective rather than a researcher coming in and conducting the investigation, as the researcher was already established within the university netball club.

To uphold reliability, the anonymity in the participants responses within the interviews was stressed therefore the participants were able to give their true responses; thus the interview guide enhanced the consistency across the participants whilst also allowing the researcher the flexibility to address participants as individual cases. Therefore the interview guide allows the interviewer to capture how those being interviewed view their world and to capture the complexity of their individual perceptions and experiences (Patton, 2002). Furthermore, this approach increased the comprehensiveness of the data and made the data collection systematic (Patton, 2002) which upheld the reliability of the current study.
Reliability and validity are two major issues in the measurement and testing of a question and as ‘these are often used to assess how ‘truthful’ a piece of research actually is’ (p.85). When considering the reliability of research performed in sport one cannot predict whether X will always caused Y as unlike the subject matter of the natural sciences – we all have, to differing extents, freedom to act in a number of different ways’(Gratton and Jones, 2004 p19). This statement is relevant to this research area as the views under investigation have been measured using ‘words, statements and other non numerical methods of the participant’ (Gratton and Jones, 2004). Therefore within this investigation due to the lack of a quantifiable approach it can bring up issues with reliability and validity.

3.52 Validity

Validity refers to the extent to which ‘the data accurately reflects the phenomenon under study’ (Brewer, 2000, p46) and that the data is collected using an appropriate method relevant to the study. Two suggestions have been made from Dean and Whyte (1978) to maximize the validity of the data obtained from an interview; ‘first it is important to ensure that the subject is aware of the confidentiality of the interview, and secondly that it is generally a good idea to structure the interview so that the range of questions may be asked on any areas that may cause concern in terms of validity’ (cited in Gratton and Jones, 2004, p151), and both of these were known to the researcher prior to the interviews. The validity of the study was maintained by a process of member checking (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) as this contributed to the trustworthiness of the data and maintained that the transcription reflected what was said within each interview. Therefore after each interview was completed the transcription was given back to the interviewee to read and check on the accuracy of the
recording. It was also offered to the interviewee that any information within the transcription could be removed prior to the data being analysed.

3.6  

Aim of Study

The purpose of this study was to further examine the relationship between coach leadership behaviours and team cohesion but in a different sport setting; a university netball team. Once the data had been analysed it was possible to provide an underlying reason for the changes in opinion of coach leadership behaviours and team cohesion (if they occurred) over the season. The outcome of the study will provide greater insight into the understanding of coach leadership behaviours and its effect on team cohesion within a university netball team when using a qualitative method.
CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION
5.0 Conclusion

The results from this study add support to the notion that there is a relationship between coach leadership behaviour and team cohesion. It was apparent within the current longitudinal study that a team who possessed high levels of cohesion throughout the season had a high level of dependency on the coach. This supported previous findings suggesting that coach leadership behaviours have an impact on team cohesion levels (Carron and Hausenblas, 1998). However, it also emerged that team cohesion influenced coach leadership behaviours. Players preferred autocratic behaviour in relation to task cohesion and to be coached with high levels of training and instruction, democratic behaviour, and provision of social support. In addition, it was perceived that the coach became more effective over the season as awareness of these aspects were further developed to suit the player’s needs.
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APPENDIX A – Interview Guides (1, 2 and 3) for coach and player

Player (1)

Participant #: Name: Age: Date: Start time: Finish time:

Section 1: Introduction (not recorded)

Hello, I’m Alexandra Newman and I am a third year student at the Cardiff School of Sport at the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff, and thank you for agreeing to take part in this interview.

In connection with this interview, I am aiming to get a detailed understanding of your opinion on your coach’s leadership style and whether you think team cohesion within your netball team has been affected by (both positively and negatively) a certain type of coaching behaviour. An additional reason is for me to gain further knowledge about coaching leadership behaviours and team cohesion, as this investigation will either support or refute the notion that coaching leadership behaviours have an affect on team cohesion in netball, since Carron (1982) introduced a general conceptual system for cohesiveness in sports teams. This model identified the antecedents and consequences of cohesion. The antecedents included environmental, personal, leadership and team factors. The dimensions related to leadership behaviors included leader behavior, leadership style, coach/athlete personal relationship. According to Carron’s model, coach/athlete relationships are a critical link to perceptions of team cohesion.

The information gained from this study will be used to further examine the relationship of leadership coaching behaviours and its affects on team cohesion. The source of this information will be kept confidential even though I may use direct quotes from it. I am using a digital recorder in order to record the interview and to retain accurate information after the interview has finished. I will only be using the recordings to transcribe your interview.

By participating in my study, you must remember that you retain the right to withdraw from this investigation at any time, and you may choose not to answer any questions or stop the interview at any time. I must make you aware that there are no right or wrong answers to the questions that I ask throughout the interview. The purpose of this interview is further examine the relationship between coach leadership behaviours and team cohesion in netball, for this reason I would really appreciate it if you could take your time in answering the questions, and if you do not understand what the question is asking, then please let me know and I can make it clearer. If, however you choose not to answer a question I will simply move onto the next question. It would be most beneficial to my investigation if you could
answer the questions as honestly as possible and the more information you can give me the better.

I am open to questions throughout the interview and I will be happy to answer them as best as I can. The interview is made up of several different sections relating to different coaching leadership behaviours and team cohesion. When the interview is complete, you will have the opportunity to add any further information that you think is relevant and did not include in the interview.

(Recorded)

Do you have any questions about what we have already spoken about? If you do not have any questions then we have proceed with the interview. As you can see from the interview guide, the interview comprises of three sections. The first section is on group cohesion, second on the cohesion – performance relationship, third on leadership. At the end of the interview, there will be an opportunity for you to add anything that you felt was important and not covered in the interview.

Outline the coach’s opinion on team cohesion (both task and social) and the reasons why this has occurred.

**Demographic information**

Before we start with the main sections on cohesion and leadership, I’d like to ask you a few questions about your playing and coaching background if that’s okay?

- How many years did you spend as a player and can you just give me a brief description of your playing career to date?
- When did you actually start to think about coaching?
  Probe: Was there any reason in particular why you went into coaching?
- Can you give me a brief description of your coaching background and your experience as a coach?
  Probe: How long have you been a coach?
- How many hours per week would you say are committed to coaching?
  Probe: Would you describe yourself as a full-time coach or something else (for example a lecturer)?

**Group Cohesion:**

Okay that’s great. Now that we have spoken about some background issues I would like to start to ask some questions in relation to the aspects of cohesion within the team you are coaching at the moment.

- Okay to start, how would you define cohesion?
Probe: Why do you think of cohesion as this?
Probe: Did you understand cohesion and its importance when you were a player?
Probe: Do you perceive cohesion differently now that you are a coach
Probe: If yes, why?

Read: Okay thanks for that, you have highlighted some important aspects of cohesion. I’d just like to read you some information from the literature to help clarify some of these aspects that you have mentioned:

Cohesion is multidimensional in its nature, and in relation to Carron’s conceptual model (1982) there are a number of different factors that can affect cohesion (for example personal and situational factors), and we will be discussing these in further detail later on in the interview.

*The definition of cohesion – ‘a dynamic process that is reflected in the tendency of a group to stick together and remain united in the pursuit of its instrumental objectives and/or for the satisfaction of member affective needs’ (Carron et al, 1998, p213)*

- How do you think the cohesion of your team is affected?
  Probe: Why do you think cohesion is affected in this way – can you provide me with some examples of this?
  Probe: If factors (i.e. personal, leadership etc) are not identified start to probe on these.

- What are the goals of your team at the moment?
  Probe: How are these goals set? Can you give me a couple of examples how goals are set from an individual and group perspective?
  Probe: Do you think that the individuals and team are committed to these goals?
  Probe: How do you know this?
  Probe: Why do you think the team wants to achieve them?

- Can you give me an example (or examples) of how cohesion is developed in your team?
  Probe: Are there any reasons why you think this?
  Probe: How do you know if your team is cohesive or not?

- (If different to the above) Can you give me an example of how you develop cohesion as an individual?
  Probe:

- Do you think you play an important role as the coach in enhancing cohesion within the team?
  Probe: Why do you think this and how do you know this?
  Probe: Would you consider the team to be compatible with you as the coach?
• Can you give me a brief description of what happens straight after a training session (as an individual and as a team)

• Same as above but for a competitive match
  Probe: Do you analyse the game or next week’s training?

• Can you describe your relationship with the team/individual members please?
  Probe: Do you integrate socially? Why? Why (if not)?

• When a member of your team is unhappy with her performance in training/match, how do you support her? Can you give me some specific example?
  Probe: As a team do you discuss training and matches analytically?
  Probe: How is the problem addressed when there is a problem in the team? Can you provide me with examples?

• When you loose a match who takes responsibility for your loss?
  Probe: Why is this?
  Probe: Do you think anyone is particular is responsible. Probes- team, coach, both, players?

• What do you think cohesion is influenced by?
  Probe: Would you say that everyone has a role to play in relation to cohesion within the team - player, coach, both, environmental/personal/leadership factors?

• How do you perceive cohesion in your team?
  Probe: Do you think cohesion within the team is important – or does is depend on the task?
  Probe: Would you consider the team to be close friends – freshers and third years?

**Cohesion-Performance relationship:**

Read:
Cohesion and performance have a complex relationship. Several researchers (Paskevich et al, 2001) believe that team cohesion is related to performance success. Therefore, in this next section, I would like to ask you a few questions relating to the team cohesion – performance relationship.

• Can you explain to me whether you think your coaching is having a positive/negative effect on cohesion and performance?
  Probe: Are there any reasons why you think this?
  Probe: Can you give me a positive/negative example?

• Can you describe for me what you think affects performance?
  Probe: Why do you think cohesion changes over time?
  Probe: Do you think it depends on the outcome of a game, can you give me
examples of this?

- Could you tell me why increased levels of cohesion in your team can lead to increased levels of performance?
  Probe: Are there any reasons why you think this, if so what are they?
  Probe: Can you give examples of this occurring in your team?
  Probe: Do you have a different opinion on cohesion-performance relationship, if so can you describe for me what this is?

- Can you tell me in your opinion whether you think performance has a stronger effect on cohesion or that cohesion has on performance, if so why do you think this?
  Probe: What are your reasons for this?
  Probe: Can you give some examples of this in your team

- Can you describe for me why you think with increased levels of team cohesion it increases team success?
  Probe: Can you give me some examples of this in your team?
  Probe: Do you not think it has an effect on success within the team, if so why do you believe this?

- How do you think that cohesion can have a negative effect on performance?
  Probe: Why do you think this?
  Probe: Are there any sport specific examples you can think of?

Leadership:

I now want to explore your experiences that you have had as a coach as research has suggested that leaders work through interpersonal relationships and by providing direction, goals and structure to their team (Weinberg and Gould, 2003, p203)

- How would you define leadership?
  Probe: Why do you think of leadership as this?
  Probe: Did you understand leadership and its importance when you were a player?
  Probe: Do you perceive leadership differently now that you are a coach?
  Probe: If yes, why

Read: Thank you. Now that we have established you definition of leadership I’d like to just read you some information from the literature to help clarify some of these aspects that you have mentioned.

Leadership can be defined as a purpose whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal (Northouse, 2001, p. 3)

Many coaches lead their team in a style that they think is best. It is important for coaches to understand player’s needs and wants to improve athlete satisfaction. (Reimer and Chellandurai, 1998)
- Are you in agreement with the above definition, if so why?
  Probe: If no, why do you not agree?
  Probe: Can you give me some examples of when this has occurred when coaching?

- What is your role as a coach?
  Probe: Can you give me some examples of your role throughout a typical week as a coach?
  Probe: Same as above but for a match day.

- What coaching style do you use?
  Probe: In relation to your coaching style, do you just use one style or a combination of two or three? (autocratic, democratic, submissive) Do you integrate the styles together?
  Probe: Do you have a preferred leadership behaviour?

- Do you have a coaching philosophy?
  Probe: What is your coaching philosophy – explain?
  Probe: What are your major objectives, beliefs and principles – what do you want to achieve?

- Can you describe to me how you adapt your coaching style for varying abilities/personalities within the team?
  Probe: How do you adapt your coaching style?
  Probe: What are your reasons for doing this?

The type of leadership behavior displayed by the coach can have a significant effect on the performance and psychological well being of the athlete (Horn, 2002)

- The behavior of a coach can have an effect on the performance and self worth of the athlete.
  Probe: Do you agree with this?
  Probe: Can you give me examples of this?

It has been suggested that there is some importance when studying the relationship between leadership and coaching behaviors and team cohesion, since cohesion is an important influence on performance, and secondly when comparing the antecedents to team cohesion, leadership is possibly the most important as Williams (1993) noted ‘the coach is probably in the best position to influence change in team cohesion’. (Carron et al, 1985)

- Some of the research has suggested that the coach has a direct influence on changing team cohesion, do you agree with this?
  Probe: If agree, can you elaborate on this?
  Probe: If do not agree, why?
Do you find that the team influences the way that you coach, if so how?
Probe: How and why do you think the team can have an effect on you as the coach?
Probe: Have you got any situation specific - sporting examples to back up what you have just said?

What do you think is key in providing effective sports leadership?
Probe: Do you think the characteristics of the coach are important?
Probe: Do you think there is a certain way that you should coach, if so how?

Do you think leadership effectiveness is dependent on situational factors of you as the coach and the team members, why/why not?

In an ideal world, who would you like to emulate?
Probe: Is there a coach in particular that you would like to aspire to?
Probe: Would you use a mixture of styles from different professional coaches?

What are you working towards? In an ideal world/situation, what would you like to achieve in your coaching career?
Probe: Have you got any future directions/aspirations? Why?
Probe: Where do you want to be in 5 years time?

**Conclusion:**

I think I have included all of the questions that I had in relation to coach leadership behaviours and its affect on team cohesion. Is there anything that you would like to comment on regarding the interview? Do you have anything else to say at this stage, that you feel you didn’t mention in the interview? Now that we have completed the interview, I now need to transcribe the interview and check through for the accuracy of the recording. Once this is finalized, I will send you a copy of the interview, and if possible could you read through to make sure that it is accurate and reflects your opinions on coach leadership behaviours and team cohesion. If you wish to add or take away anything from the interview, I can do that before continuing with the study.

Thank you for your time in conducting this interview, I am really grateful and I am sure that you have produced some interesting data that I and others can use in the future to further understand the coach leadership behaviours and its affects on team cohesion.

*Player (2)*

**Interview Guide**

Participant #:
Name:
Age:
Hello, I’m Alexandra Newman and I am third year student at the Cardiff School of Sport at the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff, and thank you for agreeing to take part in this interview.

In connection with this interview, I am aiming to get a detailed understanding of your opinion on your coach’s leadership style and whether you think team cohesion within your netball team has been affected by (both positively and negatively) a certain type of coaching behaviour. An additional reason is for me to gain further knowledge about coaching leadership behaviours and team cohesion, as this investigation will either support or refute the notion that coaching leadership behaviours have an affect on team cohesion in netball, since Carron (1982) introduced a general conceptual system for cohesiveness in sports teams. This model identified the antecedents and consequences of cohesion. The antecedents included environmental, personal, leadership and team factors. The dimensions related to leadership behaviors included leader behavior, leadership style, coach/athlete personal relationship. According to Carron’s model, coach/athlete relationships are a critical link to perceptions of team cohesion.

The information gained from this study will be used to further examine the relationship of leadership coaching behaviours and its affects on team cohesion. The source of this information will be kept confidential even though I may use direct quotes from it. I am using a digital recorder in order to record the interview and to retain accurate information after the interview has finished. I will only be using the recordings to transcribe your interview.

By participating in my study, you must remember that you retain the right to withdraw from this investigation at any time, and you may choose not to answer any questions or stop the interview at any time. I must make you aware that there are no right or wrong answers to the questions that I ask throughout the interview. The purpose of this interview is further examine the relationship between coach leadership behaviours and team cohesion in netball, for this reason I would really appreciate it if you could take your time in answering the questions, and if you do not understand what the question is asking, then please let me know and I can make it clearer. If, however you choose not to answer a question I will simply move onto the next question. It would be most beneficial to my investigation if you could answer the questions as honestly as possible and the more information you can give me the better.

I am open to questions throughout the interview and I will be happy to answer them as best as I can. The interview is made up of several different sections relating to different coaching leadership behaviours and team cohesion. When the interview is complete, you will have the opportunity to add any further information that you think is relevant and did not include in the interview.
(Recorded)

Do you have any questions about what we have already spoken about? If you do not have any questions then we have proceed with the interview. As you can see from the interview guide, the interview comprises of three sections. The first section is on group cohesion, second on the cohesion – performance relationship, third on leadership. At the end of the interview, there will be an opportunity for you to add anything that you felt was important and not covered in the interview.

Outline the player’s opinion on team cohesion and the reasons why this has occurred.

Group Cohesion:

To start of the interview, I would like to ask you some questions on cohesion within your team and how it has influenced your team. Cohesion is multidimensional in its nature, and in relation to Carron’s conceptual model (1982) there are a number of different factors that can affect cohesion, and we will be discussing these in further detail later on in the interview.

I am just going to read you some information from the literature to clarify the definition of cohesion:

Read:

*The definition of cohesion – ‘a dynamic process that is reflected in the tendency of a group to stick together and remain united in the pursuit of its instrumental objectives and/or for the satisfaction of member affective needs’ (Carron et al, 1998, p213)*

- Has the cohesion of your team been affected or changed since we last spoke?
  Probe: Why do you think cohesion is affected in this way – can you provide me with some examples of this?
  Probe: If factors (i.e. personal, leadership etc) are not identified start to probe on these.
  Probe: Do you think it is a combination of factors that affect cohesion – personal factors, leadership factors, environmental factors, team factors?

- Do you think cohesion depends on all your team working together closely, and would you consider your team to still be close?
  Probe: How do you know this?
  Probe: Can you give some examples of this?

- Have the goals of your team changed, if so why?
  Probe: What are these goals?
  Probe: Why do you think the team still wants to achieve them?
Probe: Do you think that the individuals and team are still committed to these goals?
Probe: How do you know this?
Probe: Why do you think the team still wants to achieve them?

- Have roles within the team changed as a result of different players coming in or going out? (Due to injury, playing well etc)
  Probe: Why do you think this has occurred?
  Probe: Can you give me any examples of this?

- Have you found that personalities within the team have become more evident since we last spoke, if so what effect has this had on the team?
  Probe: Can you give me some examples of this?

- When your team is satisfied with a performance in a match, do you think you are more task (same goals) or socially cohesive (enjoy each other’s company), has it changed since we last spoke?
  Probe: Which do you think is most important in performance - task or social cohesion?

- Have you had to make sacrifices with regards to social aspects of your life for preparation purposes (for matches etc) over the last few weeks?
  Probe: If so why? Can you give me any examples of this?

- Has anything changed in regards to what happens straight after a training session?
  (as an individual and as a team)
  Probe: Can you give me some examples of this?

- Same as above but for a competitive match
  Probe: Do you analyse the game or next week’s training?
  Probe: Do you think this is having a positive or negative effect on performance?

- I am aware that you have won all of your matches this season; do you think there are any reasons why this has occurred?
  Probe: Can you give me some examples of this?

- Would you consider that the team distributes the credit for success and shares the responsibility for failure, or vice versa?
  Probe: If so why do you think this?

- Do you think your coach is still playing an important role for your team to be cohesive, if so why?
  Probe: Can you give me an example of how you know what the coach’s role is, has it changed?
  Probe: Would you still consider the team to be compatible with your coach?
- When you are not training or playing netball, do you socialise with your team more, less or the same amount compared to when we last spoke?
  Probe: Have you attended socials that are arranged by the university netball club?
  Probe: Would you still consider it important for your team to attend the socials, if so why?

- Have you had any team meetings since we last spoke, if so what was discussed?

- Are you and the rest of your team still sharing common goals? Have you changed the way you prepare for a game with the team and coach?
  Probe: What are the goals of your team at the moment?
  Probe: How have these goals set? Can you give me a couple of examples how goals are set from an individual and group perspective?
  Probe: What would you consider to be the common goals of the team?
  Probe: Why do you think the team still wants to achieve them?

- Is there a particular process that the team goes through to achieve and reach their objectives?
  Probe: If so, what are these?

- How do you perceive cohesion in your team at the moment, has it changed?
  Probe: Do you think cohesion within the team is still important – or does is depend on the task?
  Probe: Would you consider the team to still be close friends – freshers and third years, or has it changed?

- What do you think cohesion of your team has been influenced by?
  Probe: Would you say that everyone has had a role to play in relation to cohesion within the team - player, coach, both, environmental/personal/leadership factors?

**Cohesion – Performance relationship**

Cohesion and performance have a complex relationship. Several researchers (Paskevich et al, 2001) believe that team cohesion is related to performance success. Therefore, in this next section, I would like to ask you a few questions relating to the team cohesion – performance relationship.

- In your opinion, do you think cohesion has a positive or negative effect on performance at the moment, have your opinions changed?
  Probe: Are there any reasons why you think this?
  Probe: Can you give me a positive/negative example?

- Which aspects do you think are affecting performance the moment, have performances changed since we last spoke?
  Probe: Do you think cohesion changes over time?
  Probe: Do you think it depends on the outcome of a game?
• At the moment your team is successful, could you tell me why increased levels of cohesion in your team can lead to increased levels of performance?
  Probe: Are there any reasons why you think this?
  Probe: Do you have a different opinion on cohesion-performance relationship?
  Probe: Do you have a different opinion on cohesion-performance relationship, if so can you describe for me what this is?

• Do you think interchanging players during matches is more of a hindrance than a help in terms of developing cohesion?
  Probe: Why do you think this?
  Probe: Can you give me some examples of this?

• Have you found that shared experiences such as success have developed cohesion lately?
  Probe: Can you give me some examples of this?

• Have you found that the levels of competition you have been playing against has affected the cohesion in your team?

• Do you think task (the degree to which members of the group work together to achieve common goals) or social cohesion (the degree to which members of a team like each other) is having a positive or negative effect on performance compared to when we last spoke?
  Probe: Why do you think this?
  Probe: Do you think your team could change this, if so how?

• Do you think with increased levels of performance is leading to higher levels of cohesion within your team?
  Probe: Why do you think this?
  Probe: Do you not think it has an effect on success within the team, if so why do you believe this?

• Do you think that when a player misses training or match that this has had a positive or negative effect on cohesion?
  Probe: If so, why do you think this?
  Probe: Can you give me any examples?

• Do you think cohesion has developed over the season?
  Probe: How has it will changed?

• How do you think that cohesion can have a negative effect on performance, has this occurred since we last spoke?
  Probe: Why do you think this?
  Probe: Are there any sport specific examples you can think of?
Leadership:

I now want to talk about your experiences that you have had as a player as research has suggested that leaders work through interpersonal relationships and by providing direction, goals and structure to their team (Weinburg and Gould, 2003, p203)

I’d like to just read you some information from the literature to clarify the definition of leadership.

_Leadership can be defined ‘as a purpose whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal’ (Northouse, 2001. p. 3_

_Leadership and cohesion have been identified by leaders in sport as crucial for success. (Weinburg and McDermott, 2002)_

- What you do think is the role of your coach, do you think it has changed?
  Probe: Can you give me some examples of this?

- With regards to your coach, how do you find her – has she changed or adapted her approach, if so how?
  Probe: Do you find her effective?
  Probe: What coaching styles do you think your coach uses, are a combination of styles used? Does your coach just use one style or a combination of two or three? (autocratic, democratic, submissive) Does she integrate the styles together?

- In relation to your performance, have you found that a particular leadership behaviour is more effective compared to when we last spoke?
  Probe: Why do you think this?
  Probe: Can you give some examples of this?

- On the leadership continuum where would you place your coach – has it changed since we last spoke?

  Autocratic---------------------------------------------------------------Democratic
  (Task master) (Question and answer)

- Are you still satisfied with the way that you are being coached, if so why?
  Probe: Are there reasons why you think this?
  Probe: Would you change the way that you are being coached?

- Would you consider the commitment and closeness of the team to be more important than the leadership behaviours of your coach, if so why?
  Probe: Can you give me any examples of when this has occurred?
• What do you think is key in providing effective sports leadership (as a coach), have your opinions changed since we last spoke?
  Probe: Do you think the characteristics of the coach are important?
  Probe: Can you give me some examples?

**Conclusion:**

I think I have included all of the questions that I had in relation to coach leadership behaviours and its affect on team cohesion. Is there anything that you would like to comment on regarding the interview? Do you have anything else to say at this stage, that you feel you didn’t mention in the interview? Now that we have completed the interview, I now need to transcribe the interview and check through for the accuracy of the recording. Once this is finalized, I will send you a copy of the interview, and if possible could you read through to make sure that it is accurate and reflects your opinions on coach leadership behaviours and team cohesion. If you wish to add or take away anything from the interview, I can do that before continuing with the study.

Thank you for your time in conducting this interview, I am really grateful and I am sure that you have produced some interesting data that I and others can use in the future to further understand the coach leadership behaviours and its affects on team cohesion.

*Player (3)*

Participant #:
Name:
Age:
Date:
Start time:
Finish time:

Section 1: Introduction (not recorded)

Hello, I’m Alexandra Newman and I am third year student at the Cardiff School of Sport at the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff, and thank you for agreeing to take part in this interview.

In connection with this interview, I am aiming to get a detailed understanding of your opinion on your coach’s leadership style and whether you think team cohesion within your netball team has been affected by (both positively and negatively) a certain type of coaching behaviour. An additional reason is for me to gain further knowledge about coaching leadership behaviours and team cohesion, as this investigation will either support or refute the notion that coaching leadership behaviours have an affect on team cohesion in netball, since Carron (1982) introduced a general conceptual system for cohesiveness in sports teams. This model identified the antecedents and consequences of cohesion. The antecedents
included environmental, personal, leadership and team factors. The dimensions related to leadership behaviors included leader behavior, leadership style, coach/athlete personal relationship. According to Carron’s model, coach/athlete relationships are a critical link to perceptions of team cohesion.

The information gained from this study will be used to further examine the relationship of leadership coaching behaviours and its affects on team cohesion. The source of this information will be kept confidential even though I may use direct quotes from it. I am using a digital recorder in order to record the interview and to retain accurate information after the interview has finished. I will only be using the recordings to transcribe your interview.

By participating in my study, you must remember that you retain the right to withdraw from this investigation at any time, and you may choose not to answer any questions or stop the interview at any time. I must make you aware that there are no right or wrong answers to the questions that I ask throughout the interview. The purpose of this interview is further examine the relationship between coach leadership behaviours and team cohesion in netball, for this reason I would really appreciate it if you could take your time in answering the questions, and if you do not understand what the question is asking, then please let me know and I can make it clearer. If, however you choose not to answer a question I will simply move onto the next question. It would be most beneficial to my investigation if you could answer the questions as honestly as possible and the more information you can give me the better.

I am open to questions throughout the interview and I will be happy to answer them as best as I can. The interview is made up of several different sections relating to different coaching leadership behaviours and team cohesion. When the interview is complete, you will have the opportunity to add any further information that you think is relevant and did not include in the interview.

(Recorded)

Do you have any questions about what we have already spoken about? If you do not have any questions then we have proceed with the interview. As you can see from the interview guide, the interview comprises of three sections. The first section is on group cohesion, second on the cohesion – performance relationship, third on leadership. At the end of the interview, there will be an opportunity for you to add anything that you felt was important and not covered in the interview.

Outline the player’s opinion on team cohesion and the reasons why this has occurred.

**Group Cohesion:**

To start of the interview, I would like to ask you some questions on cohesion within your team and how it has influenced your team. Cohesion is multidimensional in its nature, and in
relation to Carron’s conceptual model (1982) there are a number of different factors that can affect cohesion, and we will be discussing these in further detail later on in the interview.

- Has the cohesion of your team been affected or changed since we last spoke?
  Probe: Why do you think cohesion is affected in this way – can you provide me with some examples of this?
  Probe: If factors (i.e. personal, leadership etc) are not identified start to probe on these.
  Probe: Do you think it is a combination of factors that affect cohesion – personal factors, leadership factors, environmental factors, team factors?

- Do you think cohesion depends on all your team working together closely, and would you consider your team to still be close?
  Probe: How do you know this?
  Probe: Can you give some examples of this?

- Do you think that social relationships and cohesiveness were more important at the start of the season, whereas now it is all on performance and competition?
  Probe: Why do you think this?
  Probe: Have you got any examples to support that?

- Have the goals of your team changed, if so why?
  Probe: What are these goals?
  Probe: Why do you think the team still wants to achieve them?
  Probe: Do you think that the individuals and team are still committed to these goals?
  Probe: How do you know this?
  Probe: Why do you think the team still wants to achieve them?

- Have roles within the team changed as a result of different players coming in or going out? (Due to injury, playing well etc)
  Probe: Why do you think this has occurred?
  Probe: Can you give me any examples of this?

- Have you found that personalities within the team have become more evident since we last spoke, if so what effect has this had on the team?
  Probe: Can you give me some examples of this?

- Have you had to make sacrifices with regards to social aspects of your life for preparation purposes (for matches etc) over the last few weeks?
  Probe: If so why? Can you give me any examples of this?

- Has anything changed in regards to what happens straight after a training session? (as an individual and as a team)
  Probe: Can you give me some examples of this?

- Same as above but for a competitive match
Probe: Do you analyse the game or next week’s training?
Probe: Do you think this is having a positive or negative effect on performance?

- Would you say that due to your group’s history, current state and motivational base that your team is stable?
  Probe: Can you give me any examples of this?

- I am aware that you lost your first match this season last week, has this had a positive or negative effect on the cohesion with your team?
  Probe: What was discussed after the match between the players and coach?
  Probe: Can you describe for me the reason why you think you lost – players, coach, opposition?
  Probe: What was different in the following training session (prior and after) – what was discussed and worked on?

- Do you think your coach is still playing an important role for your team to be cohesive, if so why?
  Probe: Can you give me an example of how you know what the coach’s role is, has it changed?
  Probe: Would you still consider the team to be compatible with your coach?

- When you are not training or playing netball, do you socialise with your team more, less or the same amount compared to when we last spoke?
  Probe: Have you attended socials that are arranged by the university netball club?
  Probe: Would you still consider it important for your team to attend the socials, if so why?

- Have you had any team meetings since we last spoke, if so what was discussed?

- Are you and the rest of your team still sharing common goals? Have you changed the way you prepare for a game with the team and coach?
  Probe: What are the goals of your team at the moment?
  Probe: How have these goals set? Can you give me a couple of examples how goals are set from an individual and group perspective?
  Probe: What would you consider to be the common goals of the team?
  Probe: Why do you think the team still wants to achieve them?

- How do you perceive cohesion in your team at the moment, has it changed?
  Probe: Do you think cohesion within the team is still important – or does is depend on the task?
  Probe: Would you consider the team to still be close friends – freshers and third years, or has it changed?

- Since all the members of your team had a shared competence at the start of the season has it lead to greater task cohesion now?
  Probe: Why do you think this?
Probe: Can you give me any examples of this?

- Do you think the cohesion of your team would continue to improve if you were to have post season training?
  Probe: Why do you think this?

- What do you think cohesion of your team has been influenced by?
  Probe: Would you say that everyone has had a role to play in relation to cohesion within the team - player, coach, both, environmental/personal/leadership factors?

**Cohesion – Performance relationship**

Cohesion and performance have a complex relationship. Several researchers (Paskevich et al, 2001) believe that team cohesion is related to performance success. Therefore, in this next section, I would like to ask you a few questions relating to the team cohesion – performance relationship.

- In your opinion, do you think cohesion has a positive or negative effect on performance at the moment, have your opinions changed?
  Probe: Are there any reasons why you think this?
  Probe: Can you give me a positive/negative example?

- Which aspects do you think are affecting performance the moment, have performances changed since we last spoke?
  Probe: Do you think cohesion changes over time?
  Probe: Do you think it depends on the outcome of a game?

- At the moment your team is successful, could you tell me why increased levels of cohesion in your team can lead to increased levels of performance?
  Probe: Are there any reasons why you think this?
  Probe: Do you have a different opinion on cohesion-performance relationship?
  Probe: Do you have a different opinion on cohesion-performance relationship, if so can you describe for me what this is?

- Have you found that shared experiences such as success have developed cohesion lately?
  Probe: Can you give me some examples of this?

- Have you found that the levels of competition you have been playing against has affected the cohesion in your team?

- Do you think that since you have lost you first match this season that this will have a positive or negative effect on performance?
  Probe: Why do you think this?
Do you think task (the degree to which members of the group work together to achieve common goals) or social cohesion (the degree to which members of a team like each other) is having a positive or negative effect on performance compared to when we last spoke?
Probe: Why do you think this?
Probe: Do you think your team could change this, if so how?

Do you think with increased levels of performance is leading to higher levels of cohesion within your team?
Probe: Why do you think this?
Probe: Do you not think it has an effect on success within the team, if so why do you believe this?

Do you think cohesion has developed over the season, can you give me some examples from the past nine weeks from the first interview to now?
Probe: How has it changed?

How do you think that cohesion can have a negative effect on performance, has this occurred since we last spoke?
Probe: Why do you think this?
Probe: Are there any sport specific examples you can think of?

Leadership:

I now want to talk about your experiences that you have had as a player as research has suggested that leaders work through interpersonal relationships and by providing direction, goals and structure to their team (Weinburg and Gould, 2003, p203)

I’d like to just read you some information from the literature to clarify the definition of leadership.

*Leadership can be defined ‘as a purpose whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal’ (Northouse, 2001, p. 3

*Leadership and cohesion have been identified by leaders in sport as crucial for success. (Weinburg and McDermott, 2002)

What you do think is the role of your coach, do you think it has changed?
Probe: Can you give me some examples of this?

With regards to your coach, how do you find her – has she changed or adapted her approach, if so how?
Probe: Do you find her effective?
Probe: What coaching styles do you think your coach uses, are a combination of styles used? Does your coach just use one style or a combination of two or three? (autocratic, democratic, submissive) Does she integrate the styles together?

• In relation to your performance, have you found that a particular leadership behaviour is more effective compared to when we last spoke?
  Probe: Why do you think this?
  Probe: Can you give some examples of this?

• On the leadership continuum where would you place your coach – has it changed since we last spoke?

  Autocratic---------------------------------------------------------------Democratic

  (Task master)              (Question and answer)

• Are you still satisfied with the way that you are being coached, if so why?
  Probe: Are there reasons why you think this?
  Probe: Would you change the way that you are being coached?

• Previously you mentioned a bit about both of your coaches and members of your team taking the leadership role, which one do you find most effective and why is this?

• Would you say that it is beneficial to cohesion and performance if coaches fully share their leadership responsibility with the members of the team?
  Probe: What aspects should be shared?
  Probe: How do you think the roles should be distributed?
  Probe: Should this take place under any particular circumstances?

• Do you think that the coach should allow the decision making within a game situation to be done by the team? Would this motivate the team more and make them want to improve?
  Probe: If so why do you think this?
  Probe: Can you give me any examples?

• Would you benefit from having both coaches at training and matches? Do you think that this would improve cohesion and performance?
  Probe: Why do you think this?

• How do you think either coach has a positive effect on the cohesion of your team?
  Probe: Can you give me any examples?

• Would you like to change or adapt either coach’s leadership style to enhance the cohesion and performance of your team?
  Probe: If so what would you do?
  Probe: Can you give me any examples?
What do you think is key in providing effective sports leadership (as a coach), have your opinions changed since we last spoke?
Probe: Do you think the characteristics of the coach are important?
Probe: Can you give me some examples?

Conclusion:
I think I have included all of the questions that I had in relation to coach leadership behaviours and its affect on team cohesion. Is there anything that you would like to comment on regarding the interview? Do you have anything else to say at this stage, that you feel you didn’t mention in the interview? Now that we have completed the interview, I now need to transcribe the interview and check through for the accuracy of the recording. Once this is finalized, I will send you a copy of the interview, and if possible could you read through to make sure that it is accurate and reflects your opinions on coach leadership behaviours and team cohesion. If you wish to add or take away anything from the interview, I can do that before continuing with the study.

Thank you for your time in conducting this interview, I am really grateful and I am sure that you have produced some interesting data that I and others can use in the future to further understand the coach leadership behaviours and its affects on team cohesion.

Coach (1)

Participant #:
Name:
Age:
Date:
Start time:
Finish time:

Section 1: Introduction (not recorded)

Hello, I’m Alexandra Newman and I am third year student at the Cardiff School of Sport at the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff, and thank you for agreeing to take part in this interview.
In connection with this interview, I am aiming to get a detailed understanding of your opinion on your coach’s leadership style and whether you think team cohesion within your netball team has been affected by (both positively and negatively) a certain type of coaching behaviour. An additional reason is for me to gain further knowledge about coaching leadership behaviours and team cohesion, as this investigation will either support or refute the notion that coaching leadership behaviours have an affect on team cohesion in netball, since Carron (1982) introduced a general conceptual system for cohesiveness in sports teams. This model identified the antecedents and consequences of cohesion. The antecedents included environmental, personal, leadership and team factors. The dimensions related to leadership behaviors included leader behavior, leadership style, coach/athlete personal relationship. According to Carron’s model, coach/athlete relationships are a critical link to perceptions of team cohesion.

The information gained from this study will be used to further examine the relationship of leadership coaching behaviours and its affects on team cohesion. The source of this information will be kept confidential even though I may use direct quotes from it. I am using a digital recorder in order to record the interview and to retain accurate information after the interview has finished. I will only be using the recordings to transcribe your interview.

By participating in my study, you must remember that you retain the right to withdraw from this investigation at any time, and you may choose not to answer any questions or stop the interview at any time. I must make you aware that there are no right or wrong answers to the questions that I ask throughout the interview. The purpose of this interview is further examine the relationship between coach leadership behaviours and team cohesion in netball, for this reason I would really appreciate it if you could take your time in answering the questions, and if you do not understand what the question is asking, then please let me know and I can make it clearer. If, however you choose not to answer a question I will simply move onto the next question. It would be most beneficial to my investigation if you could answer the questions as honestly as possible and the more information you can give me the better.

I am open to questions throughout the interview and I will be happy to answer them as best as I can. The interview is made up of several different sections relating to different coaching leadership behaviours and team cohesion. When the interview is complete, you will have the opportunity to add any further information that you think is relevant and did not include in the interview.

(Recorded)

Do you have any questions about what we have already spoken about? If you do not have any questions then we have proceed with the interview. As you can see from the interview guide, the interview comprises of three sections. The first section is on group cohesion, second on the cohesion – performance relationship, third on leadership. At the end of the interview, there will be an opportunity for you to add anything that you felt was important and not covered in the interview.
Outline the coach’s opinion on team cohesion (both task and social) and the reasons why this has occurred.

Demographic information

Before we start with the main sections on cohesion and leadership, I’d like to ask you a few questions about your playing and coaching background if that’s okay?

- How many years did you spend as a player and can you just give me a brief description of your playing career to date?
- When did you actually start to think about coaching?
  Probe: Was there any reason in particular why you went into coaching?
- Can you give me a brief description of your coaching background and your experience as a coach?
  Probe: How long have you been a coach?
- How many hours per week would you say are committed to coaching?
  Probe: Would you describe yourself as a full-time coach or something else (for example a lecturer)?

Group Cohesion:

Okay that’s great. Now that we have spoken about some background issues I would like to start to ask some questions in relation to the aspects of cohesion within the team you are coaching at the moment.

- Okay to start, how would you define cohesion?
  Probe: Why do you think of cohesion as this?
  Probe: Did you understand cohesion and its importance when you were a player?
  Probe: Do you perceive cohesion differently now that you are a coach
  Probe: If yes, why?

Read: Okay thanks for that, you have highlighted some important aspects of cohesion. I’d just like to read you some information from the literature to help clarify some of these aspects that you have mentioned:

Cohesion is multidimensional in its nature, and in relation to Carron’s conceptual model (1982) there are a number of different factors that can affect cohesion (for example personal and situational factors), and we will be discussing these in further detail later on in the interview.

**The definition of cohesion – ‘a dynamic process that is reflected in the tendency of a group to stick together and remain united in the pursuit of its instrumental objectives and/or for the satisfaction of member affective needs’ (Carron et al, 1998, p213)**
• How do you think the cohesion of your team is affected?
  Probe: Why do you think cohesion is affected in this way – can you provide me with some examples of this?
  Probe: If factors (i.e. personal, leadership etc) are not identified start to probe on these.

• What are the goals of your team at the moment?
  Probe: How are these goals set? Can you give me a couple of examples how goals are set from an individual and group perspective?
  Probe: Do you think that the individuals and team are committed to these goals?
  Probe: How do you know this?
  Probe: Why do you think the team wants to achieve them?

• Can you give me an example (or examples) of how cohesion is developed in your team?
  Probe: Are there any reasons why you think this?
  Probe: How do you know if your team is cohesive or not?

• (If different to the above) Can you give me an example of how you develop cohesion as an individual?
  Probe:

• Do you think you play an important role as the coach in enhancing cohesion within the team?
  Probe: Why do you think this and how do you know this?
  Probe: Would you consider the team to be compatible with you as the coach?

• Can you give me a brief description of what happens straight after a training session (as an individual and as a team)

• Same as above but for a competitive match
  Probe: Do you analyse the game or next week’s training?

• Can you describe your relationship with the team/individual members please?
  Probe: Do you integrate socially? Why? Why (if not)?

• When a member of your team is unhappy with her performance in training/match, how do you support her? Can you give me some specific example?
  Probe: As a team do you discuss training and matches analytically?
  Probe: How is the problem addressed when there is a problem in the team? Can you provide me with examples?

• When you loose a match who takes responsibility for your loss?
  Probe: Why is this?
  Probe: Do you think anyone is particular is responsible. Probes- team, coach, both, players?
What do you think cohesion is influenced by?
Probe: Would you say that everyone has a role to play in relation to cohesion within the team - player, coach, both, environmental/personal/leadership factors?

How do you perceive cohesion in your team?
Probe: Do you think cohesion within the team is important – or does is depend on the task?
Probe: Would you consider the team to be close friends – freshers and third years?

Cohesion-Performance relationship:

Read:
Cohesion and performance have a complex relationship. Several researchers (Paskevich et al, 2001) believe that team cohesion is related to performance success. Therefore, in this next section, I would like to ask you a few questions relating to the team cohesion – performance relationship.

Can you explain to me whether you think your coaching is having a positive/negative effect on cohesion and performance?
Probe: Are there any reasons why you think this?
Probe: Can you give me a positive/negative example?

Can you describe for me what you think affects performance?
Probe: Why do you think cohesion changes over time?
Probe: Do you think it depends on the outcome of a game, can you give me examples of this?

Could you tell me why increased levels of cohesion in your team can lead to increased levels of performance?
Probe: Are there any reasons why you think this, if so what are they?
Probe: Can you give examples of this occurring in your team?
Probe: Do you have a different opinion on cohesion-performance relationship, if so can you describe for me what this is?

Can you tell me in your opinion whether you think performance has a stronger effect on cohesion or that cohesion has on performance, if so why do you think this?
Probe: What are your reasons for this?
Probe: Can you give some examples of this in your team

Can you describe for me why you think with increased levels of team cohesion it increases team success?
Probe: Can you give me some examples of this in your team?
Probe: Do you not think it has an effect on success within the team, if so why do you believe this?
• How do you think that cohesion can have a negative effect on performance?
  Probe: Why do you think this?
  Probe: Are there any sport specific examples you can think of?

Leadership:

I now want to explore your experiences that you have had as a coach as research has suggested that leaders work through interpersonal relationships and by providing direction, goals and structure to their team (Weinberg and Gould, 2003, p203)

• How would you define leadership?
  Probe: Why do you think of leadership as this?
  Probe: Did you understand leadership and its importance when you were a player?
  Probe: Do you perceive leadership differently now that you are a coach?
  Probe: If yes, why

Read: Thank you. Now that we have established you definition of leadership I’d like to just read you some information from the literature to help clarify some of these aspects that you have mentioned.

Leadership can be defined ‘as a purpose whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal’ (Northouse, 2001, p. 3)

Many coaches lead their team in a style that they think is best. It is important for coaches to understand player’s needs and wants to improve athlete satisfaction. (Reimer and Chellandurai, 1998)

• Are you in agreement with the above definition, if so why?
  Probe: If no, why do you not agree?
  Probe: Can you give me some examples of when this has occurred when coaching?

• What is your role as a coach?
  Probe: Can you give me some examples of your role throughout a typical week as a coach?
  Probe: Same as above but for a match day.

• What coaching style do you use?
  Probe: In relation to your coaching style, do you just use one style or a combination of two or three? (autocratic, democratic, submissive) Do you integrate the styles together?
  Probe: Do you have a preferred leadership behaviour?

• Do you have a coaching philosophy?
  Probe: What is your coaching philosophy – explain?
Probe: What are your major objectives, beliefs and principles –what do you want to achieve?

- Can you describe to me how you adapt your coaching style for varying abilities/personalities within the team?
  - Probe: How do you adapt your coaching style?
  - Probe: What are your reasons for doing this?

The type of leadership behavior displayed by the coach can have a significant effect on the performance and psychological well being of the athlete (Horn, 2002)

- The behavior of a coach can have an effect on the performance and self worth of the athlete.
  - Probe: Do you agree with this?
  - Probe: Can you give me examples of this?

It has been suggested that there is some importance when studying the relationship between leadership and coaching behaviors and team cohesion, since cohesion is an important influence on performance, and secondly when comparing the antecedents to team cohesion, leadership is possibly the most important as Williams (1993) noted ‘the coach is probably in the best position to influence change in team cohesion’. (Carron et al, 1985)

- Some of the research has suggested that the coach has a direct influence on changing team cohesion, do you agree with this?
  - Probe: If agree, can you elaborate on this?
  - Probe: If do not agree, why?

- Do you find that the team influences the way that you coach, if so how?
  - Probe: How and why do you think the team can have an effect on you as the coach?
  - Probe: Have you got any situation specific - sporting examples to back up what you have just said?

- What do you think is key in providing effective sports leadership?
  - Probe: Do you think the characteristics of the coach are important?
  - Probe: Do you think there is a certain way that you should coach, if so how?

- Do you think leadership effectiveness is dependent on situational factors of you as the coach and the team members, why/why not?

- In an ideal world, who would you like to emulate?
  - Probe: Is there a coach in particular that you would like to aspire to?
  - Probe: Would you use a mixture of styles from different professional coaches?

- What are you working towards? In an ideal world/situation, what would you like to achieve in your coaching career?
Probe: Have you got any future directions/aspirations? Why?
Probe: Where do you want to be in 5 years time?

**Conclusion:**

I think I have included all of the questions that I had in relation to coach leadership behaviours and its affect on team cohesion. Is there anything that you would like to comment on regarding the interview? Do you have anything else to say at this stage, that you feel you didn’t mention in the interview? Now that we have completed the interview, I now need to transcribe the interview and check through for the accuracy of the recording. Once this is finalized, I will send you a copy of the interview, and if possible could you read through to make sure that it is accurate and reflects your opinions on coach leadership behaviours and team cohesion. If you wish to add or take away anything from the interview, I can do that before continuing with the study.

Thank you for your time in conducting this interview, I am really grateful and I am sure that you have produced some interesting data that I and others can use in the future to further understand the coach leadership behaviours and its affects on team cohesion.

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*Coach (2)*

Participant #:
Name:
Age:
Date:
Start time:
Finish time:

Section 1: Introduction (not recorded)

Hello, I’m Alexandra Newman and I am third year student at the Cardiff School of Sport at the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff, and thank you for agreeing to take part in this interview.

In connection with this interview, I am aiming to get a detailed understanding of your opinion on your coach’s leadership style and whether you think team cohesion within your netball team has been affected by (both positively and negatively) a certain type of coaching behaviour. An additional reason is for me to gain further knowledge about coaching leadership behaviours and team cohesion, as this investigation will either support or refute
the notion that coaching leadership behaviours have an affect on team cohesion in netball, since Carron (1982) introduced a general conceptual system for cohesiveness in sports teams. This model identified the antecedents and consequences of cohesion. The antecedents included environmental, personal, leadership and team factors. The dimensions related to leadership behaviors included leader behavior, leadership style, coach/athlete personal relationship. According to Carron’s model, coach/athlete relationships are a critical link to perceptions of team cohesion.

The information gained from this study will be used to further examine the relationship of leadership coaching behaviours and its affects on team cohesion. The source of this information will be kept confidential even though I may use direct quotes from it. I am using a digital recorder in order to record the interview and to retain accurate information after the interview has finished. I will only be using the recordings to transcribe your interview.

By participating in my study, you must remember that you retain the right to withdraw from this investigation at any time, and you may choose not to answer any questions or stop the interview at any time. I must make you aware that there are no right or wrong answers to the questions that I ask throughout the interview. The purpose of this interview is further examine the relationship between coach leadership behaviours and team cohesion in netball, for this reason I would really appreciate it if you could take your time in answering the questions, and if you do not understand what the question is asking, then please let me know and I can make it clearer. If, however you choose not to answer a question I will simply move onto the next question. It would be most beneficial to my investigation if you could answer the questions as honestly as possible and the more information you can give me the better.

I am open to questions throughout the interview and I will be happy to answer them as best as I can. The interview is made up of several different sections relating to different coaching leadership behaviours and team cohesion. When the interview is complete, you will have the opportunity to add any further information that you think is relevant and did not include in the interview.

(Recorded)

Do you have any questions about what we have already spoken about? If you do not have any questions then we have proceed with the interview. As you can see from the interview guide, the interview comprises of three sections. The first section is on group cohesion, second on the cohesion – performance relationship, third on leadership. At the end of the interview, there will be an opportunity for you to add anything that you felt was important and not covered in the interview.

Outline the coach’s opinion on team cohesion (both task and social) and the reasons why this has occurred.

**Group Cohesion:**
I would like to start to ask some questions in relation to the aspects of cohesion within the team you are coaching at the moment.

I am just going to read you some information from the literature to clarify the definition of cohesion:

Cohesion is multidimensional in its nature, and in relation to Carron’s conceptual model (1982) there are a number of different factors that can affect cohesion (for example personal and situational factors), and we will be discussing these in further detail later on in the interview.

*The definition of cohesion – ‘a dynamic process that is reflected in the tendency of a group to stick together and remain united in the pursuit of its instrumental objectives and/or for the satisfaction of member affective needs’ (Carron et al, 1998, p213)*

- Has the cohesion of your team been affected since we last spoke?
  Probe: Why do you think cohesion is affected in this way – can you provide me with some examples of this?
  Probe: If factors (i.e. personal, leadership etc) are not identified start to probe on these.

- Have the goals of your team changed, if so why?
  Probe: How are these goals set? Can you give me a couple of examples how goals are set from an individual and group perspective?
  Probe: Do you think that the individuals and team are still committed to these goals?
  Probe: How do you know this?
  Probe: Why do you think the team still wants to achieve them?

- Have you had to make any changes to strategies and tactics? How has this been communicated to players?

- Can you give me an example (or examples) of how cohesion has been developed in your team?
  Probe: Are there any reasons why you think this?
  Probe: How do you know if your team is still cohesive or not?

- Have there been any changes in team players over the last couple of weeks? If so how have they been managed and monitored?

- Do you think that the team distributes the credit for success and share the responsibility for failure? Or vice versa?
  Probe: If so why?

- Have there been any problems with players and how have you managed this?
- Have some of the players not performed, and how have they been dealt with?

- (If different to the above) Can you give me an example of how you are developing cohesion as an individual?
  Probe: Why have you chosen to do this?

- Do you think you still play an important role as the coach in enhancing cohesion within the team?
  Probe: Why do you think this and how do you know this?
  Probe: Would you still consider the team to be compatible with you as the coach, if so why?

- Has anything changed in regards to what happens straight after a training session?
  (as an individual and as a team)
  Probe: If so what, and why has this occurred?

- Same as above but for a competitive match
  Probe: Do you analyse the game or next week’s training?

- Can you describe your relationship with the team/individual members please and has it changed since we last spoke, if so why?
  Probe: Do you integrate socially? Why? Why (if not)?

- I am aware that you have won all of your matches this season, do you think there are any reasons why this has occurred?
  Probe: Can you give me some examples of this?

- What do you think cohesion is influenced by?
  Probe: Would you say that everyone has a role to play in relation to cohesion within the team - player, coach, both, environmental/personal/leadership factors?

- Have there been any team meetings, if so what has been discussed?

- How do you perceive cohesion in your team at the moment, has it changed if so why?
  Probe: Can you give me some examples of this?
  Probe: Would you consider the team to still be close friends – freshers and third years?

**Cohesion-Performance relationship:**

Read:
Cohesion and performance have a complex relationship. Several researchers (Paskevich et al, 2001) believe that team cohesion is related to performance success. Therefore, in this next
section, I would like to ask you a few questions relating to the team cohesion – performance relationship.

- Can you explain to me whether you think your coaching is having a positive/negative effect on cohesion and performance at the moment, has it changed since we last spoke, if so why?
  Probe: Are there any reasons why you think this?
  Probe: Can you give me a positive/negative example?

- Can you describe for me what you think is affecting the performance of your team at the moment?
  Probe: Why do you think cohesion has changed over time?
  Probe: Do you think it depends on the outcome of a game, can you give me examples of this?

- Do you think that when a player misses training or a match that this a positive/negative effect on cohesion and performance?

- At the moment your team is successful, could you tell me why increased levels of cohesion in your team can lead to increased levels of performance?
  Probe: Are there any reasons why you think this, if so what are they?
  Probe: Can you give examples of this occurring in your team?
  Probe: Do you have a different opinion on cohesion-performance relationship, if so can you describe for me what this is?

- Do you think it helps cohesion of the squad by inter changing players during matches? Or do you think it has a negative effect?

- Do you think the levels of competition your team has been playing against has affected the cohesion of you team? If so how and why?

- Can you tell me in your opinion whether you think performance is having a stronger effect on cohesion or that cohesion is having on performance, if so why do you think this, do you think it has changed within your team?
  Probe: What are your reasons for this?
  Probe: Can you give some examples of this in your team

- How do you think that cohesion can have a negative effect on performance, has this occurred since we last spoke?
  Probe: Why do you think this?
  Probe: Are there any sport specific examples you can think of?

Leadership:
I now want to explore your experiences that you have had as a coach as research has suggested that leaders work through interpersonal relationships and by providing direction, goals and structure to their team (Weinberg and Gould, 2003, p203)

I’d like to just read you some information from the literature to clarify the definition of leadership.

**Leadership can be defined ‘as a purpose whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal’ (Northouse, 2001. p. 3)**

- What is your role as a coach, do you think that it has changed?  
  Probe: Can you give me some examples of your role throughout a typical week as a coach, how has it changed?  
  Probe: Same as above but for a match day.

- Have you changed or adapted your coaching style lately, if so why/how?  
  Probe: In relation to your coaching style, do you just use one style or a combination of two or three? (Autocratic, democratic, submissive) Do you integrate the styles together?

- Has your coaching philosophy changed, if so why?  
  Probe: What is your coaching philosophy – explain?  
  Probe: What are your major objectives, beliefs and principles – what do you want to achieve?

- Can you describe to me how you adapt your coaching style for varying abilities/personalities within the team, have you had to change it?  
  Probe: How do you adapt your coaching style?  
  Probe: What are your reasons for doing this?

*It has been suggested that there is some importance when studying the relationship between leadership and coaching behaviors and team cohesion, since cohesion is an important influence on performance, and secondly when comparing the antecedents to team cohesion, leadership is possibly the most important as Williams (1993) noted ‘the coach is probably in the best position to influence change in team cohesion’. (Carron et al, 1985)*

- Have you found that the team has influenced the way that you coach lately, if so why and how has it changed?  
  Probe: How and why do you think the team can have an effect on you as the coach?  
  Probe: Have you got any situation specific - sporting examples to back up what you have just said?

- Do you think that the commitment and closeness of the team is more important than the leadership role you have, in terms of cohesion? If so why?
What do you think is key in providing effective sports leadership, have your opinions changed since we last spoke?
Probe: Do you think the characteristics of the coach are important?
Probe: Do you think there is a certain way that you should coach, if so how?

Do you think leadership effectiveness is dependent on situational factors of you as the coach and the team members, why/why not?
Probe: Have your opinions changed since we last spoke?
Probe: Can you give me some examples of this?

Conclusion:

I think I have included all of the questions that I had in relation to coach leadership behaviours and its affect on team cohesion. Is there anything that you would like to comment on regarding the interview? Do you have anything else to say at this stage, that you feel you didn’t mention in the interview? Now that we have completed the interview, I now need to transcribe the interview and check through for the accuracy of the recording. Once this is finalized, I will send you a copy of the interview, and if possible could you read through to make sure that it is accurate and reflects your opinions on coach leadership behaviours and team cohesion. If you wish to add or take away anything from the interview, I can do that before continuing with the study.

Thank you for your time in conducting this interview, I am really grateful and I am sure that you have produced some interesting data that I and others can use in the future to further understand the coach leadership behaviours and its affects on team cohesion.

Coach (3)

Participant #:
Name:
Age:
Date:
Start time:
Finish time:

Section 1: Introduction (not recorded)

Hello, I’m Alexandra Newman and I am third year student at the Cardiff School of Sport at the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff, and thank you for agreeing to take part in this interview.

In connection with this interview, I am aiming to get a detailed understanding of your opinion on your coach’s leadership style and whether you think team cohesion within your netball team has been affected by (both positively and negatively) a certain type of coaching
behaviour. An additional reason is for me to gain further knowledge about coaching leadership behaviours and team cohesion, as this investigation will either support or refute the notion that coaching leadership behaviours have an affect on team cohesion in netball, since Carron (1982) introduced a general conceptual system for cohesiveness in sports teams. This model identified the antecedents and consequences of cohesion. The antecedents included environmental, personal, leadership and team factors. The dimensions related to leadership behaviors included leader behavior, leadership style, coach/athlete personal relationship. According to Carron’s model, coach/athlete relationships are a critical link to perceptions of team cohesion.

The information gained from this study will be used to further examine the relationship of leadership coaching behaviours and its affects on team cohesion. The source of this information will be kept confidential even though I may use direct quotes from it. I am using a digital recorder in order to record the interview and to retain accurate information after the interview has finished. I will only be using the recordings to transcribe your interview.

By participating in my study, you must remember that you retain the right to withdraw from this investigation at any time, and you may choose not to answer any questions or stop the interview at any time. I must make you aware that there are no right or wrong answers to the questions that I ask throughout the interview. The purpose of this interview is further examine the relationship between coach leadership behaviours and team cohesion in netball, for this reason I would really appreciate it if you could take your time in answering the questions, and if you do not understand what the question is asking, then please let me know and I can make it clearer. If, however you choose not to answer a question I will simply move onto the next question. It would be most beneficial to my investigation if you could answer the questions as honestly as possible and the more information you can give me the better.

I am open to questions throughout the interview and I will be happy to answer them as best as I can. The interview is made up of several different sections relating to different coaching leadership behaviours and team cohesion. When the interview is complete, you will have the opportunity to add any further information that you think is relevant and did not include in the interview.

(Recorded)

Do you have any questions about what we have already spoken about? If you do not have any questions then we have proceed with the interview. As you can see from the interview guide, the interview comprises of three sections. The first section is on group cohesion, second on the cohesion – performance relationship, third on leadership. At the end of the interview, there will be an opportunity for you to add anything that you felt was important and not covered in the interview.

Outline the coach’s opinion on team cohesion (both task and social) and the reasons why this has occurred.
**Group Cohesion:**

I would like to start to ask some questions in relation to the aspects of cohesion within the team you are coaching at the moment.

I am just going to read you some information from the literature to clarify the definition of cohesion:

Cohesion is multidimensional in its nature, and in relation to Carron’s conceptual model (1982) there are a number of different factors that can affect cohesion (for example personal and situational factors), and we will be discussing these in further detail later on in the interview.

*The definition of cohesion – ‘a dynamic process that is reflected in the tendency of a group to stick together and remain united in the pursuit of its instrumental objectives and/or for the satisfaction of member affective needs’ (Carron et al, 1998, p213)*

- Has the cohesion of your team been affected since we last spoke?  
  Probe: Why do you think cohesion is affected in this way – can you provide me with some examples of this?  
  Probe: If factors (i.e. personal, leadership etc) are not identified start to probe on these.

- Have the goals of your team changed, if so why?  
  Probe: How are these goals set? Can you give me a couple of examples how goals are set from an individual and group perspective?  
  Probe: Do you think that the individuals and team are still committed to these goals?  
  Probe: How do you know this?  
  Probe: Why do you think the team still wants to achieve them?

- Have you had to make any changes to strategies and tactics? How has this been communicated to players?

- Can you give me an example (or examples) of how cohesion has been developed in your team?  
  Probe: Are there any reasons why you think this?  
  Probe: How do you know if your team is still cohesive or not?

- Have there been any changes in team players over the last couple of weeks? If so how have they been managed and monitored?

- Do you think that the team distributes the credit for success and share the responsibility for failure? Or vice versa?  
  Probe: If so why?
• Have there been any problems with players and how have you managed this?

• Have some of the players not performed, and how have they been dealt with?

• (If different to the above) Can you give me an example of how you are developing cohesion as an individual?
  Probe: Why have you chosen to do this?

• Do you think you still play an important role as the coach in enhancing cohesion within the team?
  Probe: Why do you think this and how do you know this?
  Probe: Would you still consider the team to be compatible with you as the coach, if so why?

• Has anything changed in regards to what happens straight after a training session? (as an individual and as a team)
  Probe: If so what, and why has this occurred?

• Same as above but for a competitive match
  Probe: Do you analyse the game or next week’s training?

• Can you describe your relationship with the team/individual members please and has it changed since we last spoke, if so why?
  Probe: Do you integrate socially? Why? Why (if not)?

• I am aware that you have won all of your matches this season, do you think there are any reasons why this has occurred?
  Probe: Can you give me some examples of this?

• What do you think cohesion is influenced by?
  Probe: Would you say that everyone has a role to play in relation to cohesion within the team - player, coach, both, environmental/personal/leadership factors?

• Have there been any team meetings, if so what has been discussed?

• How do you perceive cohesion in your team at the moment, has it changed if so why?
  Probe: Can you give me some examples of this?
  Probe: Would you consider the team to still be close friends – freshers and third years?

**Cohesion-Performance relationship:**

Read:
Cohesion and performance have a complex relationship. Several researchers (Paskevich et al, 2001) believe that team cohesion is related to performance success. Therefore, in this next section, I would like to ask you a few questions relating to the team cohesion – performance relationship.

- Can you explain to me whether you think your coaching is having a positive/negative effect on cohesion and performance at the moment, has it changed since we last spoke, if so why?
  Probe: Are there any reasons why you think this?
  Probe: Can you give me a positive/negative example?

- Can you describe for me what you think is affecting the performance of your team at the moment?
  Probe: Why do you think cohesion has changed over time?
  Probe: Do you think it depends on the outcome of a game, can you give me examples of this?

- Do you think that when a player misses training or a match that this a positive/negative effect on cohesion and performance?

- At the moment your team is successful, could you tell me why increased levels of cohesion in your team can lead to increased levels of performance?
  Probe: Are there any reasons why you think this, if so what are they?
  Probe: Can you give examples of this occurring in your team?
  Probe: Do you have a different opinion on cohesion-performance relationship, if so can you describe for me what this is?

- Do you think it helps cohesion of the squad by inter changing players during matches? Or do you think it has a negative effect?

- Do you think the levels of competition your team has been playing against has affected the cohesion of your team? If so how and why?

- Can you tell me in your opinion whether you think performance is having a stronger effect on cohesion or that cohesion is having on performance, if so why do you think this, do you think it has changed within your team?
  Probe: What are your reasons for this?
  Probe: Can you give some examples of this in your team

- How do you think that cohesion can have a negative effect on performance, has this occurred since we last spoke?
  Probe: Why do you think this?
  Probe: Are there any sport specific examples you can think of?

Leadership:
I now want to explore your experiences that you have had as a coach as research has suggested that leaders work through interpersonal relationships and by providing direction, goals and structure to their team (Weinberg and Gould, 2003, p203).

I’d like to just read you some information from the literature to clarify the definition of leadership.

*Leadership can be defined ‘as a purpose whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal’ (Northouse, 2001. p. 3)*

- What is your role as a coach, do you think that it has changed?
  - Probe: Can you give me some examples of your role throughout a typical week as a coach, how has it changed?
  - Probe: Same as above but for a match day.

- Have you changed or adapted your coaching style lately, if so why/how?
  - Probe: In relation to your coaching style, do you just use one style or a combination of two or three? (Autocratic, democratic, submissive) Do you integrate the styles together?

- Has your coaching philosophy changed, if so why?
  - Probe: What is your coaching philosophy – explain?
  - Probe: What are your major objectives, beliefs and principles – what do you want to achieve?

- Can you describe to me how you adapt your coaching style for varying abilities/personalities within the team, have you had to change it?
  - Probe: How do you adapt your coaching style?
  - Probe: What are your reasons for doing this?

*It has been suggested that there is some importance when studying the relationship between leadership and coaching behaviors and team cohesion, since cohesion is an important influence on performance, and secondly when comparing the antecedents to team cohesion, leadership is possibly the most important as Williams (1993) noted ‘the coach is probably in the best position to influence change in team cohesion’. (Carron et al, 1985)*

- Have you found that the team has influenced the way that you coach lately, if so why and how has it changed?
  - Probe: How and why do you think the team can have an effect on you as the coach?
  - Probe: Have you got any situation specific - sporting examples to back up what you have just said?

- Do you think that the commitment and closeness of the team is more important than the leadership role you have, in terms of cohesion? If so why?
What do you think is key in providing effective sports leadership, have your opinions changed since we last spoke?
Probe: Do you think the characteristics of the coach are important?
Probe: Do you think there is a certain way that you should coach, if so how?

Do you think leadership effectiveness is dependent on situational factors of you as the coach and the team members, why/why not?
Probe: Have your opinions changed since we last spoke?
Probe: Can you give me some examples of this?

Conclusion:

I think I have included all of the questions that I had in relation to coach leadership behaviours and its affect on team cohesion. Is there anything that you would like to comment on regarding the interview? Do you have anything else to say at this stage, that you feel you didn’t mention in the interview? Now that we have completed the interview, I now need to transcribe the interview and check through for the accuracy of the recording. Once this is finalized, I will send you a copy of the interview, and if possible could you read through to make sure that it is accurate and reflects your opinions on coach leadership behaviours and team cohesion. If you wish to add or take away anything from the interview, I can do that before continuing with the study.

Thank you for your time in conducting this interview, I am really grateful and I am sure that you have produced some interesting data that I and others can use in the future to further understand the coach leadership behaviours and its affects on team cohesion.
Dear Participant,

I am a Level 3 undergraduate student in the Cardiff School of Sport, at the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff. I am undertaking a dissertation on the relationship between leadership coaching behaviours and its affects on team cohesion in a university netball team and wonder if you would be kind enough to help me with my research.

As a relationship between cohesion and leadership behaviour has been highlighted in the literature, I am interested to further investigate this finding within a netball setting. The relationship between leadership behaviors and group cohesion rests on two premises. First, group cohesion is an important influence on group performance. Second, of the antecedents to group cohesion, leadership is perhaps the most important because the coach is probably in the best position to influence the change in team cohesion. It is hoped that the results of my research will further the topic chosen topic area of netball, and aid with practical applications from a coaching and playing perspective.

As a subject, you will be asked to take part in three interviews over as period of nine weeks, each of them lasting for an hour. There are no risks involved in participation, although it is necessary that all participants involved in the investigation sign at the bottom of this informed consent letter. It is also necessary that a confidentiality and anonymity form so that privacy of the participants is upheld.

Confidentiality will be upheld as far as humanly possible. Your name will not appear anywhere at any time, and the features cited are only those relevant to the research. During the research process, the data will be kept by and access will be restricted to the principal investigator (Alexandra Grace Newman). Additionally any personal data will be analysed by the principal investigator and only codes will be used to identify participant data. Participation is entirely voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any stage of the research process and the humanity of each participant will be upheld regardless of their gender, ethnic origin, cultural background, sexual orientation, religion or political affiliation.

The final dissertation will be kept at the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff and will be submitted to my supervisor only.
If you are willing to participate in my investigation, then please read the slip below carefully and sign. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you.

Alexandra Grace Newman

I have read and understand the request to be a participant in the above research. I understand the risks involved. I understand that participation is entirely voluntary, and that withdrawal is possible at any time. I understand the measures that will be taken to uphold confidentiality. I agree to participate.

(Participant) Signature: 

Date: