

“Hero to Zero to Hero”

Exploring the Experiences of Football Managers
as they Socialise into a New Football Management Job Role

Steven Brian Taylor

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Abstract

Organisation socialisation is a dynamic, complex process that takes place when an individual transitions into a new job role. Often there are a wide range of factors that an individual faces as they adapt to a new organisation culture. Some individuals may be overwhelmed by a constellation of factors; for example, the socialisation content to be learned, the tactics that an organisation uses, people already in situ and political aspects that are already in play within the organisation (and workgroup). This thesis contributes to the organisation socialisation literature by providing the Hiplex-D model that represents the relationship dynamics that occur when a new manager is employed.

The model is based on 43 semi-structured interviews with managers (men's and women's football) to discover their transition experiences during their career. The longest career in men's non-league football was over 30 years, with several managers having relatively stable periods of between 5-8 years at one club. The majority of the managers have won promotion to a higher level e.g. the national league south (level 5) to national league, with some being promoted into the English League Division 2. The majority have had a successful career in football management, where movement from organisation to organisation is the norm rather than the exception. The ability to improve the performance of a team within a short period of time, and to keep winning, is the only guarantee of job role tenure.

The key findings were twofold. Firstly, it was discovered that there were many elements to the dynamic complexity of the socialisation process that made socialisation challenging in a short timeframe (5-6 weeks). The socialisation process is multi-level; from day 1, a variety of stakeholders engage simultaneously with the new manager. Socialisation is a competitive process wherein a new manager has to motivate a winning team. Creating and maintaining high quality working relationships requires the manager to apply a range of strategies and actions to create mutual benefits for themselves and a range of stakeholders.

The Hiplex-D model identifies that socialisation is multi-levelled, including an extra-organisational level which can be particularly potent. Customers, regulators, journalists (part of the media) and talent agents all compete with the new manager to socialise the new manager from outside the organisation and vice versa. The agency of the new manager during transition (socialisation) is found to be contingent upon three factors: the job role responsibilities, the job role position within the organisation structure, and the individual's ability to read the political landscape and modify their actions accordingly.

Secondly, the football manager has to demonstrate an ability to read the political landscape and choose political strategies and actions that show political astuteness in action. The ability to understand the football management role in terms of relative power relations/objective configuration enables the new manager to become a social chameleon. Key facets of political astuteness are the evaluation of the political strategies and actions available and the choice of one that enables the maintenance or improvement in a relationship. Many times this comes in the form of a compromise where the football manager flexes their objective as far as they can to align with the stakeholder concerned. The choice of the manager to work collaboratively or adversarially is explored during the socialisation period.

The transition made by internal appointees was more difficult than that of external appointees. Assistant managers (internal appointees) who had little or no experience of dealing with the organisation level, e.g. chair and board, and the extra-organisational level had not developed appropriate political strategies to deal with these stakeholders. The internal appointee transitions from a single level of socialisation, i.e. workgroup, where the manager enjoys significant relative power relations over the workgroup. However, at the organisation and extra-organisational level, stakeholders have relative parity or relative power superiority. This means that the new manager has to be more nuanced in their choice of political strategies and actions to protect the quality of each particular stakeholder relationship. For example, having a conflict with the chairperson may indeed end in a manager's immediate dismissal, whilst a conflict with a key workgroup colleague could lead to an emotional contagion that eats away at the fabric of the team.

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.0 Introduction

This chapter introduces the thesis by highlighting the rationale for the research, i.e. the academic puzzle that the researcher has chosen to investigate. The chapter will develop by outlining the overall aim, the objectives, and the research questions of this thesis. The research will be grounded in the organisation socialisation (hereafter socialisation) literature. Socialisation as a process involves negotiations between an applicant and employer, and, post-appointment, between the newcomer and the organisation (Feldman, 1976; Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008; Traeger et al., 2022). The socialisation literature has not, to date, highlighted the relationship dynamics that evolve during socialisation, nor how a new manager interacts with a multitude of stakeholders (Mitchell et al., 1997; Wood et al., 2021). From a socialisation perspective, it is key that a newcomer has the ability to deliver performance proficiency and maintain social acceptability (Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008; Traeger et al., 2022; Edwards & Jones, 2022).

1.1 Research Rationale

“There is a growing trend within the game for clubs to change managers more frequently, as there is so much pressure for short-term results. I am always sad when a manager loses their job. Clubs need stability and having been at Arsenal for almost 19 years now, I have been given the time to create a culture at the club, which is so important.”

(Calvin, 2015, pp. xiv)

The League Managers Association (LMA) statistics (Annual reports, 2018; 2019; 2020) highlight an annual struggle that managers must survive in their job role. In order to remain in post, the manager has to demonstrate performance proficiency in the job role. For some job roles, performance maybe relatively simple to understand, e.g. a regional sales manager maybe be set a target in sales revenue for their sales team to achieve. In the football context, success can be difficult to define, as a manager’s success may be measured as the number of trophies that an individual manager wins. However, Bridgewater (2010) has put forward as a measure the number of games won as a percentage of the games played under the manager’s stewardship at the club. These measures of

success can be short term, i.e. if the manager wins promotion, or a cup competition. One of the main issues is that all football clubs are not equal when it comes to investment into the player budget. Generally, those clubs who invest the highest relative amount tend to be expected to gain the highest league placing. For example, if Manchester City FC invested the highest investment in player wages, then it would be expected that they should achieve first place in the league. Moreover, managing an English Premier League team is likely to be more challenging than a championship club.

Decisions to remove a manager from post have been linked to the peculiarities of the football industry (Wilson, 2020). Some teams are likely to be placed in the relegation zone during the season, whilst the majority are going to be between the relegation zone and promotion places. The more successful teams are likely to be competing for promotion – this shows that club status, i.e. league position, is important as well as percentage points won. Wilson et al. (2020) highlight that teams at the top of the table should have no need to replace the manager. However, having just won promotion through the play-offs, Darren Moore moved on from Sheffield Wednesday. Audas et al. (1997) found that the performance of a team improves after a dismissal. However, whilst this puts forward a case to replace a manager, it is noted that one of the main triggers manager dismissal is a run of poor form. Wilson et al. (2020) qualifies this performance improvement: in the short-term there may be an increase in performance, but overall, a poor team may return in the longer term to the performance level they exhibited prior to the new manager's appointment. This may suggest that the new manager is being scapegoated at times for poor player performances.

Having considered different organisational literatures, e.g. sensemaking (Weick et al., 2005; Eddy-Spicer, 2019; Cristofaro, 2022), psychological contracting (Woodrow & Guest., 2020; Bari et al., 2020) and organisation socialisation (Traeger et al., 2022; Parnell et al., 2023), it was decided to tease apart the process of organisation socialisation. The process of organisation socialisation has been described by Gilmore and Hardy (2021, p.1):

“Socialization, the transition from newcomer to embedded organizational citizen, is an inevitable feature of organizational life. It is often a painful and traumatic experience, but why this is so, and how its difficulties can be ameliorated, is not well understood”

The socialisation literature to date is 50 years old and has identified many component parts of the socialisation process, including the need for a newcomer to learn about socialisation domains (Chao et al., 1994; Taormina, 1997; and Traeger 2022), for organisations to use a range of tactics to provide the newcomer with information on the organisation culture (Van Maanen and Schein, 1979; Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008) and for newcomers to proactively seek out information to fill in the gaps (Miller & Jablin, 1991; Mornata & Cassar, 2018; Bauer et al., 2021; James, 2022). However, there has been limited research that explains the dynamic nature of relationships when newcomers transition into their new job role. The key issue is that a new manager is likely to be faced by a wide range of internal and external stakeholders who are likely to try and influence the newcomer's socialisation through interactions.

From a socialisation perspective, how do managers assimilate a wide range of information on the organisation, whilst also dealing potentially with managing their job role and the potential conflicts that may arise with key colleagues and other stakeholders (Thomson & Sparkes, 2020; Johnson et al., 2021; Parnell et al., 2022)? There has been some key work that has started to tease apart the micro-political aspects of coaching and behaviours exhibited by coaches that are used to protect their own self-interests, and to perpetuate the current football habitus where there is a hierarchical social order (Cushion & Jones, 2014; Edwards & Jones, 2022). The new football manager has a particular set of challenges that make socialisation precarious, e.g. the dis-integration and re-integration of a team to improve performance, and sometimes the ability to appoint loyal allies (Morrow and Howieson, 2018; 2022).

Having carried out a literature review on organisation socialisation, it was decided to adopt a sensemaking approach. This is distinguished from sensemaking theory, where there are academic debates over, for example, whether sensemaking is retrospective or prospective. A sensemaking approach has been adopted more recently by Haski-Leventhal and Bargal (2008) and by Traeger et al. (2022). Through using coaching literature for example, the work of Cushion and Jones (2014), Morrow and Howieson (2018), Manley et al (2016) who use a Bourdieusian framework to understand interactions. This enables the researcher to explore political astuteness from the view of the manager wishing to protect the traditional habitus, whilst also adapting to pressures from regulators through coach education to be more supportive in the feedback given. This enables the researcher to seek out the tensions between maintaining social order within the field (Morrow and Howieson, 2018) on the one hand whilst enabling players to be treated as more than a factor of production.

1.2 Aims of Research

This study will contribute to the socialisation and football management literatures by exploring the experiences of managers socialising into a new football management job role.

The objectives are:

1. critically review and evaluate the existing literature on organisation socialisation (socialisation), identifying the relevance of this literature to the context of English football management;
2. explore, using the managers' experiences, the transition into a new football management job role;
3. present, in narrative form, a detailed understanding of the development of social relations during the socialisation period; [critical incident technique].
4. contribute to the organisation socialisation literature by producing a new model through analysing interactions between the newcomer and a wide variety of stakeholders.

The questions that this thesis looks to address are as follows:

- a. What is the job role of a football manager?

This question enables the researcher to investigate whether there are differences in the football manager role between the men's and women's game. Are there different positions within the organisation architecture that may help a manager to shape their own socialisation experiences?

- b. How do football managers transition into the new management role?

This question highlights the variety of routes into football management. This may have an impact on the socialisation stages that an individual has to journey through to be successfully socialised. Moreover, the socialisation knowledge already accumulated may help to create very different socialisation experiences.

- c. What socialisation challenges do new football managers experience during transition?

This question will help the researcher to identify the challenges which present themselves, the most obvious of which may seem to be temporality. The current socialisation literature has not concluded

whether socialisation is a multi-level process or whether stages are experienced concurrently.

d. How does the football manager show political astuteness while socialising?

If the manager deals with a wide range of stakeholders inside and outside the organisation, how do they decide what political strategies and actions to use to influence each stakeholder? How can managers change the situation to obtain an improved points per game outcome (Wilson et al., 2020)?

1.3 Planned Contributions

The first planned contribution to the socialisation literature is to identify the key responsibilities of the football manager. This study presents semi-structured interviews with a sample comprising managers in both the women's game and the men's game, in order to highlight the agency that the manager has when creating an organisation sub-culture (the football operations culture), how they socialise as managers, and how they socialise players within such a short space of time.

The second contribution is to examine the people and political aspects of socialisation, and to look at how the decisions and actions used by the managers account for different stakeholder objectives. Within socialisation, a newcomer is faced with developing and maintaining high quality social-professional relationships. The ability of a newcomer to read the political landscape is crucial, for example through understanding the impact of the stakeholder configuration - objective/relative power relations - on the choice of political strategy and political actions.

The third contribution is to design a socialisation model that includes the dynamic complexity of relationships during socialisation. In recent literature, Cloutier and Langley (2020) put forward that process theory needs to reflect the complex nature, as shown in recent research by Traeger et al. (2022) and Bauer et al. (2021). Traeger and colleagues link socialisation content domain with organisational tactics and emotions at different socialisation stages, whilst Bauer and colleagues use quantitative analysis to assess the rate of socialisation given the quantity of socialisation resources prior to organisation entry. The Hiplex-D model presents a range of aspects of socialisation, including a response to Ramarajan and Reid (2020), to explore the extra-organisational level, and shows how the stakeholder objective and relative power relations may be used by newcomers when deciding on political strategies and actions.

A fourth contribution is to the understanding of football coaching and the political astuteness that coaches need when operating in the football habitus. This is a habitus that is renowned for organisational hierarchy, where young players can be reduced in status through abusive language and humour designed to maintain the traditional social order (Manley et al., 2016; Edwards & Jones, 2022). On one hand, new managers are changing certain aspects of coaching practice, whilst still maintaining some of the traditional football habitus that sees the manager in a position of prominence.

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

The thesis consists of nine chapters. Following the introduction, **Chapter 2** presents some background information on the contexts that the manager faces when taking charge. This chapter provides some salient pieces of information, so that non-football academics may understand some of the key aspects. The chapter provides information on key themes, for example, league structures, club ownership and football fans, in order to facilitate understanding of some of the challenges that a new manager may encounter. The chapter is organised at three levels of socialisation – the extra-organisational level, i.e. the football industry; the organisation level, i.e. the board and club staff; and the workgroup level, i.e. the assistant manager and players, as per Ramarajan and Reid's (2020) suggestions.

Industrial challenges centre on football fans, league structures in the men's and women's game, the funding of football by foreign and UK benefactors, and the main objectives of a football club. At the player (workgroup) level, issues include the incidence of player turnover, coping with injury, and the psychological pressure of uncertainty e.g. a short working career. The chapter compares and contrasts the English Premier League, i.e. level 1, and the National League, i.e. level 5 (in the diagrams used tier, step and level are equivalent). The chapter gives an overview for the lay academic and then, in an additional section, covers developments in areas in which a more specialist academic may seek to research further.

An updated section provides a more nuanced look at recent themes in the sector for the more football savvy reader. This shows that identification of fans has become more complex, and the environments in which some managers work, e.g. men's football levels 6 and above, have become more competitive, with football agents replacing the role of the manager in scouting for players. Moreover, the sports director (director of football) at some top clubs has also eroded the ability of some managers to have discretion over player recruitment.

Chapter 3 reviews the literature on socialisation and football management in order to identify gaps in both bodies of literature. The chapter starts by discussing the different approaches and definitions of socialisation, identifying what has been researched and the areas which have been under-represented to date. The chapter identifies that socialisation is a complex process, of which the key component parts have been discovered. However, to date, the dynamic nature of relationships and the politics of relative power relations have not been foregrounded. From a micropolitical standpoint, sports coaching as a context has made advances in the understanding of micropolitics but has not yet developed a framework that explains how some managers survive socialisation through political astuteness.

Chapter 4 focuses on the methodology of the research. The design of the research project is outlined with its accompanying ontological and epistemological assumptions. The chapter reviews the data collection and analysis, which aims to provide a thematic data output that can then be used as a framework to drill down into the fine-grained detail. The chapter then reflexively considers the role of the researcher and that of the participants during the semi-structured interviews. In this case, both interviewer and interviewee may play one or more roles during the process e.g. both are likely to be both football fans and professional managers. The participants table gives a range of data that enables the reader to assess the credibility of the participants, without being able to identify the managers' identity as per ethical approval granted.

Chapter 5 is the first of three findings chapters and uses a thematic analysis to explore the manager's job role. The chapter highlights the key socialisation challenges, e.g. making sense of the job role challenge and socialising players in 5-6 weeks. The chapter explores the differences between men's football and women's football, e.g. where the manager's role sits within the organisational structure, and how this impacts upon their agency to effect change. Moreover, the chapter considers two contrasting aspects - the business aspects of the manager's role and the technical coaching and football operations role. Lastly, the chapter highlights the key changes in the manager's role over the last 20-25 years, e.g. the raised expectations that players will receive detailed feedback on performance based on sport analytics.

Chapter 6 reports on the two main ways in which managers socialise into their new role, i.e. as internal promotees or external promotees. The chapter highlights the key challenges of adapting to dealing with a much wider range of stakeholders at multiple levels. The stakeholder configuration is highlighted, i.e. the configuration of objectives/relative power relations, which enables a new manager to consider the decisions and actions that are open to them. An understanding of the configuration enables a new manager to build and maintain positive relationships where the manager is socially acceptable to the stakeholder. The role of the extra-organisational stakeholders and their ability to impact the new manager's role is highlighted, an area in socialisation literature that has been explored partially. In this thesis, consideration is given to multiple stakeholders, adding the process of prioritisation, which has not been shown by single stakeholder studies.

Chapter 7 presents the political strategies and political acts that are used by managers to establish/gain influence and protect that influence, once gained, within different environments. The chapter provides evidence of the experiences that today's managers had as academy players, where they learnt over an extended vocational socialisation how managers may make mistakes. They observed their managers making promises they did not keep, or not adapting their coaching style to become player centred. Firsthand experience, as a player, enables the new manager to understand that they need to develop and maintain high-quality working relationships. The development of political astuteness means that a manager will develop a range of political skills e.g. emotional intelligence and personal skills to sell a personal vision to player. Managers have to use their personal agency to recruit allies, whilst also aligning themselves with stakeholder objectives as far as possible. Selecting an appropriate political strategy and actions to maintain relationships and improve professional social relationships e.g. motivating stakeholders to support the manager's ambitions.

Chapter 8 presents the discussion and interpretation of the findings of the study. The manager experiences revealed that socialisation as a process was far more complex than has hitherto been acknowledged theoretically. The decision dynamics faced by the newcomer are potentially driven by consideration for who the newcomer is interacting with and their objective/relative power relations combination. Events can unfold when performance expectations are not achieved, whereupon the chair and board are likely to start micromanaging the situation. The newcomer is continuously under pressure to perform from a wide variety of stakeholders, in a highly public, achievement-oriented and time-constrained environment.

The chapter shows that those managers who have developed a political astuteness understand how to read the political landscape e.g. stakeholder objective/relative power relations configuration. Moreover, managers who create alignment as far as possible with stakeholders are more likely to succeed than those who do not. Political astuteness underpins the political strategies and acts used by managers to recruit players who they know are pre-socialised (pre-approved), to speed up the socialisation process. The new manager may have the agency to bring in new recruits with whom they have already worked at other organisations. This means that the manager can be relatively certain of what level of performance they can expect, which reduces the level of uncertainty with this particular individual.

Finally, **Chapter 9** draws conclusions from the study and presents opportunities for further research. The manager experiences have given a fresh perspective on how the socialisation process operates. The first contribution is the extension of the socialisation literature, by providing the new socialisation Hiplex-D (standing for high complexity dynamic model) which highlights aspects of complexity that had not been shown before e.g. dynamic nature, contrast between internal and external promotees, and prioritisation.

The conclusion is that socialisation is much more complicated than previously acknowledged. The Hiplex-D model has the following aspects: a) a stage aspect – accommodation and role management are simultaneous; b) a multi-level aspect – multiple stakeholders engage the new manager simultaneously, necessitating prioritisation and requiring political astuteness; and c) a relationship dynamics aspect, based on the objective/relative power relations configuration. The relative power relations show the ability of the newcomer to compete to socialise each stakeholder, and vice versa.

The ability to exert agency on the socialisation process depends upon three factors: the manager's job role responsibilities, the position of the job role within the organisational structure, and the ability of the individual to choose the most appropriate political strategies and actions, i.e. to be politically astute. The job role responsibilities highlight who the new manager has to work with internally, and the position will affect the relative power relations with internal and external stakeholders. Individual political astuteness shows relationship dexterity, to align the new manager's objectives as far as possible with a wide range of stakeholders.

Politically astute managers are able to select from a range of political strategies and actions in order to exert influence over others. This may involve using adversarial strategies and actions to weaken their opponent whilst using collegiate strategies and actions to empower their allies, in order to

change the organisation sub-culture (football operations) or recruiting pre-socialised (pre-approved) players who can be trusted to perform consistently from game to game. The manager's ability to read the political landscape enables them to predict outcomes from strategies and actions. This gives them a sense of how their actions may be perceived by others when developing personal credibility in the new job role. Personal credibility is contingent upon performance proficiency (negotiated with the chair and board) and social acceptance (negotiated with a much wider range of stakeholders).

Chapter 2 – The Football Context

2.0 Chapter Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to highlight some of the main factors that have influenced the football context since the research began in January 2018. Football could be considered a latter-day amphitheatre, where each week fans witness a competitive game in which there is an outcome. There is immediate gratification and tribalism - with in-groups and out-groups, winners and losers – in stark contrast to real life. Feelings of mundanity, boredom and routine are replaced with a rollercoaster of emotions. This chapter will cover some of the factors that impact football, to give the reader a brief overview of the football context.

The football context has been described by Critchley (2017, p.1) as:

“Football is about so many things, so many complex, contradictory and conflicting things: memory, history, place, social class, gender (masculinity and increasingly femininity), family identity, tribal identity, the nature of groups, groups of players and fans.”

It can be seen from this quote that football is indeed woven into the very fabric of the society we inhabit. For many who participate, it represents, at a deep psychological level, part of their personal identity – their local community. Moreover, football is also about collective memories of the glories of winning matches, leagues and cups, when disparate groups of people came together to cheer on their team. These memories are shared between the fans, directors and players who were there – who experienced the emotions of joy at winning or the sadness of defeat. As Critchley (2017) alludes

tos, football represents the complex, the volatility of change and the highs and lows of life – often all in one 90 minute spell per week. The aim of this chapter is to give some basic information that underpins the description of football above.

This chapter will explore the three levels of social context that a manager is likely to face, as proposed by Saks and Ashforth (1997) in the socialisation literature. The first level is the extra-organisational level i.e. the football industry in general; the second level is the organisation level i.e. the football club itself; and finally there is the workgroup level - the players, assistant manager, and manager. The chapter will unfold by reviewing the main issues that were facing the market in 2018, when this research began.

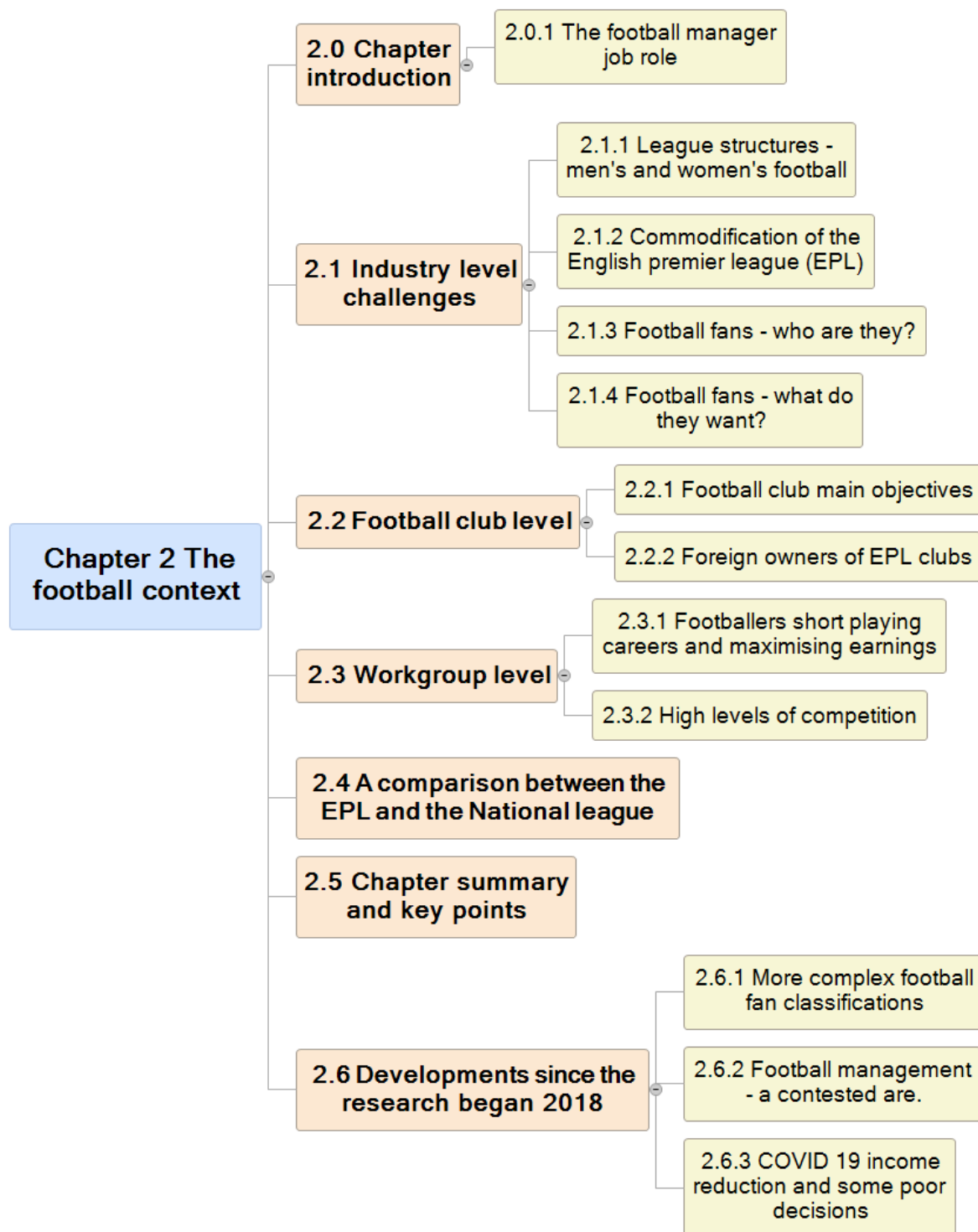
The researcher is aware that the global pandemic had a major impact on football during the study period. This is particularly true of the high-level, non-league men's sectors, and of the women's sectors. With isolation measures, non-league football clubs were supported with a fund of £10m, announced by Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden. However, as the non-league newspaper (NLN) reported (Richardson, 2020), the distribution of lottery funds between the National League and National Leagues North and South was open to huge debate regarding the way the monies were rationed between clubs in each league. The initial objective was for the grant to make up for lost revenue from match day attendance. This study freely acknowledges that the pandemic did indeed lead to unprecedented outcomes. The football context chapter (Chapter 2) is based on the somewhat more normal period before the pandemic of 2019.

In this research, the researcher adopts a sensemaking approach to socialisation; that is, learning is considered from a cognitive psychology perspective. The newcomer is faced with either a new organisation, a new job role or potentially both, providing a challenge of adapting to a new situation. Chao and colleagues (1994) highlighted six main domains that may form part of the socialisation process. These include acquiring some knowledge of the team's performance proficiency, people, language, politics, organisation goals/values and history. For examples see Haski-Leventhal and Bargal (2008) and Traeger et al. (2022).

The chapter will work through the themes identified in Figure 2.1, starting at the industry level by reviewing what is known about the fans and what they want. The chapter will then move forward by reviewing the league structures and league developments (men's and women's), followed by the commodification of football. Having completed a brief review of some of the key contextual factors at the industrial level, the chapter will work through, in order, the themes at the football club level. The context will be completed by considering the workgroup level, and some comparisons are drawn between the EFL and the National League.

In order to contextualise the football sector, the chapter will concentrate on the English Premier League (EPL), where information and research proliferates (Bridgewater, 2010; Wilson et al., 2020). Quite simply, the EPL is the highest-level football league in England. This league is made up of the top 20 teams in England and attains the majority of media and academic coverage. It attracts millions of fans watching in person, or via the TV broadcasting rights sold to Sky, BT Sports and Amazon (Deloitte's Money League, 2020). The rationale for using the EPL is that it provides the focal point for fans and local and national media as the highest standard of football in England. As Carter (2007) states, the media focus their stories and speculation on football's elite. There is information on the non-leagues; however, this is not always readily available in the public domain. The conclusion will give some appreciation of the convergent and divergent challenges faced by managers in different sectors.

Figure 2.1. Chapter 2 Plan – The Football Context



This chapter has been constructed to assist the academic reader by highlighting the potential impact of the areas mentioned. The information is laid out in the body of Chapter 2 with those interested in football in mind, then at the end of the chapter, Table 2F has been produced to indicate the potential challenge to a new manager. The context has been organised to coincide with the multi-level socialisation model that has been advocated by Saks and Ashforth (1997) – see the socialisation literature review in Chapter 3.

2.0.1 The Football Manager Job Role

In his seminal work, Roderick (2006) reflects on the Labour of Love that, for many players who become managers, means that they give a high level of commitment for relatively small financial reward. In the non-professional leagues, the managers attract much less attention, whilst their counterparts talent manage players worth millions of pounds in the English Premier League (2020). Penn (2002) highlights that the modern manager job role melds the traditional role, where the manager trains, develops and selects a team, with other tasks expected within organisations that are now more complex, such as managing budgets and signing players. Other managers may collaborate with a sporting director on player signings (Parnell et al., 2018; 2022; 2023). This has created job role conflict and job role ambiguity for the new manager (Parnell et al., 2018; 2022; 2023).

Traditionally, and for much of the sport's history, the manager has exercised legitimate authority based on how renowned they were as a player (Morrow & Howieson, 2018). Kelly (2008; 2017) highlights a longstanding tradition of learning by doing, which is, to some extent, very different from the industrial management tradition of management qualifications and personal experience. The football manager has lived with less formal rules and fewer regulations on how they operate – they are to some extent left to define themselves (Kelly, 2008; 2017). With the commodification of football (see later in this chapter), the manager may see their personal autonomy reined in as football organisations become more complex. Historically, there have always been tensions between the board and the manager (Kelly and Harris, 2010). The board and chair have usually invested financially in the club, and may view football as just another business with the associated factors of production. However, managers are resistant to board interference in football decisions, e.g. team tactics, player selection and which players are signed. More recent attitudes towards education (Morrow & Howieson 2014; 2018; 2022) highlight that, in the UK, managers are expected to have attained the UEFA A license. The modern manager is, to some extent, expected to be able to work

productively with the board and with marketing staff to promote the club, team and individual players as brands (Ogbonna & Harris, 2015; Molan et al., 2016; Morrow & Howieson, 2022).

The traditional manager still has significant power over academy players and over players in general. As Cushion and Jones (2014) found, there is still focus on managers instilling key behaviours that are required to succeed as a professional player. This is likely to involve the player dealing with the pressure to ask questions about their performance, whilst being subjected to the expectation to be respectful and submissive to the manager (Manley et al., 2016). Edwards and Jones (2022) highlight that managers sometimes use humour to undermine fellow coaches and players, in order to protect their status in the football club setting.

2.1. Industry Level challenges

The football industry in England is regulated by the England Football Association (EFA) who govern the game and who aim:

“To be the home of English Football Development, bringing to life and embodying the whole game coaching and playing philosophy outlined in The FA's Technical Guide, The Future Game. To be a one-stop coaching and support environment which enhances personal development, rehabilitation and fitness.”

(The FA, 2023. *The Vision*. www.thefa.com)

The EFA, whilst overseeing the game in England, reflects certain values of wider society, e.g. that football is for all. Thus, diversity and inclusivity are at the top of the agenda, and so is developing young footballers in a safe environment, e.g. safeguarding the players from abusive behaviour, whether verbal, physical or emotional. The EFA is in charge of rules, regulations and discipline from a regulatory perspective, as well as being responsible for encouraging the development of football at large, and the women's game, in particular, on the back of the European Championship in 2022.

2.1.1 Development and League Structures

The league structures that the English Football Association have adopted are reflected in a pyramid structure for both men's and women's football. There is a mechanism for teams to gain automatic promotion up the league pyramid, and there are automatic relegations down to lower divisions too.

Figure 2.2 on the next page shows an extract (Tier 1-5) of the women's game. The upwards arrows denote the promotion from a lower league to a higher league e.g. promotion from FA Women's National League North to the FA Women's Championship. The downward arrows (red) show relegation, for example from the FA Women's Super League down to the Women's Championship. Figure 2.3, on the next page, shows an extract of levels 1-6 in the men's football pyramid. The first four levels (1-4) are normally considered to be professional, full-time clubs, where the manager and the employees are in full-time football job roles. Levels 5 and 6 are likely to have a mixture of full-time managers and players and part-time managers and players. This will depend upon the financial backing that a club has. For example, some of the semi-professional teams are now attracting high-profile actors, such as Ryan Reynolds and Rob McElhenny, Hollywood actors and owners of Wrexham FC, and high-profile businessmen, such as Dr Abdulla Al-Humaidi, owner of Ebbsfleet United FC, who has invested in a large project called London Resort, a Disney-type theme park in London.

Figure 2.2. The FA Women's League Structure (extract of tiers 1-4)

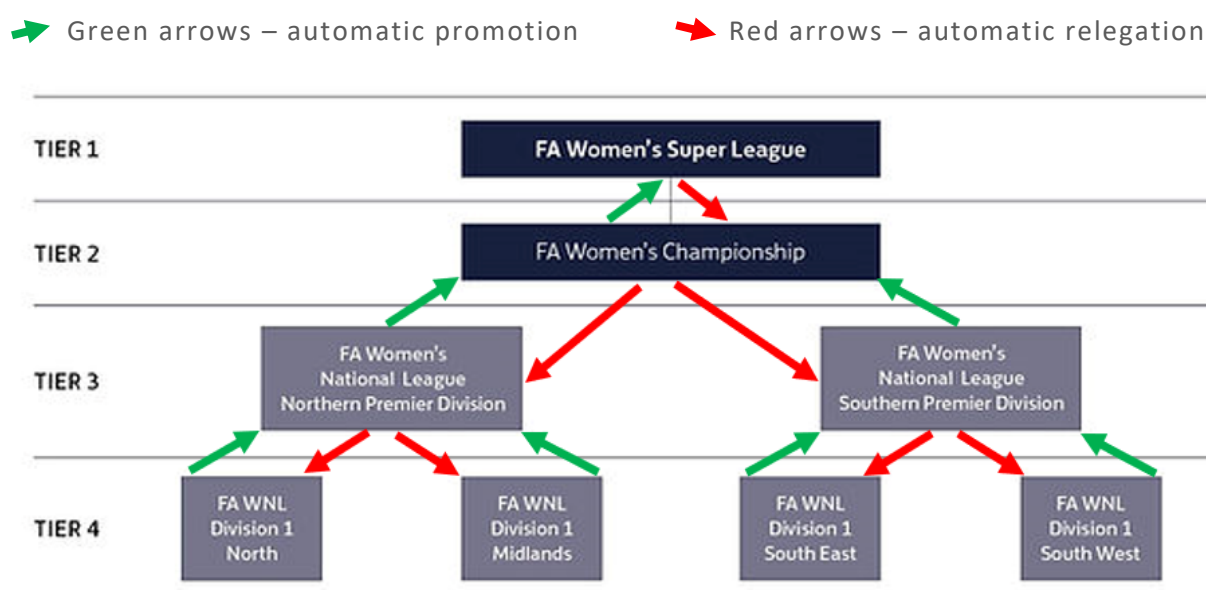


Figure 2.3. The FA Men's League Structure (extract of levels 1-6)

➡ Green arrows – automatic promotion ➡ Red arrows – automatic relegation



A new manager may be faced with taking charge of a team that is in the relegation zone, with implications for socialisation. This means that, should the team still be in this position at the end of the season, they will lose status, and will be playing at a lower level of football during the next season. However, the new manager may come in with a mandate to make sure that their team wins promotion or is in the playoff places. Most clubs want to avoid relegation at all costs, whilst winning promotion is remembered by club fans as a major achievement.

2.1.2 Commodification of the English Premier League

The English Premier League (EPL) began on 20th February 1992, in order to attract more fans, after clubs in the first division took the decision to break away from the Football League, which was founded in 1888, to take advantage of lucrative television rights offers. The deal with Sky was for £191m to televise 308 games between 1992 and 1997, at an average cost of £600k per game. This helped to globalise the audiences able to view EPL matches, audiences which included 300 million fans in China, 147 million in India, and 290 million across Africa in the 2018/19 EPL season. Moreover, 1.4 billion fans identify with a particular Premier League club (Sporting Index, 2021), which means that the EPL can attract record revenues through Sky, BT Sport and Amazon Prime Video. Figure 2C, below, shows that the main revenue streams for the EPL are commercial

sponsorship, broadcasting rights and match day revenues. As an exemplar, the researcher has the top 6 clubs' earnings during the 2018-19 season (Deloitte's Money League, 2020).

Of the three main revenue streams that football clubs attract, the first is commercial revenues from sponsorship. Well-known products and service organisations will pay to sponsor a club, for example by placing their product names on the team's shirts. Sponsors have included the car manufacturer Chevrolet, Standard Chartered bank and American Express (Sports Promedia, 2021). Effectively, this means that when a match is televised, the sponsoring organisation will be associated with a successful Premier League team, and will be featured during prime-time television. The logo of Standard Chartered was seen live around the world when Liverpool won the European Champions League in 2019, showing a 166% streaming growth for BT sport, with 4.8 million online and 11.3 million UK viewers (Sports Promedia, 2019). The sponsorship deals are negotiated between the organisation and the football club individually – for example, American Express are an American business with a base in Brighton, and they have just extended a partnership deal for sponsorship over the next 12 years, worth £100m (Sports Promedia, 2021).

Table 2A. Deloitte's Money League January 2020 – The Top 6 EFL Clubs

EPL Top 6 Clubs	Commercial		Broadcast		Matchday		Total Revenue
	£m	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m
Manchester United	279.6	45%	241.2	38%	106.3	17%	627.1
Manchester City	230.0	43%	253.2	47%	55.0	10%	538.2
Liverpool	186.0	33%	299.0	53%	83.0	15%	568.5
Tottenham Hotspur	133.9	29%	243.9	53%	81.5	18%	459.3
Chelsea	185.4	41%	200.2	44%	66.6	15%	452.2
Arsenal	110.9	28%	185.6	47%	96.2	24%	392.7

Source: Deloitte Sports Business Group (2020)

****Please note that the top 6 clubs appearing in Deloitte's Money League (DML) have**

been chosen to represent the ability of Premier League clubs to commercialise the football experience.

The second revenue stream in the table is broadcasting rights – for which the teams in a league get together and negotiate with broadcasters to televise their games live. These negotiations mean that viewers who subscribe to Sky, BT Sports or Amazon Prime can now watch Premier League games.

Broadcasting rights have changed football since 1992, with the inception of the EPL, as demonstrated by premiership matches available over an extended weekend, from Friday to Monday each week. Traditionally, fans enjoyed football on a Saturday afternoon; now, broadcasters schedule football on Friday night, Saturday and Sunday (three different slots), and Monday night, effectively trying to stretch the weekend for the viewers. For teams that reach the Premier League, Table 2A, above, shows that broadcasting revenues are the largest revenues for all of the top six clubs, except for Manchester United. When negotiating TV broadcasting rights, the teams who are members of the league collectivise their negotiating power by being represented as a group. The first deal between broadcasters and the EPL was for the 1992–1997 period. Sky purchased the broadcasting rights for £191m, costing 600k per match. The latest negotiations involving the Premier League, for 2016–2019, reached a deal wherein Sky pay £5.1bn for 3 years' TV coverage, or £10.2m per match. It can be seen that five out of the top six EPL clubs receive 44% or more of their revenue from broadcasting rights.

Match day revenue is the third source of income, which comes from fans attending the home or away venue to watch their team in person. The revenue includes match tickets, programmes, food/drink, and hospitality. However, whilst fans turning up in person to cheer their team on is indeed important, the revenue stream is by some margin lower than the previous two streams. Only Arsenal's relatively low commercial revenues are close to their match day income. Every football club in the EPL has three main income streams (Deloitte, 2020, 2021, 2022). There is an increasing overreliance on broadcasting rights; however, this is the way to reach fans who cannot make it to the stadia to witness their team's performance in person. Deloitte (2020) have mentioned the need for football clubs to engage in converting 'social fans' into 'focused' or 'vested' fans (Sutton et al., 1997). They highlight that clubs need to develop a 'stickiness', so that the fans do not hop from sport to sport in their TV viewing, e.g. one day football, the next day basketball (Deloitte's Money League, 2020). Buying high profile players and playing attractive football, as mentioned above, means that clubs are likely to retain fans locally and globally.

The

The expectations of the fans of a particular club may well start to influence a manager when taking up their new job role. Historically, there is an expectation of attacking football or skilled defence and counter attack. The potential impact, from a manager's perspective, is that during the socialisation period the manager needs to appreciate the football brand that they represent. The cultural aspects of how a new manager fits at Stevenage, Wycombe Wanderers or Manchester United are always on view, e.g. behaviours and language used during interviews or the way the managers engage with the local community (Chao et al., 1994). Ramarajan and Reid (2020) highlight that relationship reconciliation is a key aspect of socialisation between the new manager, players, and fans.

2.1.3 Football Fans – Who Are They?

This section will give an appreciation of who a football fan, or 'fanatic' (Agas et al., 2012) is, and what they are seeking from a football club and, consequently, a manager. The early literature on football fandom defined the fundamental difference between a spectator and a fan. A spectator is an individual who watches a sporting event from an analytical and emotionally detached position (Wann, 1995), i.e. they do not get excited about the result, and they do not suffer the feelings of hurt, pain, and sometimes despair as a consequence of their team losing. A fan is an individual who displays enthusiasm, passion, or an eagerness to engage in football as a sport, and who engages with a particular team (Wann, 1995).

Sutton et al. (1997) devised a classification of fans, distinguishing between social fans (low identification), focused fans (medium identification) and vested fans (high identification). Identification (allegiance) with a football team is based on satisfaction with the football club (organisation) and the team's performances. Fan identification, for Sutton et al. (1997), was based on emotion, financial commitment, and involvement.

Social fans (low identification) are characterised by a passive long-term relationship with sport, based on low emotion, low financial commitment, and low personal involvement. This means, effectively, that they are attracted to the sport for the entertainment value alone; there is no affiliation to a particular event and no affiliation to a particular football team. This type of person is motivated by the opportunities for social interaction, and the stress relieving qualities and entertainment that a football match provides (Sutton et al., 1997).

Focused fans (medium identification) are individuals who are attracted to an event, a star player, or a team because they have a high performing player or they are successful, i.e. the team wins the league regularly. Focused fans have common characteristics with vested fans (high identification), in

that they may have a high financial commitment and personal involvement (Sutton et al., 1997). However, the differentiating factor appears to be the link to performance; so when the team loses or a player moves on, the fan's commitment may wane. It would appear that these types of fans are attracted to achievement and the experience of vicarious achievement by association. Fans with the achievement-seeking aspect will be attracted by a 'Big Game' billing, e.g. the FA Cup Final.

Last in Sutton et al.'s (1997) categorisation are vested fans (high identification). This group are the strongest in terms of identification, and have the most loyal, long-lasting relationship with the football game and with a particular club. This means that this type of fan makes a high investment in terms of time (involvement) and money (financial commitment). This is supported by other scholars, who have highlighted that this type of fan has a high frequency of indirect consumption, e.g. media coverage of club developments, and discussion with other fans through social media (Tapp, 2003). Moreover, these fans are emotionally tied to the sport/club and talk about 'we' – the fan identifies themselves as part of the football team, i.e. they represent the club, and the club represents them. Fans may see the team as an extension of their community, or they may like to back an underdog, which means that their loyalty goes beyond the performance of the team (Tapp, 2003).

Table 2B. Football Fan Classification (Sutton et al., 1997)

Fan category	Relationship with sport	Emotional commitment	Financial commitment	Personal involvement	Characteristic
Social	Passive Long-term	Low	Low	Low	Attracted to sport and entertainment value. Social aspect of gathering with friends is main driver.
Focused	Medium Long-term	Medium	Medium	Medium	Attracted to the event because of a star player or a star team e.g. Cristiano Ronaldo. If the player moves to another club, the fan moves too.
Vested	Active Long-term	High	High	High	High levels of direct consumption and indirect consumption. Fan will not only watch the team but will think about the team between games.

Football managers need to be aware that vested fans will identify with the football club and see the football club as an extension of themselves. They will be emotionally involved in the team, i.e. when they are winning, they will be happy to exult the players and the team manager, and when the team loses, they will be unhappy with the players and the manager. The team is their team and any new manager to the club (as an outsider) may well have to convince the fans that they are the right person to run the fans' team. The vested fans are loyal to their community 'football club' and will come along whether the team wins, loses or draws (Sutton et al., 1997). The performance is sometimes more important than the result. The manager needs to be able to engage the fans as they are loyal to the club and only to managers whilst they are winning games (Sutton et al., 1997). Vested fans will still come and see the team when ticket prices go up, and they will invest time and money to keep up to date with football club information (Sutton et al., 1997). Moreover, for a vested fan, supporting a team is a large part of their social identity ('I am a Rovers/City/United/Wanderers fan'). They demonstrate personal interest in the team through thoughts – thinking about and talking about the team on a regular basis (daily/weekly); emotions – linked to the performance of the team (basking in reflected glory – BIRGing/cutting off reflected failure – CORFing); and actions – watching the team in person, wearing the club's colours and buying merchandise. The above acronyms will be explained later in the chapter.

From a socialisation perspective, it has been identified in the literature that it is very important to understand the customer's perspective. For example, Horvat et al. (2010) highlighted relationships between newcomer teachers and parents (a proxy for customers), and discussed the importance of this understanding. In the context of this research, it is important for the new managers to understand the level of attachment that fans have with the club, since this may help them to identify the fans who may be more vociferous in their feedback and who will take defeat more personally.

2.1.4 Football Fans – What Do They Want?

It is important for the football industry in general and football clubs specifically, that they understand why football fans are affiliated with a football team (Wann, 1995). In consolidating previous research, Wann (1995) developed a Sport Fan Motivation Scale, which puts forward 8 main factors that motivate fans to follow a football club. The first factor is **Eustress** – the psychological arousal felt when supporting a football team, and the increased feeling of self-esteem when the team wins. **Self Esteem** is the second factor, though it should be noted that there is potentially a downside, when 'your team' loses. However, whilst the concept of basking in reflected glory

(BIRGing) is the psychological association with achievement (success), there is an ego defence mechanism that creates distance between the fan and the team's defeat (Cialdini et al., 1976). This is described as cutting off reflected failure, or CORFing, wherein the fan makes excuses for the loss, e.g. 'we only played our second team in that match'.

Escape is the third factor, as the individual attempts to have an emotional experience away from the monotony of everyday life (Cialdini et al., 1976). It has been noted that job roles today invariably deal with one small part of a product or service. This is contrary to a football match, in which there is a start and finish, with a final outcome, and there is an opportunity to be part of the game through chanting and singing songs to encourage one's team to victory. **Entertainment** is the fourth factor in Wann's (1995) scale – the individual is entertained by the unpredictability of the event, the fact that the game unfolds in front of them in real time. The **Economic** factor, the fifth factor, is based on the ability to make money from the event. There have been many casinos, betting and gambling organisations that have advertised through football. The placing of a bet creates excitement that the individual may make some money from betting on the result of the game or other events, such as the team and the player to score the next goal.

The **Aesthetic** factor (the sixth factor) is based on the appreciation of the visually attractive nature of the game - athletic players, at the peak of physical fitness, playing at a highly skilled level. The pattern and style of play can be pleasing to the eye, as the game ebbs and flows and the play moves from end to end of the pitch. **Group Affiliation** is the seventh factor, it relates to the need for an individual fan to be part of a group. Fans who have allegiance to the same team have the same objectives. The wearing of team colours shows their allegiance, along with singing and chanting to encourage their players to play their best game – to outfight, outplay, and to ultimately be victorious. The last factor, the eighth factor, is **Family Needs** – the opportunity for fans to spend time with their family and to create shared memories of supporting their team. It should be noted that work by Trail and James (2001) on the Motivation Scale for Sport Consumption (MSSC) and by Funk et al. (2001) on the Sport Interest Inventory (SII) have supported the factors described in Wann's work (see the table below).

Table 2C. Analysis of Fan Motivation/Consumption Scales

Summary of all three models – convergent themes	Wann (1995) – Sport Fan Motivational Scale	Trail and James (2001) – Motivation Scale for Sport Consumption	Funk et al (2001) Sport Interest Inventory
Eustress	Eustress	Drama/Eustress	Excitement
Increase in self esteem	Self esteem	Achievement	Vicarious achievement
Belonging/group affiliation	Family/group affiliation	Family/social interaction	Family and friends bonding
Escape	Escape	Escape	Escape
Entertainment	Aesthetic	Attractiveness/skill of participants	Player interest and entertainment value

In summary, football fans support a team for a combination of reasons – the experience of physical excitement/emotional excitement, self-esteem boost through the team winning, affiliation with other supporters at the club and the club's fortunes. This may be experienced with your biological family, or 'fan family' at the club. The entertainment value of the game is dependent upon the team's skill level, pattern of play and fluidity of movement, and it provides an opportunity to get away from the monotony of everyday life.

From a manager's perspective, there are several key factors that lead to fan satisfaction. One may argue that this is primarily about winning games of football, or about playing in an entertaining match in which just missing out on a win may be acceptable. The pattern, style of play, formation and philosophy of the manager plays a part in the way that a team is schooled to play. Fans will attend wishing to see an entertaining game, in which drama unfolds in front of them, with twists and turns for the fate of their team during the 90 minute period (Calvin 2015). As football has become more of a business, with league identities used to brand or commodify football to millions of TV viewers, it is important that the newcomer understands the history, goals and values of the organisation (Chao et al., 1994; Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008; Traeger et al., 2022). The manager

and players have a marketing role, in which they must help the chairperson of a club to bring in additional income (Ogbonna & Harris, 2015; Liu et al., 2019).

2.2 Football Club Level

Whilst the industrial level has football fans wanting entertainment and escapism from the mundanity of daily life, and whilst football leagues are trying, along with members, to commodify their league brand – each football club is ostensibly fending for itself. However, a football club is, to some extent, a unique type of organisation, particularly due to the one vital ingredient that wins teams games – the football players.

2.2.1 Football Club Main Objectives

Sloane (2015) has identified several objectives that can be linked with a football club. The first, and arguably the most important, is its playing success, i.e. winning football matches. This is an objective that a wide variety of stakeholders associated with the club can agree on – chairperson, board, manager and assistant manager, players and fans. Brady et al. (2008) highlighted that there was a high correlation between expenditure on talent and average performance: average expenditure showed an $r=0.78$ relationship to average league position. This effectively means that those teams that buy the most expensive talent tend to be higher up in the league placings. Brady et al. (2008) pointed out that, in 2006, approximately 62% of EPL turnover was spent on wages and salaries, thus players comprise the main portion of expenditure. However, in football as a business sector, the purchase of the best players means that most football clubs have to manage the tension between playing success and football club security (Sloane, 2015). Football club security here is analogous to the accounting concept of a going concern i.e. the board ensuring to some degree that the club is run so that it continues to operate for the foreseeable future. It should be noted that this has not always been the case, with some chairmen putting playing success above football club security, which has led to a spate of football club insolvencies. In men's football, Bury FC went into administration in 2019 (BBC, 2019). From a profitability point of view, Financial Fair Play (FFP) was introduced in 2010 to stop football clubs from spending too much money on players. The basic philosophy is that football clubs should run their businesses to break even as a minimum – this means that the revenues of a football club should be equal to the total costs of the club (Geey, 2011). There are, however, some investments that are not included in the breakeven calculation. These are investments in football stadia construction and investments in football academies (Geey,

2011). Consequently, as Sloane (2015) states, match day attendance is also important as a revenue stream for football clubs.

The last objective identified by Sloane (2015) is to satisfy the fans. As mentioned above, the fan that is often considered the most valuable is the vested fan. The rationale behind this is that the vested fan is likely to have been supporting the club for several years. Moreover, they do not change allegiance, as the club is part of their local community or represents them as an individual, e.g. there are links with the social history of the area or the fan's personal values, or the team's formation is linked to a local church or trade union group. Early work on fan loyalty to football clubs appeared to show that fans follow their teams whether they perform well or not. However, Tapp (2003) and Williams and Caulfield (2019) point to the need for clubs to understand the complex nature of why fans support a particular team.

From a manager's point of view, the consideration of the club as a utility-maximising organisation means that they have to be aware of the fine balance between the tensions of conflicting objectives. The first tension is to push for as much money as possible, so they can buy the best quality players, and achieve playing success; however, overstressing funds may cause the whole club to become insolvent. Adhering to budgetary controls with the first team not only protects the first team, but also the wider organisational infrastructure, i.e. academy and youth teams.

The new manager needs to be able to make sense of the club's goals, values and history. For example, understanding how a club that was once famous and in the Championship, may now be in the National League. What has precipitated this downward trajectory? What is the expected performance proficiency, or the size of the job? For example, what are the expectations in the very short term – this season – and then for future seasons? In this context, what the chairperson of the club wants, such as their target standing in the league, should be supported by an appropriate level of financial support. Thus, a target of first place would ideally be backed by the highest relative player-wage budget, though in practice this may well not be the case.

2.2.2 Foreign Owners of EPL Clubs

There has been an increasing takeover of EPL clubs by foreign owners. The EPL clubs, as of January 2021, were owned by seven American owners, three Chinese owners, two Italian owners and eight British owners. Moreover, there were investments into EPL clubs by Russian, Taiwanese, Egyptian and Iranian owners. The EPL is indeed a global league, and it attracts very wealthy people with large sums of money to invest. At the time of writing, the Saudi Arabian Public Investment Fund (PIF) has

the highest wealth in the English Premier League, with £320bn, and they have invested in Newcastle United. The second wealthiest investor is Sheikh Mansour, personally worth £22.9bn, who owns Manchester City, followed by Roman Abramovich at Chelsea, personally worth £9.6bn. At the other end of the spectrum, from a personal net worth perspective, are Gino Pozzo at Watford, worth £93m; Mike Garlick at Burnley, worth £62m; and Delia Smith and Michael Wynne-Jones, jointly worth £23m, at Norwich City. The last three owners could be considered relatively poor, by EPL standards, particularly as Jack Grealish was transferred for £100m last year from Aston Villa to Manchester City. Osbourne and Coombs (2009) classified foreign owners in the EPL as enthusiasts, invaders, or savvy custodians.

The rich enthusiast owner treats a football club as toy or plaything (Osbourne & Coombs, 2009), with their main focus on raising their own profile as an owner, and on inflating their ego by winning leagues and trophies. Osbourne and Coombs (2009) cite the rich enthusiast as having a love of sport but no particular loyalty to any one club. However, whilst wealthy owners such as Roman Abramovich and Sheikh Mansour may be seen as simply rich enthusiasts, there is a counter argument that both have made significant developments at both Chelsea's Chelsea village, and Manchester City's training complex. However, rich enthusiasts can become too involved in the operational running of a club, which may put them in a conflict situation with the manager.

Foreign invaders are described as individuals who are interested in profits first and foremost, they tend not to be interested in the social history of the club *per se* (Osbourne & Coombs, 2009). An example of this is the takeover of Manchester United, which was achieved through a leveraged buyout – the Glazer family borrowed a loan against Manchester United's future earnings. They used this money to buy the club, which meant that Manchester United had the debt to service. Usually it is the new owner that borrows the money and services the debt. One advantage of the rich enthusiast is that they do not look to make a profit out of the club, whilst the foreign invader's objective is to do exactly that (Osbourne and Coombs, 2009).

The last category is the savvy custodian, who understands football as a business, and as a traditional sport. Primarily, this type of owner is interested in the football club as a long-term investment. Osbourne and Coombs (2009) highlight that, for the savvy custodian, there is a genuine interest in developing the football club as a brand, thus becoming a custodian of community assets.

To develop the revenue streams of their clubs, some new owners have considered developing new stadia. This may mean moving away from the area that has been associated with the club for many years. Putting commercial concerns before the fans has been an accusation that some owners have been charged with. During the COVID-19 outbreak, in April 2021, an announcement by several clubs

at the top end of the EFL put forward that they were joining an elite European Super League with other top teams from Spain and Italy (BBC, 2021). Thus, the richest clubs seem intent on getting richer at the expense of those lower down the league pyramid, e.g. the English Football League. Fans of the clubs involved (Manchester United, Liverpool, Tottenham Hotspur, Arsenal and Chelsea) expressed their dismay, as they felt that this was yet another breakaway, very much in the style of the EPL, to gain a sustained financial advantage. However, this move was undertaken during the pandemic, when the National League (level 5) and the National League North and South were given a £10m national lottery grant to keep the clubs in these leagues, 66 clubs in all, from going into insolvency. The main issue was that the lower league clubs have less opportunity to raise revenue from commercial and TV broadcasting rights. This means that fan attendance forms a much larger proportion of their overall revenue – quite simply, with COVID-19 and no fans, there was no revenue. The outcry that the European Super League provoked united fans, players, and some managers against the owners (BBC, 2021). This has since led to a call for finances to be shared more equitably with lower league teams, as the teams in the National League and National League North and South provide opportunities for young academy players at top sides to develop from youth players to senior professionals. For example, a young player at Watford may go on loan to Kings Langley to attain game time and to get a taste for the more physical men's game.

The appointment of a manager is a critical interaction where the new manager is likely to need to assess the chair and board of directors. The managers are likely to seek out information that gives guidance on the chair's objectives for the club – what is their motivation for investment in the club. The potential impact on the manager is that they might misread the owner or chairperson at interview. The socialisation literature has highlighted that the anticipatory socialisation stage is very important for both the individual and the organisation to assess mutual benefits and gain a mental image of what it will be like working with each other (Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008). However, should the outsider become a new member of the organisation, they may discover that the actual reality is somewhat different from the reality they have constructed through sensemaking. Reality shock may follow, with the impact that the manager may think of leaving. It is important to understand the people and their agendas, although the socialisation literature suggests that this may be difficult to establish early on.

2.3 Workgroup level

Managers spend the majority of their time with players. Many of them have been academy players before being released, having worked at Premier League youth academies. The player is challenged

by the physicality of the football, and the fact that a human body deteriorates through usage over time. Moreover, being a player means that you are one of many seeking employment in an overcrowded market. In any squad, there will be those who start for the team, those who are on the periphery and those who have few or no opportunities to play a game that they love.

2.3.1 Short Playing Careers and Maximising Earnings

Footballers have short careers; they usually have a maximum career span from 18 years of age, when a player turns into a senior professional, until 35 years old. Consequently, professional footballers who remain injury-free receive just 204 pay packets in their lifetime as a player (Calvin, 2015). This means that there is intense pressure for the player to move up the league pyramid and play at the highest level at the earliest opportunity. For many footballers who have injuries, this maximum career length is cut to somewhere between 8 and 11 years (PFA, 1998). For those who are lucky and stay fit, the 204 wage packets would ideally provide for their needs from the age of 35 years until they pass away. The time at which a player retires may be decided by many factors, the majority not under the player's control. A sudden injury, or a new manager who does not want them, will determine whether an individual player chooses to leave the game, or the opportunity to play the game leaves them. Data from the professional footballer's association (PFA, 1998) states that approximately 10% of players leave the professional game each year.

Footballers are paid high sums of money when playing in the EPL, principally for two reasons. Firstly, the presence of a marquee player – one of the top players who can impact the outcome of a game – means that a team are more likely to win the league and compete in domestic (English) cup competitions and European cup competitions. Marquee footballers such as Cristiano Ronaldo (Manchester United), Kevin De Bruyne (Manchester City) and Mohamed Salah (Liverpool) will increase merchandising by the purchase of replica shirts, and will attract more fans globally (in this example, they will attract fans from Portugal, Belgium and Egypt respectively). Moreover, with their teammates they create a brand of football within their teams that fans want to pay to watch – in person, but more likely at home on Sky, BT Sports and Amazon Prime Video. At the time of writing, Ronaldo earns £26,520,000 per annum over two years, Kevin De Bruyne earns £20,800,000 per annum over two years and Mohamed Salah earns £27,833,465 per annum over five years. Another way of measuring the desirability of a player is the term of the contract they are offered – by tying a player down for five years, a club is depriving its competitors of this player's talents. Two-year extensions are sometimes agreed to extend the five years that a player has played for one club i.e. they will have been at the club for seven years.

Table 2D. Analysis of the Top Six Salary Spending Clubs in the EPL 2018-19

Rank	Team	Active Players	Forwards	Midfielders	Defencemen	Goalkeepers	Est Total Salary
1	Arsenal FC	28	£31,307,273	£51,194,000	£34,164,000	£37,284,000	£153,949,273
2	Manchester United FC	26	£39,520,000	£56,680,000	£37,180,000	£15,600,000	£148,980,000
3	Manchester City FC	26	£44,200,000	£50,440,000	£43,026,000	£7,540,000	£145,206,000
4	Chelsea FC	28	£10,140,000	£70,162,000	£43,628,000	£11,596,000	£135,526,000
5	Liverpool FC	26	£38,480,000	£46,800,000	£29,900,000	£7,800,000	£122,980,000
6	Tottenham Hotspur FC	23	£23,348,000	£30,680,000	£23,998,000	£8,320,000	£86,346,000

Source: Sportsmedia (2021)

The other main concern for a manager, apart from having expensive marquee players, is the total cost of the squad wage bill. It has long been accepted as a rule of thumb that the relative expenditure by a club compared to their rivals usually determines their likely league placing at the end of the season. So, based on Table 2D, Manchester United would be expected to win the league, Chelsea coming second and Manchester City coming in third. However, the expected placing does not mean that the team will play in alignment with expectations. Underperformance is rarely tolerated in the EPL – with a squad of expensive players comes the expectation that the manager will have the tactical savvy and the motivational skills to deal with players who earn more in a year than many companies earn.

Until the Bosman ruling in 1995, a football club could sign a player and then control whether that player moved to another club or not, even after the expiry of the contract with the club (Frick, 2009). For example, if Ismailia Saar signed a contract with Watford FC for 5 years (prior to 1995) he would be left with Watford after his contract finished. Moreover, until another club was prepared to pay a transfer fee, he would have to stay with the club. However, Jean Marc Bosman won a landmark court case that now allows players, as free agents, to sign for another club at the end of the contract. This means that footballers now have contractual power when coming to the end of a contract. They can see the contract through, then they are free to move; this puts the onus on the club to sell the player in good time if they want a transfer fee. The argument is that the club should be paid a fee due to the training and development of the player achieved during the contract.

Potential new managers need to be aware of the value of players at different levels within the football pyramid. As they may aim to gain promotion up the league pyramid, they are likely to be dealing with players who earn more money, and with this may come a larger ego. This may affect player attitudes and the manager's ability to instil an organisation's cultural behaviours, attitudes

and professional standards, on and off the pitch (Molan et al., 2016). The players are also now in a more powerful position at the end of a contract with a club; they are entitled to move to another club as a free agent.

2.3.2 High Levels of Competition

Football is a highly competitive, highly contested area in which there is an oversupply of players both for non-league and professional teams, and an oversupply of coaches who may want to progress to manager. The BBC (2021) reported that out of 1,500,000 hopefuls, only 180 young players will forge a career in the EPL. That is 0.012% who make it as a professional in the EPL. This creates an environment where there is a constant tension between competing for a starting place in the team, and being collaborative with teammates. This means, to an extent, that players and even coaching staff cannot trust each other. Coaching elite players does not happen in a hygienic vacuum – it occurs in an industry in which everyone is out to protect themselves and their hard-won jobs. Potrac et al. (2013a) highlight that whilst there may appear to be a camaraderie on the surface, coaches are indeed involved in micropolitical acts to preserve their job role. Coaches who could be supportive stand by and watch fellow coaches (competitors) make rudimentary mistakes when joining a football club, whilst head coaches may undermine a skilled coach by changing the session objective without telling them (Potrac et al., 2012). This can mean spotting a mistake in a close friend's session, then correcting the session and taking the glory, leaving their friend undermined in front of the players (Potrac et al., 2012).

Players are constantly under pressure to make the grade at each level of development. Brown and Coupland (2015) highlight that players put themselves first and the team second, generally. The players want to play professionally, and that means wanting to claim their spot in the team for the next game. The psychological focus is constantly on monitoring what they eat and how they train, and extends to their every waking thought (Brown & Coupland, 2015). This means the selection decision made by the manager is all important – if you are selected you are part of the team membership. Players may perceive themselves as a marginal player when they are not starting in the first team. Beech (2011) identified that the players who are not in the team feel a sense of ambiguity and 'in-between-ness'. Moreover, players are open to criticism from others, e.g. fans and other players, that they are not full members of the team – for example, that they are inauthentic or fake (Costas & Fleming, 2009). When players are injured or not performing well, they are not attending

matches with the first team, and this changing of membership status is something that players find hard to get used to.

Brown and Coupland (2015) highlighted that an elite club creates an environment where players are under pressure from several groups of stakeholders. Players are formally under pressure when the fans attend a game, and when the chairperson has a meeting with the whole squad. However, Brown and Coupland (2015) relate players' experiences of being informally under pressure when the chairman was kicking a ball around after a game. This shows that some owners may be invasive and get too involved with the team. There is a continuous pressure to be the best every day. According to Brown and Coupland (2015), the majority of players, whilst they had friendships within the club, always wanted to be selected over their friend when it came to playing. As mentioned earlier, players can never be certain of playing – injury, poor form, or outside challenges like family illness or the birth of a child may affect the player's performance. Human beings are assets that are frail and can perform at various different levels; consistency is not always assured. Brown and Coupland (2015) highlighted that professional players were single minded, had rivalries within the team, and experienced an overwhelming relief when being selected for the next game. However, not being selected was shared as an anxiety-provoking experience, wherein some players reflected on their performances rather than ranting at the manager. The power of the manager to discipline a player and the relative powerlessness of the player drove some players to conclude that it was up to them to improve their performances.

Potential new managers need to remind themselves of the disappointment they felt when they were not selected in their early professional socialisation. The players may want to hear of their selection or their absence from the team sheet in other ways. Whilst the new manager has the power to make selection decisions, the way they make them may well dictate a player's engagement with the team, and more importantly whether they identify with the new manager. The socialisation literature has stated that relationships between a line manager and a newcomer (in this case, a player) are important for the newcomer's adjustment (Sluss & Thompson, 2012).

2.4 A Comparison Between EPL and National League

The majority of the participants in this study were involved in football from a young age. They invariably began their career at English Premier League (EPL) academies, which means that they had an opportunity to experience socialisation with a large number of boys as they started as potential professional players. So, the researcher feels that there is a validity to including the EPL as a

benchmark. There is also a practicability, in that many football clubs are below the threshold for a small-medium enterprise for accounting purposes, and can file unaudited abridged accounts, which give significantly less information, i.e. a statement of financial position only, which does not in itself tell the reader where the football club is incurring significant costs.

The football context chapter has looked at the experiences of managers and what is affecting them in the EPL. Table 2E, below, shows some comparative data to give an indication of scale, based on data for the 2018-19 season (when the research began). The metrics have been chosen to compare key factors in the football business: the highest attendance at matches measures quantity of customers attracted to a team, whilst distribution from the league is a reward for playing at a particular level of expertise. The ability to attract players and pay high salaries is the next comparator, and the last is the net worth of the business – how much the assets of the club are worth. Technically, from a business point of view, this is unknown until the business is sold, as purchasers may well be prepared to pay above the asset values for the reputation of the brand or the loyal customer base.

The headline here is that everything is far bigger in the EPL. The top two clubs had attendances that were nearly 15 times (74,498:5,444) and 12 times (59,899:5,415) those of the National League's top two clubs. The distributions to the EPL clubs were just under £150m each, whilst Wrexham's was just over £4.113m, the larger clubs' distribution revenues were approximately 36 times the size. The revenue difference enables EPL clubs to fund marquee players who earn £18.2m per annum (Alexis Sanchez and Mezut Ozil), whilst the highest-level players in non-league teams earn just £208k (Adam Rooney) and £140.4k (Sam Deering). The two highest EPL clubs are 886 times and 1218 times more valuable than the top two National League in their respective statements of financial position.

The EPL clubs can be classified as global football brands that attract TV viewers across the world, with fans in China, India and South Africa. The EPL is a global football league brand, and the clubs Liverpool, Arsenal, Manchester United and Manchester City have global fanbases. Sponsors are international brands – US bank Standard Chartered for Liverpool, Emirates airline for Arsenal, Etihad airline for Manchester City and US car manufacturer Chevrolet for Manchester United. The owners are American business owners (Liverpool, Arsenal and Manchester United) and an Emirati prince (Manchester City) with net worths of £billions each. These clubs have footballers who are household names with celebrity status, which means that, in order to win their respect, the managers at these clubs must be a top ex-professional footballer or top manager.

The non-league managers have a different set of challenges. Some of them are part-time managers. This means that they fit their manager job role around another business or full-time job. Often, the

clubs that they work at utilise volunteers, helping the club to minimise wage costs. The non-league managers have to be able to spot a player who represents a potential bargain, e.g. a player who is technically skilled but has fallen out of the Premier League academies and is looking for a route back into the professional game. The lesser financial resources the managers have often means that they cannot offer players the security of a contract. Nor can they afford to have an injured player, which costs the owners (usually local businesspeople) money.

The EPL manager is likely to have an infrastructure of coaches and support staff to help them to get the best performance out of their players. This may include specialist coaches for strikers and goalkeepers, and a sport scientist who measures match performance data, e.g. kilometres run, passes completed and tackles made, depending upon the player's position. Moreover, these clubs are likely to have a network of scouts who attend matches looking for young talent to join the club internationally. Meanwhile, the National League manager are likely to be a full time manager with less support resources.

Table 2E. Comparing the EPL and National League Using Metrics

The EPL 2018-19 season	Team	Figure	The National League 2018-19 season	Team	Figure
1. Highest average attendance	Manchester United	74498 fans	5. Highest average attendance	Leyton Orient	5444 fans
Second highest average attendance	Arsenal	59899 fans	Second highest average attendance	Wrexham	5,415 fans
2. Highest EPL distribution	Liverpool	£149.0m	6. Highest NL distribution	Leyton Orient	Small co accounts - no revenue details
Lowest EPL distribution	Manchester City	£147.5m	Lowest NL distribution	Wrexham	£4,113
3. Highest paid player	Manchester United	Sanchez £18.2m per annum	7. Highest paid player	Billericay Town	Deering £140.4k per annum
Second highest paid player	Arsenal	Ozil £18.2m per annum	Second highest paid player	Salford City	Rooney £208k per annum
4. Net worth of club per	4a. Liverpool	£248.227m	8. Net worth of club per	8a. Leyton Orient	£280,890
Statement of Financial Position	4b. Manchester City	£756.721m	Statement of Financial Position	8b. Wrexham	£620,939

2.5 Developments Since the Research Began in 2018

The researcher has identified some of the developments in the football context since the beginning of the thesis. These are not exhaustive, but they show how the analysis has become more intricate as marketeers try to unpick consumer behaviour in sport. The effect of the global pandemic on the income streams of clubs up and down the football pyramid is considered, alongside the development of organisations where football agents and sporting directors are nibbling away at the manager's autonomy.

2.5.1 More Complex Football Fan Classifications

Since the commencement of this thesis, the football context has changed. The identification of the different types of football fans has become more nuanced, with the models put forward by Guilianotti (2002) and Tapp (2004) challenging the definitions of Sutton et al. (1997) and the earlier work on fan motivation by Wann et al. (1995), Trail and James (2001), and Funk et al. (2001).

Guilianotti (2002) identifies supporters, followers, fans and flaneurs as the main types of fan. The **supporter** has a high degree of personal loyalty and long-term investment in the club, i.e. a deep emotional link, whilst **followers** are interested in clubs, players and managers. This is likely to mean that the follower has varying levels of loyalty to several clubs. **Supporters** may be seen as identifying with a club or specific players - fans may have a high degree of identification show an emotional loyalty. Fans may have a medium level of identification with the club, not as deep as that of supporters e.g. do not have a season ticket. **Flaneurs** are characterised by low solidarity with fans, i.e. they consume football via social media, television or the internet – a de-personalised form of engagement.

Jaeger (2021), using stakeholder theory, which utilises the work of Mitchell et al. (1997) and Wood et al. (2021), highlights the relevant characteristics of power, legitimacy, interest and social identity. Jaeger (2021) identifies the following fan typologies: (1) active fans, (2) consuming fans, (3) event fans, (4) corporate fans and (5) passive followers. This is based on five characteristics. **First**, football fans can be classified by their various positive and negative impacts on their club. **Second**, football fans can be classified by the legitimacy of their relationship to their club. Besides their interest and moral stake in their club, fans in the German club structure can also hold a legal and financial stake. **Third**, interest – football fans can be classified by their sports-related, economic, social or political interest in their clubs. **Fourth**, social identity – football fans can be classified by their social identities,

including age, gender, nationality, social status, educational background, sexual orientation or ethnicity. **Fifth**, involvement – while some fans are “passive followers” of their club (e.g. via TV, print or online consumption), others are actively involved through membership and corresponding voting rights, match-day activities, choreographies or political initiatives.

Jaeger (2021) shows the complex nature of classifying football fans and, in particular, that the typologies may well be different depending upon the national league being studied – in this case, Germany, where the 50 + 1% rule means that football clubs are not owned by just one owner, as can be the case in the UK. The 50 + 1 rule means that 51% of the club is owned by members, giving the fans a say in their club. Fan ownership tends to happen in England where financial mismanagement has led to football clubs becoming insolvent, e.g. Portsmouth, Wimbledon, and smaller clubs such as Wycombe and Exeter City. The main insight for the reader is that football fans are being classified in a much more complex way than ever before.

In the English leagues, the benefactor model still persists, with some notable owners of the professional clubs which have been promoted. This pathway attracts high-net-worth businesspeople, and indeed Hollywood actors, who can afford to use their personal wealth to invest in a football team. Well known owners include Ryan Reynolds and Rob McElhenney (RR McElhenney LLC) who bought Wrexham for £2 million (Ostlere, 2023), and the owners of Notts County, Christoffer and Alexander Reedtz, who run a business using mathematical modelling in the sports industry, similar to Moneyball (Gallagher, 2023).

2.5.2 Football Management – A Contested Arena

With the commercialisation of football, and the evolution of the top clubs in the English Premier League and the Championship into multinational organisations with complex structures, the football manager role, too, has changed. In the Premier League, there has been an increased tendency to employ a director of football or a sports director (Parnell et al., 2018; 2022; 2023). The sports literature has pointed out that, at present, there is no generic role for the director of football, although it may be seen that, recognising that managers may come and go, the sporting director role has been synonymous with the maintenance of the club culture. The insertion of a sport director into some clubs has caused job role ambiguity over who signs players on behalf of the club, and indeed who takes the credit for a football team's (and club's) success or failure. The traditional manager's role has evolved, with many managers involved in budgetary management, mindful of club sustainability overall. Kelly and Chatziefstathiou (2020) have highlighted another potential

erosion of the traditional manager's role, with the de-regulation of football agents. The incursion of the football agent has for some been unwelcome, as any individual can set up as a football agent. Moreover, the potentially unethical way that some agents induce young aspiring professional players into signing as clients (Kelly & Chatziefstathiou 2020) has caused concerns. The agent has effectively taken the role of scouting away from the manager; some may argue that this does help the manager to focus on the technical aspects and on pitch performance. One of the key issues with the regulation of football agents is whether the regulatory bodies governing football understand the complexity of the football agent role.

2.5.3 COVID 19 Income Reduction and Some Poor Decisions

Parnell et al. (2022) highlight the highly networked nature of football as an ecological system populated with many different stakeholders. As outlined in this work, whilst the business world generally was impacted markedly by the financial crisis of 2008-2009, as an industry, football thrived. However, COVID 19 had major impacts on football clubs and their decision-making. In England, the government introduced a furlough scheme to encourage employers to keep employees employed until the COVID 19 situation abated. Some football clubs in the English Premier League, e.g. Liverpool and Tottenham Hotspur, decided to use the furlough scheme for their players. However, they then U-turned on the decision in the face of intense public scrutiny and fan resistance, when many football stakeholders challenged the legitimacy and morals of the club.

For smaller clubs, fan attendance on match day is a large part of their income stream – the main income streams being broadcasting rights, commercial sponsorship and match day income (Deloitte Money League, 2020). During the pandemic, many football clubs had to reduce operating costs, the main expenditure being player wages. As Parnell et al. (2022) highlight, these clubs took a variety of steps, some negotiating with players for a wage cut. A wage cut, for some clubs, meant that no players were made redundant. Kennedy and Kennedy (2021) highlight that Premier League clubs who did use the government furlough scheme came in for criticism from the fans. It was an expectation that financially wealthy owners should foot the bill for non-playing staff. Due to pressure applied by the media, the clubs who chose to furlough were characterised by journalists as treating their employees as commodities (Kennedy and Kennedy, 2021). However, during COVID 19, individual players and the trusts of some football clubs provided relief through pledging money to food banks, using stadia for the distribution of vaccines, and sourcing and providing personal protective equipment (PPE) (Kennedy and Kennedy, 2021).

Pedgen (2022) highlights that Leicester City had their match day receipts reduced to £552,000, down from £13 million the season before. This was in addition to Leicester City paying back £11.5 million to broadcasters for fixtures that were deferred. Moreover, even Leicester's success from winning the FA Cup in May 2021 was affected by COVID 19, with the prize money reduced by 50% to £3.4 Million. This shows the financial impact of having to play matches behind closed doors i.e. no fans in attendance, and the impact on broadcasting rights, a mainstay of finances in football (Deloitte's Money League, 2022).

These are some of the factors that show that football management continues to be a complex area to understand. Within the generic stakeholder category of 'fans', there may indeed be several typologies which may have an impact, with larger clubs attempting to produce a global brand e.g. from a marketing perspective, whilst other clubs may have a more local fan base. The manager is potentially embedded within an ever-increasingly complex organisational structure, which can contribute to job role ambiguity. COVID 19 showed how interconnected clubs in England are to their owners, i.e. their benefactors, and the fortunes of their businesses. Lastly, some clubs lower down the football pyramid are reliant on local sponsors and match day attendances, as they are unlikely to feature on television, thus do not gain revenue from broadcasting rights.

2.6 Chapter Summary and Key Points

This chapter is summarised in a table, as there has been a great deal of nuanced detail and analysis above. This detail has been left in to demonstrate that even at a relatively simple level, as with so many industries, there is indeed significant complexity. It is not the concepts themselves that are complex, but the combination of three different foreign owner types, three different fan types, seven different factors that fans look for – very quickly the complexity multiplies.

Table 2F, below, summarises the challenges that a manager may find at different levels. In order to simplify these, a potential impact column has been added to aid understanding. As with so many organisational concepts, and indeed in sporting literature, the contexts in which they are carried out are increasingly complex. The table aims to give some insights to help the reader see football as a commercial venture. It is safe to say that many football clubs do not make large profits as they compete to attract the best players to their teams.

Table 2F. A Summary of Challenges and Potential Impact for the Manager

Contextual Information - Industry Level	Relevance to the Manager	Potential Impact
Football fan classification	Convert social fans who visit once a season into vested fans who visit 10 times a season	Increase sales revenue on match days
	Vested fans are likely to buy more merchandise, such as a replica kit, or a season ticket to all home matches	Increase sales revenue on match days
	The difference between a follower and a supporter. Followers emotional link to one club whereas supporters may form attachment to multiple clubs as a player moves between one club and another.	Recruiting marquee players (high profile) may mean that some supporters split their attendance at games. So recruit players who remain relatively loyal to the manager. Keeps players at the club (less ego) and keeps followers interested in the club rather than supporting a marquee player at another team.
What do fans want to experience at a game?	Provide family packages to encourage the whole family to attend a game. Play attractive, attacking football with flair players	Increase group and younger fan attendance
	Design tactics to attack the opposition - the pace of the game is fast, the players are skilful, and athletic.	Improve the style of play - football as entertainment. Team formations that are flexible to enable the team to have one formation with the ball and one without the ball.
	A successful team that wins trophies and is promoted up the league pyramid, and which the fans can cheer off the pitch. Fans like basking in glory rather than being associated with teams that are ridiculed. The fans team is part of their social identity. (Who I am).	Admission prices higher the higher up the pyramid they move. Successful teams mean that the fans participate in the glory of a team. Cheering them onto victory and mean more match day income to spend on players potentially.

Contextual Information - Industry Level	Relevance to the Manager	Potential Impact
Commodification of football	The main revenue streams that the club can earn from. Television rights, commercial deals (sponsorship) and matchday revenues. Manager works hand in hand with commercial staff at club	Professional and high non-league clubs have ability to be televised.
COVID19 Pandemic	Financial models that operated when people were allowed to attend games were curtailed. This had impact on team performances – away teams performing better with no home fans to cheer the team on. Income from TV broadcasting rights had to paid back to broadcasters.	High non-league clubs applied for lottery funded assistance. Without people attending games their income was severely reduced. One club withdrew from their league as they were in Wales playing in an English League – Merthyr.
Contextual Information - Organisation Level	Relevance to the Manager	Potential Impact
Ownership model adopted by a country e.g. one single owner or fan ownership (many owners).	Accountability by the manager to the fans as a wider community or consideration of a single owner. Ability of fan owned clubs to raise finance – usually less than one benefactor with high net worth.	The decision making takes longer when dealing with fan owned clubs e.g. agreement of changes in budget midway through the season.
Foreign owner classification	The type of owner (chair and board) that the manager has to deal with. Is the club an expensive toy, so there is no loyalty to the club?	A savvy custodian owner may well be an owner for longer than an enthusiast owner
Football club objectives	Winning the maximum number of games, the highest wage bill spent on players without threatening the club's financial viability	Improve league status and be associated with a larger brand e.g. EPL/Championship

Football Directors or General Managers	In the women's game the General Managers were positioned above the technical football manager. As with high level professional teams the football managers job role can be seen as being encroached upon. The General manager position can be seen as more permanent.	The traditional football managers role can be seen as being eroded. Some professional clubs have scouts and general managers. This means the manager may face job role ambiguity particularly if they transfer from men's football to women's football.
Contextual Information - Workgroup Level	Relevance to the Manager	Potential Impact
Players maximising the number of games they play	Players have a finite career, depending on physical and psychological fitness	Players will want to move as quickly as they can to the highest league level
Income maximisation	Players maximising pay from a short career – approximately 204 pay cheques from 18-35 years of age (Carson, 2015)	Player decides whether to be a full-time player or a part-time player with a full-time job

This chapter shows that there are a constellation of factors that can affect the football managers job role. The sector that the individual is football manager e.g. men's or women's football, whether the club is non-league (levels 5-10) or professional (levels 1-4) men's football. The traditional football manager role is coming under attack as football organisations attempt to provide some longevity to their organisation culture (values, working norms and history). However, underpinning the whole sector is the ability to survive financially. This was the topic that Financial Fair Play (FFP) regulations were brought in to deal with in 2010. That issue was too much financial investment in teams that led to certain clubs winning leagues without restraint. However, COVID19 threatened the very soul of football as fans were unable to see their teams due to the COVID19 virus. Financial plans that had already been committed to had to be honoured whilst broadcasting revenues were repaid as games were postponed temporarily. Each of the factors that affect a football managers performance can set off a chain reaction – understanding where that chain reaction is and the ultimate ramifications is not always easy.

Chapter 3 – Socialisation Literature Review

3.0 Chapter Introduction

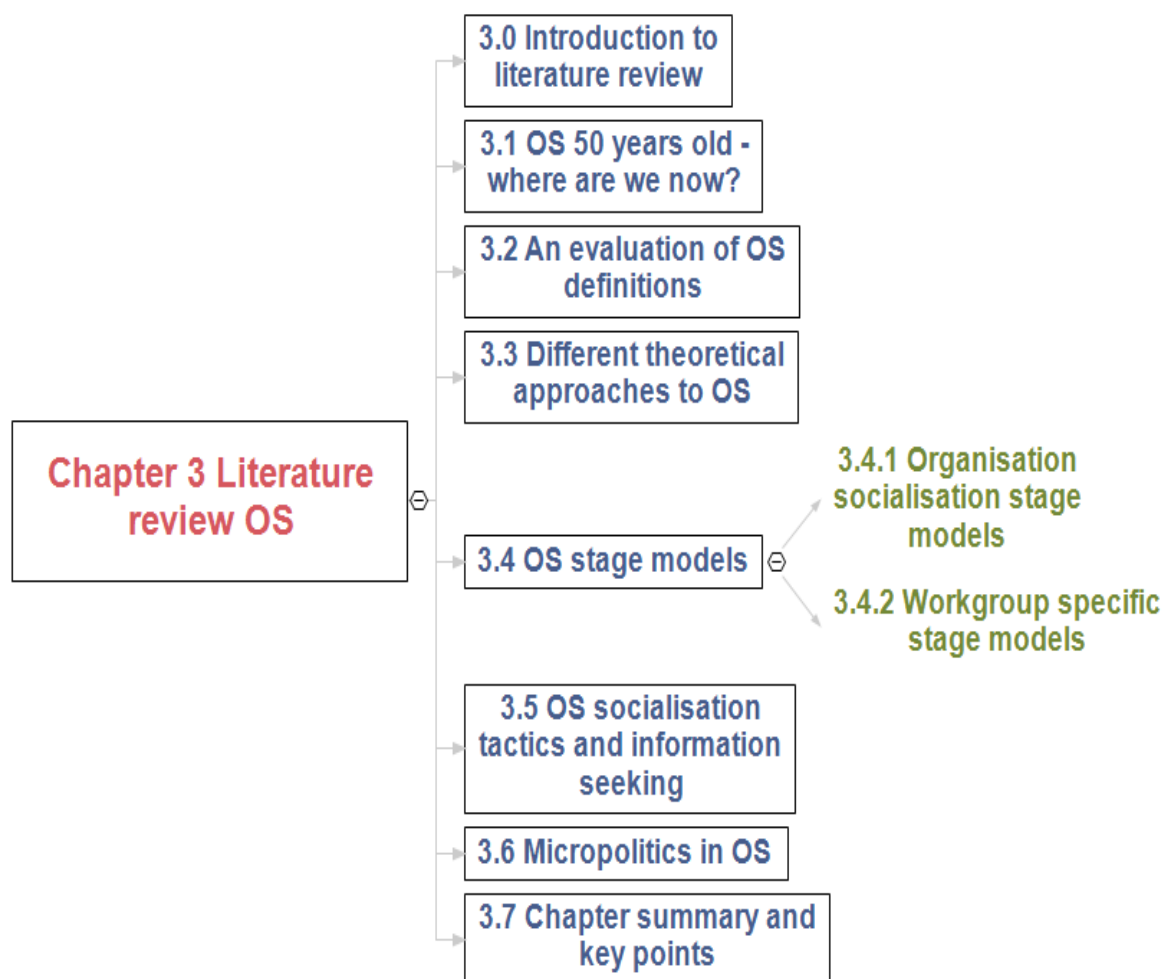
This literature review will highlight the current state of the organisation socialisation literature. It will develop by asserting that socialisation theorists have put together a variety of frameworks that give sufficient scaffolding for further, deeper, more complex research into socialisation processes (Cloutier and Langley, 2020; Bauer et al., 2021; Traeger et al., 2022). As with many organisational concepts, socialisation has been researched from many different vantage points. To date, socialisation research has been put forward as a communications theory to reduce uncertainty (Berger and Kalabrese, 1975; Bauer et al., 2019; Bauer et al., 2021), as an opportunity to make sense of new situations (Weick, 1995; Maitlis, 2005), as learning information provided by organisations (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979; Jones, 1986) and as newcomers being proactive in seeking out information for themselves (Miller & Jablin, 1991). These theories, using uncertainty reduction theory (URT) (Berger & Kalabrese, 1975), sensemaking theory (SM) and socialisation resources theory (SRT) (Saks & Gruman, 2018), are attempts by scholars to tease apart the complex socialisation process that unfolds over time (Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008; Bauer et al., 2021; Traeger et al., 2022).

This literature review has been undertaken with the knowledge that this thesis could have been situated in several literatures within organisational studies. At various stages, the researcher has considered psychological contracting and sensemaking, and finally settled on organisation socialisation. Within socialisation and micropolitics, it has been necessary to move into a specific arena, i.e. education or sport, as these areas have been very proactive in this sub-area of socialisation.

The chapter begins by taking stock of 50 years of socialisation development, then analysing some of the many definitions of socialisation. The objective is to deduce what has been included in a definition and to highlight the key gaps in the literature. The chapter will contend, in line with recent management research methods scholars, that it is time for a shift towards more complex representations of the socialisation process (Langley, 1999; Cloutier & Langley, 2020). This does show an ever more complexity-driven approach to understanding the highly nuanced nature of socialisation as a phenomenon (Bauer et al., 2021; Traeger et al., 2022). This has been underway in some areas in which, for example, micropolitics in socialisation has been researched for some time,

such as elite sport coaching (Potrac & Jones, 2009; Potrac et al., 2012; Thompson et al., 2015). Moreover, a greater alignment with a sensemaking approach will enable scholars to highlight the role of sensegiving and sensemaking in socialisation. The chapter will conclude by reviewing the relevant aspects of the socialisation literature in order to justify the research that is being undertaken.

Figure 3.1. Chapter 3 Plan – Socialisation Literature Review



3.1 Socialisation at 50 Years Old – Where Are We Now?

Socialisation theory has developed over approximately five decades and has been approached from a variety of standpoints. However, the current position is summarised by Gilmore and Harding (2021) below:

“Socialization, the transition from newcomer to embedded organizational citizen, is an inevitable feature of organizational life. It is often a painful and traumatic experience, but why this is so, and how its difficulties can be ameliorated, is not well understood.”

(Gilmore & Harding, 2021, p.1)

This quotation paints a picture of the state of the socialisation literature. As with so many organisational concepts, socialisation scholars have developed a wide range of useful frameworks in the area, for example, Buchanan (1974) and Feldman (1976) developed generic organisation socialisation stage models, showing a predicted passage of outsiders to insiders over time. The initial focus of socialisation was on the socialisation of individuals into large organisations (Saks & Ashforth, 1997; Bauer et al., 1998), i.e. how organisations assist the outsider to reduce uncertainty when moving across an organisational boundary. Uncertainty reduction theory has underpinned the socialisation literature for some 50 years now (Van Maanen and Schein, 1977; Bauer et al., 2007; Bauer et al., 2021). However, how the process of uncertainty reduction takes place,

There are still some major debates in the field of socialisation. Many studies have portrayed socialisation as a single level phenomenon, wherein the newcomer socialises into the organisation at large (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979; Bauer et al., 2007; Bauer et al., 2021) or at the workgroup level (Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008; Moreland & Levine 1982; 2002). However, Saks and Ashforth (1997) and Ashforth (2007) highlight that socialisation has multiple levels – workgroup, organisation and extra-organisation, the implication being that all these socialisation contexts are interacting with the newcomer simultaneously.

Socialisation stage models produced have put forward an organisation level model that highlights a pre-entry stage, an accommodation stage, and an adjustment stage (Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008; Bauer et al., 2021; Traeger 2022). However, whilst these stages have tasks set against them, such as forming a realistic job preview pre-entry, and assessing the congruence between own and organisation needs, the following process highlights that it is only at the encounter (accommodation) stage that a newcomer can assess the outcome of pre-entry (anticipatory) stage fact-finding. Whilst the stage models are prescriptive over the tasks to be achieved, e.g. that the accommodation stage requires initiation to role, initiation to group, and congruence of evaluation, there is no explanation of how these subprocesses work. Bauer et al. (1998) argue that the models put forward are not true process models, as they put forward a sequence of stages with little explanation of the how.

Organisation level scholars have contributed insights into how an organisation can provide information or social resources (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979; Jones, 1986; Saks & Gruman, 2018), e.g. meeting the manager before starting their job role or having internal IT systems ready on their first morning (Saks & Gruman, 2011). However, other scholars believe that the main impact on newcomers comes from interactions with the workgroup rather than the organisation at large (Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008; Traeger et al., 2022). This has precipitated a shift in research aimed at understanding the mechanics of how groups develop, e.g. looking at socialisation into voluntary sector job roles (Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008; Traeger et al., 2022), or cruise liners (Mateuszewski & Blenkinsopp, 2011).

Adopting a sensemaking approach has enabled researchers to focus in on detailed information that can be conveyed as language, perceptions, attitudes, emotional displays and behaviours, to enable a deeper understanding of what occurs in relationships during socialisation. A sensemaking approach here refers to the process identified in Weick et al. (2005) wherein a newcomer attends to a novel event. The newcomer attempts to construct a plausible story by referring to their mental picture of the organisation. Through the processes of bracketing, categorisation and synthesising the information, the newcomer pieces together their interpretation of the cause of this event. This thesis does not engage in sensemaking theory's academic debates, e.g. whether sensemaking is retrospective or prospective.

Another stream of socialisation research has focused on how the organisation shapes learning opportunities, i.e. how does the organisation or workgroup give newcomers information? From an organisation perspective, this is called socialisation tactics. This describes the way in which the organisation gives the newcomer key information about the job role, and the organisation's history and culture (Chao et al., 1994; Taormina, 1997; Mongeau et al., 2021). Meanwhile, a model of

socialisation tactics was developed by Van Maanen and Schein (1979) and validated by Jones (1986), showing that there are organisational tactics and individual tactics. How effective these tactics are is open to debate. An induction has the aim of giving basic orientation information to the newcomer (Mornata & Cassar, 2018) and mentoring makes available a role model from whom to learn new behaviours (Houghton, 2014). However, there has been evidence that, whilst the organisation has the best intentions of providing information to newcomers, workload may prevent newcomers from attending induction sessions (Mornata & Cassar, 2018). When information is not available from the organisation, empirical evidence shows that newcomers may proactively seek out information (Miller & Jablin, 1991). Furthermore, work pressures may prevent nurse mentors being available when new nurses need assistance (Houghton, 2014). The other aspect that underpins all organisational behaviour is micropolitical behaviour inside organisations (Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008; Potrac et al., 2012; Mornata & Cassar, 2018). In this study, micropolitical behaviour is defined as follows:

“Micropolitics refers to the use of formal and informal power by individuals and groups to achieve their goals in organizations... Both cooperative and conflictive actions and processes are part of the realm of micropolitics.”

(Blase, 1991, p.11)

The aspects of power relations are alluded to in many socialisation studies (Maitlis, 2005; Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008; Potrac et al., 2012). These form an almost invisible thread with which stakeholders try to influence others to become allies, whilst others are separated and cast into a peripheral role (Thomson & Sparkes, 2020).

Whilst it is apparent that there has been an initial categorisation of socialisation tactics between institutional and individual, research needs to push further to highlight the more nuanced, process-based examination. Bauer and colleagues (2021) researched the trajectory of newcomer socialisation, depending upon the social resources that newcomer entered with and the social resources that an organisation provides. However, Reid and Ramarajan (2020) have highlighted the process of relationship reconciliation, in which teachers use socialisation tactics to socialise students into the school collective, whilst reconciling their own identity with the socialisation requirements of the school. Socialisation is a dynamic unfolding process, with many stakeholders at multiple levels potentially involved (Saks & Ashforth, 1997; Ashforth et al., 2007; Ramarajan and Reid, 2020; Thomson & Sparkes, 2020).

There appear to be two fundamental challenges for socialisation moving forward. The first is to maintain learning as the central core concept. As Saks and Ashforth (1997) highlight, socialisation learning is effectively making sense of a new employment situation with a wide range of content (Chao et al., 1994; Taormina, 1997). However, it has been surprising that a sensemaking approach has been relatively under-represented, although the evidence from studies carried out using this approach highlights that it is capable of capturing detail on perceptions, emotions, and behaviour during a dynamic process that can last from a few weeks, e.g. for army cadets (Anderson & Thomas, 1998) to up to a year for volunteers (Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008; Metuszewski & Blenkinsopp, 2011; Traeger et al., 2022).

The second challenge is for management, sports and educational scholars studying socialisation to be able to model the complexity of the socialisation process. Whilst the early socialisation literature has focused on socialisation stage models, the tasks to be completed (Bauer et al., 1998). The evolution within the socialisation literature has led to a more complex representation of how the learning has different aspects. Traeger et al. (2022) show that the main learning domain, is linked to the socialisation tactic used, in order to deal with the current emotion being felt by the newcomer. Thus, the first process job familiarisation, the organisation invest in job role training which then enables the newcomer to become more confident (self-efficacy). Traeger et al. (2022) show that familiarisation with the job role, bonding with the workgroup and embedding with the organisation as a whole are key processes. Whilst this paper acknowledges both organisational level socialisation i.e. embedding within the organisation, and bonding with team members at workgroup level these are shown as sequential. However, Saks and Ashforth (1997), Ashforth et al. (2007) highlight that socialisation is likely to be simultaneous which then puts forward the issue of how does the newcomer manage both processes and inherent tensions. Ramarajan and Reid (2020) offer some insight when investigating relationship reconciliation between school teachers, students and the school organisation as a whole. The teachers manage the key tension of acculturating student from a wide background into the school culture, whilst also reconciling their own personal views as employees who may be at variance with school management practices. Ramarajan and Reid (2020) put forward that this may include extra-organisational stakeholders, as well as internal stakeholder relationships.

3.2 An Evaluation of OS Definitions

This next section on socialisation definitions has been assembled in order to form a working definition of socialisation. Conceptually, socialisation as a process has been highlighted in the previous sections as a highly complex process involving the organisation admitting a newcomer. Table 3A, below, is organised as follows: the author and date, followed by the definition of socialisation, which has been analysed for the theoretical stance (SM, URT or SRT), the learning content to be covered, and the dynamic, which indicates who is socialising whom. If the organisation socialises the newcomer, it is considered organisation-centric; if the newcomer socialised the organisation, then the quote is newcomer-centric. The outcomes column indicates the outcomes for the newcomer.

There is a majority convergence of definitions that highlight an overall theoretical slant towards social learning theory, and a minority of definitions that highlight uncertainty reduction theory.

Social learning theory suggests that individuals learn directly from their own experience and indirectly from the experiences of others (Bandura, 1977). Learning is affected by observing others and asking questions about their experience as newcomers seek information (Miller & Jablin, 1991; Saks & Gruman, 2018; Traeger et al., 2022).

Uncertainty reduction theory proposes that, in order to reduce uncertainty, an individual will communicate with others (Berger & Kalabrese, 1975). They will start by giving factual information, e.g. 'My name is John and I come from St Peters,' they will then develop the conversation with more detail to investigate whether they wish to take the relationship further.

Social learning theory (latterly social cognitive theory, SCT) considers the impact of a person's past experiences, which factor into whether behavioural action will occur. These past experiences and influences (comprising reinforcements, expectations, and expectancies) all shape whether a person will engage in a specific behaviour, and the reasons why a person engages in that behaviour (Bandura, 1977). The SCT is a learning theory, whereas URT is based on a communication theory: the outcome of URT is that an individual is able to reduce uncertainty by increasing their ability to predict how others will behave in relationships.

Table 3A. Definitions of Organisation Socialisation					
Author: Date	Definition of Organisation Socialisation	Theoretical stance	Learning (Content)	Dynamic (who is socialising whom)	Outcomes
Schein (1968, p.3)	"The concept Refers to the process by which a new member learns the value system, the norms, and the required behaviour patterns of the society, organisation or group which he is entering. The learning is defined as the price of membership".	Social learning and social exchange	Learning the value systems, the norms and required behaviours	The organisation socialises the newcomer. Learning is the price of membership	The newcomer becomes a new member
Van Maanen (1976, p.67)	"Organisational socialisation refers to the process by which a person learns the values, norms and required behaviours which permit him to participate as a member of the organisation".	Social learning and social exchange	Learning the values, norms and required behaviours	Organisation socialises. Learning permits him to participate as a member of the organisation	Newcomer given permission to participate as a member of the organisation
Van Maanen J and Schein, E. H. (1979, p.211)	"In its most general sense organisational socialisation is the process by which an individual acquires the social knowledge and skills necessary to assume an organisational role".	Social learning process	Individual acquires the social knowledge and skills necessary	Organisation socialisation. Individual acquires the social knowledge – newcomer adapts	Newcomer assumes an organisational role
Van Maanen J and Schein, E.H. (1979, p.211–212).	"A social learning process which above all entails the learning of cultural values and norms that allow 'correct' interpretation of what goes on at the workplace".	Social learning process	Social learning process learning cultural values and norms	Organisation socialises. Cultural values and norms (organisation culture)	Allow correct interpretation of the workplace

Author: Date	Definition of Organisation Socialisation	Theoretical stance	Learning (Content)	Dynamic	Outcomes
Louis (1980)	Organisational socialisation is the process through which organisational culture is perpetuated, by which newcomers learn the appropriate roles and behaviours to become effective and participating members.	Social learning process	Newcomers learn appropriate roles and behaviours to perpetuate culture	Newcomers learn the appropriate roles and behaviours	Newcomer becomes an effective and participating member. Organisation culture perpetuated
Feldman (1981, p.09)	"Defined globally, organisational socialisation is the process by which employees are transformed from organisation outsiders to participating and effective members".	Social learning process	Employees are transformed – role of outsider to insider	Implies it is the newcomer that changes	Newcomer becomes a participating and effective member
Pascale (1985, p.17; p.26)	"Socialisation encompasses the process of being made a member of a group, learning the ropes, and being taught how one must communicate and interact to get things done". "The aim of socialisation is to establish a base of attitudes, habits and values that foster co-operation, integrity and communication".	Social learning process	Learning the ropes and being taught how one must communicate and interact to get things done	Organisation teaches the newcomer the base of attitudes, habits, and values	Establish a base of attitudes, habits and values that foster co-operation, integrity and communication
Fisher (1986, p.102)	"Organisational socialisation focuses on the learning of organisation specific modes of behaving and thinking".	Social learning process	Learning process: learning of organisation-specific modes of behaving and thinking	Organisation specific modes of behaving and thinking	Alignment in the patterns of behaviour and thought
Wanous (1992)	Socialisation concerns the ways in which newcomers change and adapt to the organisation. The types of changes are learning new roles, norms and values. In other words learning what is 'acceptable' behaviour.	Social learning process	Newcomers learn new roles, norms and values – acceptable behaviour	Newcomers change and adapt to the organisation	Learning new roles, norms and values. In other words learning what is 'acceptable' behaviour

Author: Date	Definition of Organisation Socialisation	Theoretical stance	Learning	Dynamic – Organisation or self	Outcomes
Ostroff and Kozlowski (1992)	Socialisation of newcomers into organisations is a critical process influencing what they learn about their work, as well as their performance, satisfaction, and commitment to the organisation	Social learning process	Organisation teaches newcomer about performance, satisfaction, and commitment to the organisation	Organisation influencing what the newcomer learns	Organisationally conditioned newcomers
Korte (2010 p27)	Organisational socialisation conceptualises the socialisation of new employees as a learning process whereby the newcomer is responsible for learning to fit into the organisation. One manager told a newcomer, 'You need to really get to know them [and] earn their respect'.	Social learning process	Learning to fit in with the organisation – earn respect, get to know them	Newcomer earns the respect of organisation group of colleagues	Being accepted and fitting in with the organisation
(Kennedy & Berger, 1994)	The main purpose of organisational socialisation is to alleviate emotional vulnerability (e.g. job uncertainty, ambiguity, anxiety, and stress), to strengthen social interaction amongst new employees and colleagues, and to accelerate newcomer's learning and adjustment to a new environment.	Uncertainty reduction – i.e. ambiguity, anxiety, and stress	Learning how to strengthen social ties with existing employees	Interaction between newcomer and colleague, newcomer adjusts	Strengthen social interaction amongst new employees and colleagues
Ellis et al. (2015 p 204)	"Organisational socialization has been defined, at its most fundamental level, as a process of reducing the stress of uncertainty for newcomers so they may feel confident and able to successfully contribute to their new organizations"	Uncertainty reduction to reduce stress levels	Learning acceptable behaviours, values and norms	Organisation reduces the stress for the individual newcomer	Newcomer feels confident and able to successfully contribute to their new organisations

Author: Date	Definition of Organisation Socialisation	Theoretical stance	Learning	Dynamic – Organisation or self	Outcomes
Bauer et al. (2007 p708).	"From a theoretical standpoint, the socialization process is one of uncertainty reduction. Uncertainty reduction theory posits that newcomers desire to increase the predictability of interactions between themselves and others within the new organization"	Uncertainty reduction increase predictability of interactions	Learning how colleagues work in order to increase predictability in social interactions	Newcomer desires to close the gap between themselves and insiders.	Alignment of how the newcomer operates in a cultural pattern with others

The first theme that is evident in the table is that the newcomer is faced with learning the organisation culture – this includes organisation values, norms and required behaviour (working practices) (Schein, 1968; Van Maanen, 1976; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). However, there are two definitions that focus on the learning of social knowledge and skills (Kennedy & Berger, 1994; Pascale, 1985), whilst acquiring social knowledge, strengthening social interaction and social cohesion – a line manager told newcomers *‘you need to really get to know them and earn their respect’* (Korte, 2010; p27).

The chapter will review the socialisation content first and then move onto the strengthening of social interactions. Socialisation scholars have identified that there is a wide range of socialisation content to be learned, for example, the people, language and politics, as well as organisational objectives, history and culture (Chao et al., 1994). Whilst the definitions highlight what needs to be learnt – the content – there appears to be a gap in the definition, concerning the standard to which the socialisation content needs to be learned, although some definitions do hint at the level of knowledge and application to organisational situations. Whilst Pascale (1985) asserts that newcomers are taught how they must communicate to get things done, it would appear that Fisher (1986) feels that organisations may want a more all-encompassing socialisation, i.e. adherence to organisation-specific modes of behaving and thinking. Ashforth and colleagues (2007) highlight total institutions (such as armed forces and prisoner of war camps) exhibiting a combination of aspects such as a strong culture, rigorous application of values, norms and practice, and a determination for compliance to a mission (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). This type of organisation gives rise to people processing, although Van Maanen and Schein (1979) highlight that their point of view is that socialisation is an interactive process between the newcomer and organisation. Socialisation has had several paradigm shifts since people processing, and today socialisation is seen as an interactive process in which newcomers seek information (Miller & Jablin, 1991) and organisations provide socialisation resources (Bauer et al., 2021).

The research highlights that the newcomer has to learn from the insiders within the organisation about what attitudes, behaviours and decision-making models are acceptable. However, this assumes that the information provided will be accurate and understandable to the newcomer, and that sensemaking will not be used as a mechanism to undermine the newcomer. Sensemaking as a process entails paying attention to novel or ambiguous information, and the placing of stimuli into some kind of framework to obtain an understanding of an event or issue. It is when individuals retrospectively develop plausible explanations that rationalise their behaviours (Weick et al., 2005). Newcomers look out for new information of which they are unsure, they categorise it, then from their experience they try to form a plausible story to explain the causation.

In other words, organisations operate with daily contests for power and influence. Consequently, socialisation definitions seem to miss the micropolitical aspects of insider and newcomer behaviour. Maitlis (2005) does highlight that a combination of animation (emotion) and control, when used during sensegiving by managers, can impact on stakeholders (newcomers). Sensegiving here means 'the process of attempting to influence the sensemaking and meaning construction of others toward a preferred redefinition of organisational reality' (Gioia & Chittipeddi, 1991). Van der Steen (2016) highlights the impact of giving sense to subordinate employees on a business project. In her example, two branches of the same bank wanted to gain insight into customer relations issues. Branch A had senior managers guide the subordinates, then enable them to share their insights from day-to-day interactions. Branch B had senior managers give no guidance to the subordinates. This branch had several middle managers try to fill the void with their own ideas. Branch A had more successful outcomes, whereas Branch B wasted time on discussing who had the right approach. So providing a framework of reference for staff to then highlight their relevant experiences.

Leaders can make a difference by giving a sense of the overall project. The guidance acts as part of the subordinates' sensemaking process. Sensemaking is a process in which individuals notice novelty in their experiences, i.e. something unexpected happens. As a response, the individual tries to construct a plausible explanation by referring to their previous experiences (Weick, 1995; Weick et al., 2005). Mornata and Cassar (2018) have highlighted how insiders give incorrect answers to make sure they are not bothered again, and insiders used jokes (language) to exclude a newcomer volunteer (Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008). Thus, power relations and the ability to influence others' sensemaking through sensegiving, including keeping quiet (Potrac et al., 2012) and having knowledge that others do not (Thompson et al., 2015), are all in need of exploration.

The definitions also highlight, as stated above, the social aspect of socialisation – the embedding of a newcomer into the organisation as an insider. The strengthening of social ties suggests that, through interactions with the insiders, the newcomer gets to know their new colleagues and gains their trust. This assumes a positive outcome, i.e. that the newcomer is socialised successfully; however, as Buchanan (1974) highlights, the five year study did not cover those participants who did not complete the programme successfully. An early exit was found in Haski-Leventhal and Bargal's (2008) study of volunteer workers, which has provided empirical evidence that relationships can worsen between the organisation, workgroup, and the newcomer. There has been other work on a general model of group formation, which also includes stages where the member may become marginal and decide to leave (become an ex-member) (Moreland & Levine, 1982; 2002). Relationship development is an area in which there appears to be a gap in the socialisation literature, although Ramarajan and Reid (2020) did investigate relationship reconciliation during

socialisation recently. Consequently, there is a gap in the socialisation definitions on the dynamics of how relationships form, and how social ties strengthen or weaken as socialisation progresses.

Assumptions:

The first assumption is that the newcomer has relatively little agency or has the lesser of the balance of agency. This is shown by the emphasis on the newcomer learning to adapt to the organisation.

“The learning is defined as the price of membership” (Schein 1968, p.3) and *“a person learns the values, norms and required behaviours which permit him to participate as a member”* (Van Maanen 1976, p.67). Both these quotes highlight that the organisation expects compliance from the newcomer, and in return they are granted membership. Moreover, from the perspective of the newcomer, *“You need to really get to know them and earn their respect”* (Korte, 2010, p27). The definitions are organisation-centric; in other words, they show that the organisation can dictate what is being learnt in the socialisation content. For example, the aim is to establish baseline attitudes, habits and values that help to integrate the newcomer. The outcome is a newcomer who can show values of co-operation, communication and integrity with their colleagues.

The research assumption, which is implicit in the process of socialisation, is that insiders will help the newcomers to socialise. Social acceptance by the insiders is important to the newcomer in enabling the organisation to help them to transform into participating and effective members (Louis, 1980; Feldman, 1981). Kennedy and Berger (1994) highlight that socialisation attempts to strengthen social interaction amongst new employees and colleagues, in order to increase the predictability of interactions. The inference is that it is in the organisation’s and the newcomer’s best interests, but this assumes that there is no competition for power, i.e. that all interactions tend to be collaborative in nature. However, micropolitical behaviours through micropolitical strategies mean that alliances are made within organisations to further an individual’s needs at the expense of another.

Competitive fields, e.g. elite sport, show that competitors may hide crucial information that would help newcomers to adapt (Potrac et al., 2012; Thompson et al., 2015), whilst other insiders may have too much work to fulfil their mentoring duties (Houghton, 2014) or may simply see newcomers as an annoyance and give them the wrong answer so that the newcomer does not bother them again (Mornata & Cassar, 2018).

A working definition for this study:

The working definition below has been assembled from the observations above:

Organisation socialisation occurs when an **individual transitions** from an organisational **outsider to an acceptable insider**. The individual will need to both acquire organisational knowledge and learn social skills. The social skills can enable the newcomer to get to know their **workgroup colleagues and others in the wider organisation**. The transition is a **dynamic personal journey** that is likely to be accompanied by **uncertainty, surprise and cognitive stretch**. **To cope with this transition**, new behaviours, attitudes, and problem-solving methods may need to be learnt. All the while, the newcomer juggles socialisation content, learning of the **power structures, politics, cultures, and personal motivations** of work colleagues in order to fit in. The individual pulls together pieces of the organisational jigsaw, whilst **under time pressure** to transition as soon as possible to a **fully-functioning operational member**. This is a **time of significant vulnerability** as the individual tries to establish relationships within and beyond the business.

The above definition highlights the social skills required for the manager get to know their colleagues. These processes have been highlighted as vital in socialisation by Traeger et al. (2022). Moreover, the definition goes on to spotlight the dynamic personal journey wherein the newcomer is faced with uncertainty, surprise and cognitive stretch. A key facet of this definition is the inclusion of time pressure, which has not been included to date by socialisation scholars (Buchanan, 1974; Saks & Ashforth, 1997; Traeger et al., 2022). As put forward by Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002, 2019), the quality of social-professional relationships is the basis for social acceptance with colleagues. In Kelchtermans and Ballet's (2002) model, teachers have a common understanding of what is required in a professional workplace. These include a consideration of personal interests (e.g. self-esteem and personal credibility), organisational objectives (e.g. roles and responsibilities), and material interests. Cultural-ideological interests are based on the organisation culture. Lastly, social-professional relations are concerned with the quality of relationships that the newcomer constructs with their colleagues and outsiders (e.g. parents) (Uitto et al., 2021, Thomson & Sparkes, 2020).

3.3 Different Theoretical Approaches to Socialisation

This section will review the main theoretical approaches that have been used in the development of the socialisation literature. These approaches are **uncertainty reduction theory (URT)**, **sensemaking theory (SM)** and **socialisation resources theory (SRT)**. Recently, Gilmore and Harding (2021) have proposed a psychoanalytical approach to the newcomer's transition. The psychoanalytical approach by Gilmore and Harding (2021) is in its formative stage and, as such, the researcher will observe how this approach develops evidentially over the next few years.

The current situation in the socialisation literature is that the basis for the majority of papers is uncertainty reduction theory (URT) (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979; Bauer et al., 2007; Ellis et al., 2015; Bauer et al., 2021). This has enabled scholars to develop frameworks to explain the passage of time in socialisation – socialisation stage theory puts forward that newcomers move through a set of stages sequentially, in order to transition from outsider to embedded newcomer (Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008; Traeger et al., 2022). URT has also underpinned the development of how the organisation, through socialisation tactics, shapes early learning opportunities to reduce the information deficit (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979; Bauer et al., 2007; Bauer et al., 2021) and, furthermore, how newcomers seek out information when beginning at a new organisation (Miller & Jablin, 1991; Potrac et al., 2012; Mornata & Cassar, 2018). However, Saks and Gruman (2018) suggest that the URT concentrates on the socialisation of the individual, and in particular, the reduction of the newcomer's uncertainty.

Socialisation scholars have identified a whole range of information that may need to be learned by a newcomer. The learning gaps (socialisation content) (Chao et al., 1994) that the newcomer faces will depend upon their previous experiences. The closeness of person–job fit and organisation–person fit will be assessed by the initial recruitment process. Organisations will be better placed, Saks and Gruman (2018) argue, if they are linking uncertainty reduction to human resources department outcomes. Saks and Gruman (2018) put forward that human resource outcomes using employee engagement curves, e.g. how vigorously employees work, have been linked to the availability of social resources. The definitions in Table 3A (above) showed that a newcomer becoming an effective and participating member (Louis, 1980; Feldman, 1981) potentially covers many things, for example, the newcomer feels confident and adheres to the cultural behaviours when working for the organisation. One of the main issues is that newcomers are indeed individuals – they enter a particular organisation looking to satisfy their employment needs. The learning gap is the difference between the knowledge, skills, abilities and traits that the organisation is looking for, and what the individual has acquired to date through learning and experience. The socialisation journey is unique

to that individual, with a constellation of factors that interact with each other to create a unique kaleidoscope effect.

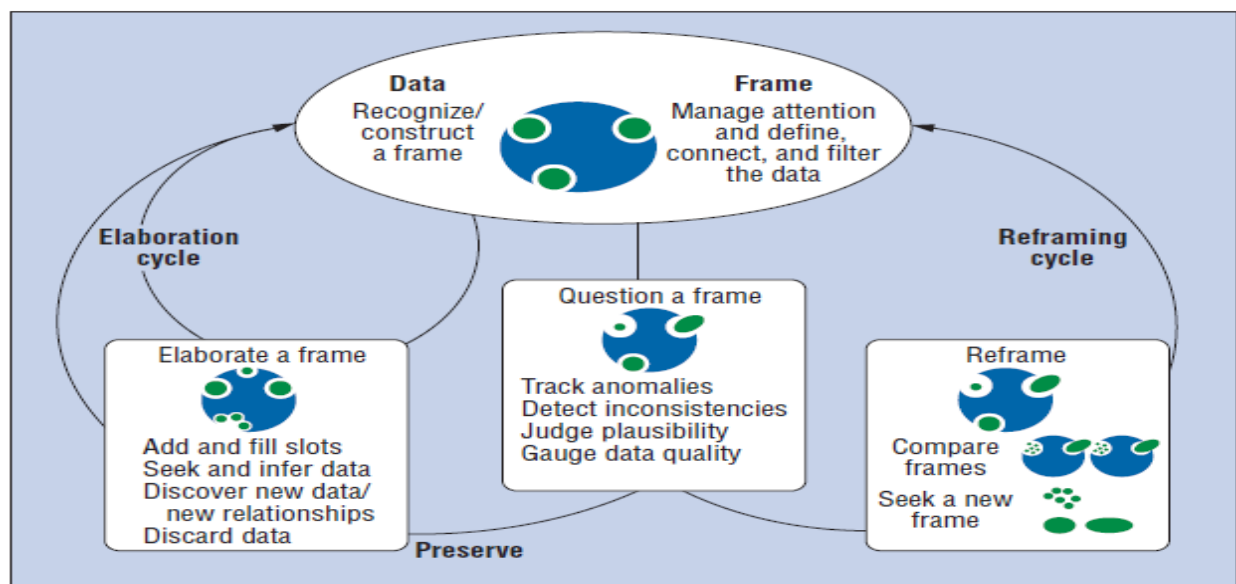
The use of sensemaking approach, which highlights how individual newcomers make sense of their new organisation and job role, was suggested by Louis (1980). Louis proposed that a newcomer's experience was influenced by their sensemaking process. Sensemaking is characterised by three aspects – change, contrast, and surprise. The sensemaking process here means a focus on change of a major feature between the new and the old employment situation (Weick et al., 2005, Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008, Traeger et al., 2022). The more changes a newcomer has to cope with, the greater the challenge. Contrast is based on the personal experience of the newcomer, i.e. the new or novel stimuli that trigger sensemaking for this particular individual; it is contingent upon previous situations that have been experienced (Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008; Traeger et al., 2022). A volunteer may, for example, feel surprised when faced with the realisation that street children may reject their offer of help (Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008; Traeger et al., 2022). Reality shock is usually accompanied by an increased intention to leave the job role, as the newcomer finds aspects of the job role different to their perception (Houghton, 2014; McCloughen et al., 2020). As Saks and Gruman (2018) highlight, many newcomers form an overly positive initial perception of their new work role. However, sometimes, reality shock can be positive (Houghton, 2014; Thompson et al., 2015).

What is surprising is that sensemaking has been used relatively little in connection with the socialisation field, whilst the sensemaking area itself has an ever-increasing body of literature linked to sensemaking in disaster situations, e.g. Mann Gulch and Bhopal (Maitlis and Sonenshein, 2010), particularly focusing on shared sensemaking and emotions during crises. Notable exceptions in the socialisation literature have been Haski-Leventhal and Bargal (2008), Metuszewski and Blenkinsopp (2011) and Traeger and colleagues (2022), who have managed to capture the essence of the newcomer's experience. In Haski-Leventhal and Bargal's (2007) research, the process of organisation entry captures the emotions, language, and ritual experiences on a first night out that give a richness to the newcomer's experience. To date, the SM approach has not been foregrounded, although Saks and Ashforth (1997) highlight that sensemaking is synonymous with learning. Very recent work by Traeger et al. (2022) has shown that SM as an approach can be very adept at linking different aspects of the socialisation process, as mentioned above. sensemaking is an approach that looks at the individual's experience, so it is newcomer-centric, as opposed to other theories – URT and SRT – which are organisation-centric. Organisation-centric here means focusing on the organisation's perspective. SM is based on cognitive psychology, and highlights how an individual learns from their new experiences (Klein et al., 2006a, 2006b). The newcomer notices surprises, which trigger the

sensemaking process, the information is attended to, and a plausible causal story constructed. Once the story has been constructed, the newcomer can choose to change their mental picture of the job role (reframing) and may adapt the mental picture by adding some aspect or leave the mental model intact (with a deeper understanding).

Figure 3.2 (see below) shows that newcomers begin with a mental picture of the job role. When sensemaking is triggered, the newcomer moves to question the frame as the stimuli is surprising, ambiguous or equivocal (Weick, 1995; Weick et al., 2005; Maitlis, 2005). The newcomer then preserves the frame or may compare frames that are more representative of what is going on. This approach begins by assuming that the newcomer brings an initial framework with them to the new job role.

Figure 3.2. The Data/Frame Theory of Sensemaking (Klein, Moon & Hoffman, 2006b)



Social resources theory (SRT) has been a relatively recent addition, with which Saks and Gruman (2018) propose a stronger link to human resource department outcomes e.g. employee engagement. SRT highlights that organisations can impact a newcomer's employee engagement through a wide variety of interventions prior to entry, immediately after entry and the period following orientation, and following formal socialisation onboarding. This theoretical position is a derivative of conservation of resources theory (COR) (Hobfoll et al., 2018), which is a motivational theory that explains that human evolution has been based on acquiring and conserving resources to survive. In particular, COR emphasises that the loss of personal resources is more important than gaining resources. Thus, in order to protect against loss, recover from loss and gain resources,

newcomers must invest in social resources (Saks & Gruman, 2018; Hobfoll et al., 2018). Social resources here are defined as “anything perceived by the individual to help his or her goals” (Halbesleben et al., 2014, p.1338). Resources are represented by a wide array of objects, states, conditions, etc. Job resources can emanate from the organisation (e.g. job security), the work itself (e.g. autonomy to make decisions), and from the task itself (performance feedback) (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; 2008). Recent work by Bauer et al. (2021) found that newcomers with social resources, e.g. proactive personalities and personal resources, had improved early adjustment to socialisation and higher manager ratings after 9 months.

SRT, although it is a relatively new approach, still appears to have an emphasis on the organisation providing socialisation resources to the newcomer. However, there do appear to be two issues that make SRT hard to adopt theoretically. The first is that the definition used by Saks and Gruman (2018) of a social resource is any resource, psychological or physical, that the newcomer perceives to help them with their job role. This means that the social resource is idiographic, i.e. is whatever the individual perceives it to be, rather than anything that may be verifiable. Moreover, it is also assumed that the social result has a positive impact, which Saks and Gruman (2018) state may not be true. For example, in the case of an insider who fobs off a newcomer with the incorrect answer. The colleague could be a social resource to whom the line manager has introduced the newcomer. But they may not wish to act a social resource, as experienced in Mornata and Cassar’s (2018) research on insider interaction with newcomers. SRT is a motivational theory – but Lloyd and Mertens (2018) critique Vroom’s motivational theory in particular. Vroom’s expectancy theory states that:

$$MV = e * i * v$$

*motivational force = expectancy * instrumentality * valence*

However, in organisations, the social context (e.g. group norms) may reduce the output of an employee or may actually improve the output of an employee. The group act to give the newcomer information on expected output norms. This highlights that the workgroup may set the rules for performance, rather than the individual.

3.4 Socialisation Stage Models

In this section, socialisation stage models will be examined by considering those that were developed to explain a newcomer's transition into the organisation in large socialisation stage models (Buchanan, 1974; Feldman, 1976) and the later theoretical development of socialisation workgroup stage models (Moreland & Levine 1982; 2002; Traeger et al., 2022). Socialisation stage modelling has moved forward by considering the linkages between different learning domains, emotional tenor, and socialisation tactics (Traeger et al., 2022) at the workgroup level. This appears to give a dynamic view of socialisation, building on the work of Haski-Leventhal and Bargal (2008), who use sensemaking approach to expose a fine-grained picture of the events and interactions that happen in a newcomer volunteer's experience. Consideration will be given to the usefulness of these models as predictive sequential passages of events. Moreover, this section will review the argument that, potentially, a multi-level socialisation process model of socialisation may present a more appropriate representation of socialisation (Saks & Ashforth, 1997; Ashforth et al., 2007).

3.4.1 Organisation Socialisation Stage Models

Socialisation stage models attempt to explain organisation socialisation as a sequence of stages that an individual may go through to be socialised within an organisation (Buchanan, 1974; Feldman, 1976; Moreland & Devine, 1982; 2002). There are three key stages. 1. Prior to entry – anticipatory socialisation (Feldman, 1976; Schein, 1978; Bauer et al., 1998). 2. First newcomer experiences – encounter (Porter et al., 1975; Anderson & Thomas, 1996); 3. Newcomer change – adaptation (Bauer et al., 1998). Bauer and colleagues (1998) highlighted that the early socialisation stage models that were developed display similar language. The first process is that of anticipatory socialisation, where the outsider prepares to become an insider – this stage is characterised by tasks such as collecting information about the organisation and assessing the mutuality of need (Feldman, 1976). The main objectives are to create a mental image of what it will be like working for the organisation, and to assess the person-job fit and the person-organisation fit (Saks and Gruman, 2011). The socialisation evidence shows that the anticipatory socialisation stage is not without its challenges. The information given and received may not give enough information for the individual to assess the job role accurately, i.e. what tasks are included in the job role (Feldman, 1976; Houghton, 2014).

A number of scholars have developed socialisation stage models (three), based on empirical evidence, to portray the sequence of stages that an outsider goes through to be an accepted insider

(Feldman, 1976; Van Maanen, 1976; Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008, Traeger et al., 2022). Although the descriptors vary, there is an inferred time flow through the recruitment and selection process (Cornelius, 2001). The first stage is labelled as anticipatory socialisation (Van Maanen, 1976) where the individual assesses the organisation as a prospective employer; during this process, the applicant will gather information about the organisation. The objective is to make sense of the mutual benefits and any social costs that may accrue from joining the organisation (Miller & Jablin, 1991). The second stage encounter (Porter et al., 1975) is when the newcomer starts to perform the job role and comes into first contact with others and to build up successful group relations (Feldman, 1976). “The objective is to accommodate new information by really getting to know your colleagues and earning their respect” (Korte, 2010, p27). The initiation to group and initiation to job role may give rise to a new realism – sometimes it is better than expected, sometimes worse than expected (reality shock). Reality shock may take many forms – being overwhelmed emotionally, becoming aware of being aware of their responsibilities and the consequences of poor work performance (Houghton, 2014). The final stage, stage three, has been labelled adaptation (Louis, 1980) or metamorphosis (Jablin, 1982), and describes when the newcomer has adapted to the organisation culture. This organisational learning of values, work norms and practices equips the new insider with the ability to manage their job role. Feldman (1976) perceives this as an insider who is less concerned about internal organisational conflict between groups. Moreover, the new insider who has experienced conflict resolution now has their own personal set of rules to resolve conflict.

An evaluation of socialisation stage models is based around the idea that they appear to predict a linear lock-step process wherein outsiders transition into organisation insiders (Ashforth et al., 2007). From the scholars’ perspective, the anticipatory, encounter and adaptation stages are a path that all newcomers follow in sequence. At first sight, it appears that the stage models assume a smooth, linear flow from one stage to another. However, as scholars have highlighted, for example Saks and Gruman (2018), motivation may decrease upon entering the organisation. This may be due to the newcomer constructing expectations that are often inflated or unrealistic (Feldman, 1976; Houghton, 2014; McCloughen et al., 2020). The first stage is effectively how well the individual gathers information about the organisation. Socialisation research has highlighted that sometimes key information is not accentuated as part of the job role. Feldman (1976) provides an example, in which an accountancy role was effectively debt recovery on the telephone. This meant that those who took up the post and who preferred to work with numbers were instead asked to deal with people on the telephone all day, handling disputes. This highlights some stage model weaknesses: firstly, an assumption that socialisation stages are a smooth process of progression, rather than a lumpy process wherein an individual newcomer maybe ejected by the organisation (Haski-Leventhal

& Bargal, 2008), or have an increased intention to leave due to reality shock. The early general socialisation stage models concentrated on trying to explain successful socialisation. However, this misses the fact that some newcomers are likely to doubt the desirability of the job role when in the accommodation stage. Yet, other than Haski-Leventhal and Bargal (2008) there has been no consideration of this, e.g. a feedback loop or a recognition of an extended probationary period perhaps. A possible definition of reality shock in socialisation is that it:

“... occurs when a new employee’s expectations, established prior to joining an organisation, differ significantly from what is experienced upon entering the organisation. ... It is hypothesised that reality shock has a negative impact on the degree to which an individual is committed to the organisation.”

Dean (1983, p55)

Finding out *why* newcomers experience reality shock is a very different question to asking *whether* they experience reality shock, and socialisation is important as an area for that very reason, to make sure that retention of newcomers is high (Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008). Research into a range of areas show that newcomers transitioning as university graduates in nursing and teaching are more likely to experience reality shock when they join their employer as newly qualified. The transition has been traced to the feeling that they need to act in the job role autonomously. They face the realisation that they are no longer supervised all the time, and that the job role is full time with no breaks, whereas previously the trainees had returned to university life. That return had meant that they could process their experiences whilst under less stress (Houghton, 2014; De Swardt et al., 2014; McCloughen et al., 2020). This reality shock for many newcomers is a marked setback in progress. This attests to the view that socialisation is indeed, for many, a lumpy process, where many decide to leave very quickly after entering the workforce full-time (Duchscher, 2009; Houghton, 2014; Ho et al., 2021).

The second stage is described as accommodation (encounter), when a newcomer is introduced to their new colleagues and new job role. The main activities are initiation to group, initiation to task, role definition and congruence of evaluation (Feldman, 1976; Porter et al., 1975; Van Maanen, 1975). Feldman (1981) highlights that a newcomer is socialised at multiple levels – e.g. within their immediate workgroup and the organisation at large. This is represented in his model through reflecting the workgroup and the intergroup conflicts that the newcomer may have to resolve (Feldman, 1981). Although socialisation stage models do provide a basic framework for the

transition process, Bauer and colleagues (1998) highlighted that socialisation models have not explained how socialisation is achieved. As an example, Feldman (1976) highlighted that four tasks are associated with the second accommodation stage: initiation to task, initiation to group, congruence of evaluation and role definition. It is unsurprising, in many ways, that these sub-processes have not been explored thoroughly at present. Congruence of evaluation, according to Feldman (1976, p435), is *“the extent to which an employee and a supervisor similarly evaluate the employee’s progress in the organization”*. However, as Cloutier and Langley (2020) highlight, theorising about processes comes down to a realisation that there are different potentialities, in this case an agreement or a disagreement. In Haski-Leventhal and Bargal’s research (2008), it was found that one recruit did not fit in with the organisation at large, their colleagues in the workgroup specifically, and the type of work. Thus, in the Feldman (1976) model above, the initiation to group did not work out, the initiation to task was unsuccessful and the organisation ejected the volunteer (Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008).

The third stage is adaptation, when the newcomer has reached a threshold of acceptability. This acceptability could be denoted by certain behaviours being experienced by the newcomer (Ashforth et al., 2007), such as other insiders sharing the organisation’s historical failings, or a mentor being withdrawn once the newcomer has proven themselves in the role. This means that the newcomer has learnt the values, work norms and practices of the immediate workgroup. They have shown that they can perform the job role and deal with other workgroups within the organisation, who may be in conflict with their workgroup. They have become integrated into the organisation and the networks within the organisation (Anderson & Cooper, 1996). Socialisation stage models have given a framework that has identified the main (process) activities that a newcomer must go through (Wanous et al., 1992). The evidence of reality shock suggests that many individuals in certain sectors may exit before they have come to the adjusted stage (Duchscher, 2009; Houghton, 2014; Ho et al., 2021). However, as the socialisation literature has progressed, it has been contested whether research should focus on the organisation level. Cooper-Thomas and Anderson (2002) and Moreland and Devine’s (2002) group membership model put forward an argument that the dynamics of socialisation are best developed by understanding workgroup level interactions. Very recently, Ramarajan and Reid (2020) highlighted the process of relationship reconciliation in a school. This work has shown a more nuanced view of the way in which relationships can be reconciled between a school and teacher, and simultaneously between the teacher and students, during socialisation.

3.4.2 Workgroup Specific Stage Models

More recent work by Haski-Leventhal and Bargal (2008) uses a sensemaking approach to give a deeper insight into the socialisation journey. They describe the displays of anger that the new volunteers received when genuinely trying to help the street children on one hand, and the language used by the organisation staff to exclude them from the experienced volunteers on the other hand. The shock of first engaging a street child, someone who needs but does not want help and has very little trust in mankind, highlights why, after a year of careful recruitment, one of the volunteers is expelled. The study also considers the emotions that the remaining volunteers feel. It extends the workgroup models, such as Levine and Moreland's general group socialisation model (1982; 2002). The Moreland and Levine (1982; 2002) general model of group socialisation focuses on the stages of socialisation that build up to accepted group member, but they develop stage models further by adding stages wherein a member may become marginal and, eventually, an ex-member. The five stages are investigation, socialisation, maintenance, resocialisation, and remembrance (Moreland and Levine, 2002). This particular stage model attempts to explain stage transitions through the concept of commitment levels. When a level is attained that meets both the group's and the individual's criteria, then a transition occurs (Moreland and Levine 1982; 2002). This particular model is based on group dynamics – both the individual and the group are looking to maximise the reward accrued through mutual negotiation. When the rewards reach a certain level, i.e. a criterion level such as the acceptance level, this triggers a transition.

The stage models at the organisation level and at the workgroup level form the foundation for recent studies. The Volunteer Transitions and Stages Model (VTSM), a workgroup model (Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008) has provided additional empirical evidence to support Moreland and Levine's (1982; 2002) model for the inclusion of divergence and ex-member stages. The VTSM illustrates that:

“Volunteers are ejected due to three main obstacles: not fitting in with the group; unfavourable attitudes from their social environment; and/or a lack of suitability between the individual and the organization.”

(Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008, p84)

This particular model (the VTSM) has been very recently developed (Traeger et al., 2022), with three initial processes that newcomers go through. The study linked the main learning domain, the

socialisation tactic used, and the dominant emotion experienced. For example, the process of familiarising yourself with the role is linked to the socialisation tactic of training, which helps the newcomer overcome stress and fear. As a model, the VSTM was researched for a specific sector, the volunteering sector, and may have limited applicability to other sectors. However, whilst socialisation stage models and specific workgroup models do have their limitations on their own, they do give examples which suggest that organisation socialisation and workgroup socialisation appear to be happening simultaneously (Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008; Mornata & Cassar, 2018, Traeger et al., 2022).

The general workgroup model that has been researched empirically by Moreland and Levine (1982; 2002) and Haski-Leventhal and Bargal (2008) has given a more in-depth understanding than the early socialisation stage (organisation level entry) models. The socialisation stage models (Buchanan, 1974; Feldman, 1976) concentrated on the sample that survived and completed socialisation – five years as a management trainee in Buchanan’s research. As Buchanan (1974) notes, this is a weakness of the research. The socialisation stage models did provide a range of activities that newcomers had to complete to become socialised, e.g. initiation to group and initiation to task (Feldman, 1976). However, congruence of evaluation in the accommodation stage, and moving forward to resolve internal conflicts and outside conflicts in the role management stage, both hint at relationship dynamics (Feldman, 1976). Moreland and Levine (1982) and Haski-Leventhal and Bargal (2008) have unpacked the process at an immediate workgroup level. Both studies have shown that there is a lumpiness in socialisation – that relationships may develop positively but may also develop negatively. The Moreland and Levine model highlights the possibility of membership decline (divergence) and the possibility of resocialisation (re-engagement) (Moreland & Levine, 1982; 2002). Although the socialisation literature shows that socialisation is interactive, sometimes misinformation is given, or perceptions mean that the newcomer is overly optimistic (Saks & Gruman, 2018). This means that reality shock is likely to be experienced. There is a question of how the organisation or individual then reconciles this situation. To date, Bankins (2015) has developed a psychological contract remediation model which has provided evidence of the process individuals go through to decide whether to re-socialise or not. This work provides evidence of the process an employee may go through when deciding whether to stay in or leave a job role during socialisation.

3.5 Socialisation Tactics and Information Seeking

Socialisation theory has, for the most part, considered that newcomers (outsiders who have stepped across the organisation boundary) are motivated to reduce uncertainty (Van Maanen & Schein,

1979). Van Maanen and Schein (1979) proposed a framework of six pairs of socialisation tactics that can be considered as polar opposites. Firstly, **collective or individual** - the organisation has the choice to use a collective approach, where the newcomers are part of a separate group who share the same socialisation experiences, or to socialise them individually. The second pairing is **formal or informal** – formal tactics lead to the group being trained away from other employees, whilst informal would mean that learning takes place amongst other employees. A third pairing involves organisations either using a set of **sequential steps that the newcomer knows, or random steps where progression is more ambiguous**. The fourth pairing is **fixed or variable socialisation**, wherein there is either a fixed timetable to qualify for the job role, or a there is no specific timetable. The fifth pairing is **serial or disjunctive** tactics. An organisation that can use a mentor or buddy to help a newcomer settle into a job role is using serial tactics. However, in some job roles, it may be that the newcomer is the first one to undertake a newly developed role – so the individual has no role model to guide them. Finally, **investiture or divestiture** tactics refer to whether newcomers receive feedback from insiders that affirms or disaffirms, respectively, their identity.

Socialisation literature has suggested that socialisation tactics have the purpose of reducing uncertainty (Saks & Ashforth, 1997). This uncertainty is likely to revolve around various domains, e.g. role clarity, self-efficacy and social acceptance (Feldman, 1981; Bauer et al., 2007). Jones (1986) highlighted that the six pairings could be categorised into organisational tactics and individual tactics. The organisational tactics are designed to provide a structured, formalised approach (Ashforth et al., 1998) – this is when collective, formal, sequential, fixed, serial and investiture tactics are used. For example, when a cohort of army cadets are admitted to the army, they are in a separate group, following a programme of steps that is fixed in time, with the assistance of an organisation role model. Individual socialisation tactics are individual, informal, random, variable, disjunctive and **divestiture**. Ashforth et al. (1998) state that while individuals may socialise, this is more by default than design. In a meta-analysis, Bauer et al. (2007) found that **organisation** socialisation tactics were significantly related to role clarity, social acceptance and self-efficacy. Saks et al. (2007) found that role ambiguity and role conflict mediated socialisation tactics and socialisation outcomes.

The understanding of socialisation tactics has been further developed more recently, with Bauer et al. (2007) highlighting that Jones's (1986) model could be sub-divided with three different types of tactics: content, context and social tactics. Content tactics pertain to the stages of training, and the training timetable for the role, whilst context tactics include, for example, learning as part of a group and/or having formal training before starting the job role. The third category is social tactics – for example receiving feedback from colleagues inside the organisation, and/or having an experienced

insider to guide them. Whilst it is useful to know that information seeking is significantly related to role clarity and social acceptance, and that socialisation tactics (organisational) are related to role clarity, self-efficacy and social acceptance (Bauer et al., 2007), this does not tell scholars how to construct an effective socialisation tactic. Literature from nursing, other sports coaching and education fields, for example, shows that socialisation tactics chosen by the organisation are context specific. The effectiveness of the socialisation tactic may or may not have the desired outcome – for example the appointment of a mentor. Houghton (2014) highlights that student nurse mentors may not be available to their mentees due to workload issues, whilst McCloughen et al. (2020) highlight a perceived absence of care when students were left alone. Some socialisation contexts may indeed be perceived as eliciting fear, anxiety and uncertainty (Houghton, 2014). Organisation induction provides a general overview of the organisation mission, vision and values giving an early framework. However, Mornata and Cassar (2018) show that work pressure may make taking the time away from daily objectives very difficult.

However, there are studies that show that individuals do proactively seek information in a wide variety of ways (Miller & Jablin, 1991). The underpinning concept for information processing is the social benefit of having the information versus the costs of uncovering the information. For example, Mornata and Cassar (2018) found that some newcomers were required to be flexible, by asking the same question of more than one insider. The work of Miller and Jablin (1991) has highlighted this social cost aspect – some methods of information seeking were direct questions (overt), whereas surveillance, disguising conversations (“I have a friend who...”) and observation were some covert ways of accessing information. Recent work by Bauer et al. (2007) has shown that newcomers seek out referent information – job role information, appraisal information relating to performance in the job role, and relational information – on the nature of relationships with others. Newcomers are conscious of their personal credibility in the job role, which may impinge on their social acceptance and job performance proficiency (Miller & Jablin, 1991; Mornata & Cassar, 2018).

3.6 Micropolitics in Organisation Socialisation

Organisational change can be triggered externally by government or regulatory bodies, or by the appointment of a new senior executive, which will intensify micropolitical activity (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002; Pineda-Báez et al., 2019; Thomson & Sparkes, 2020). Organisational change management has been defined as “the process of continually renewing an organization’s direction, structure, and capabilities to serve the ever-changing needs of external and internal customers” (Moran & Brightman, 2001, p.111). Burns (1961) puts forward that political alliances and political

obligations are the exchange currency of organisational behaviour. Firstly, before defining micropolitics, it is necessary to tease apart the differences between macropolitical and micropolitical actions. Macropolitical actions are those wherein there is an interaction with external stakeholders. For example, a new school principal may be expected to balance the needs of the local community and seek to influence other schools and local and central government policymakers (Caruso, 2013). However, the new principal also has to be aware of the micropolitics within the school, involving groups and individuals such as heads of departments, teachers, unions, and parents (Caruso, 2013). Micropolitics represents the daily interactions, negotiations and bargains that individuals or groups make to further their agendas (wants) (I, 1991; Caruso, 2013; Thomson & Sparkes, 2020).

This part of the literature review consolidates the literature as it applies to management, but more so to education and sport, where scholars have advanced the knowledge of micropolitical socialisation strategies and acts. At present, micropolitics during socialisation is dominated by education literature (Blase 1998; 1991; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002; Thomson & Sparkes, 2020) and sports coaching literature (Potrac & Jones, 2009; Potrac et al., 2012, Thompson et al., 2015,). Micropolitical strategies and micropolitical acts are conducted in all organisations on a daily basis, as individuals and groups battle for influence over departments, sections, and the organisation overall. A micropolitical act is defined here as an activity by one person or group that establishes, develops, and uses power to obtain their preferred outcome in situations in which there is conflict or dissent (Pfeffer, 1981); whereas a micropolitical strategy is a set of repeated micropolitical acts that form an overall behavioural pattern, i.e. a strategy towards a particular outcome. Blase (1989) highlighted that those micropolitical strategies and micropolitical acts can be positive (collaborative-consensual) on one hand, and on the other hand can be negative (conflictive-adversarial).

Micropolitics is:

“... about power and how people use it to influence others and to protect themselves. It is about conflict and how people compete with each other to get what they want. It is about co-operation and how people build support among themselves to achieve their ends.”

(Blase, 1991, p.1)

Micropolitics has been shown to be a difficult concept for which to design an all-encompassing definition. Micropolitics include affirmative action, e.g. a bargain to support a colleague if they assist

with a task, and omission, e.g. a failure to act, such as not pointing out a poorly planned coaching session that will go wrong (Potrac et al., 2012). It includes seeking out allies to help with the achievement of goals (increasing influence) and weakening others (by helping diminish their professional credibility) (Lumby, 2015).

“Micropolitics refers to the use of formal and informal power by individuals and groups to achieve their goals in organizations. In large part political actions result from perceived differences between individuals and groups, coupled with the motivation to use power to influence and/or protect. Although such actions are consciously motivated, any action, consciously or unconsciously motivated, may have political “significance” in a given situation. Both cooperative and conflictive actions and processes are part of the realm of micropolitics.”

(Blase, 1991, p.11)

This definition of micropolitics recognises the use of permanent formal groups (e.g. the principal and senior management team and various departments and staff groups fulfilling different functions, such as HR and Finance), as well as temporary formal groups (e.g. task forces or special project groups), which cease to exist once they have carried out the allotted task (Caruso, 2013). As Thomas and Anderson (1998) comment, these formal groups are the planned, visible part of the organisation; however, there are also the informal groups. For example, the British Army cannot predict how new cadets will socialise each other upon entry. However, to satisfy needs for affiliation, self-esteem, testing reality and establishing security and power, informal groups or cliques may operate (Thomson & Sparkes, 2020). These cliques may be people of the same grade across departments, or different grades within departments. Micropolitics may be unspoken and not easily observable, such as informal agreements or bargains designed to back an individual/agenda or to undermine that individual/agenda (West, 1999; Thomson & Sparkes, 2020). The main objective in Blase’s (1991) definition is that individuals put their self-interests first, by extending their influence or protecting their influence. Some scholars have argued that serving self-interest only is the differentiator in political behaviour; however, there are plentiful examples in which an individual’s self-interests and those of the organisation are to some extent congruent (Caruso, 2013; Thomson & Sparkes, 2020).

In order to understand micropolitics, it is necessary to understand the organisational landscape, i.e. the external stakeholders (macropolitics) and internal stakeholders (micropolitics). Micropolitical

literacy has been highlighted as a skill that all newcomers need as they adjust to their new environments. The survival of newcomers has been linked to their ability to develop both macropolitical and micropolitical sensitivity (Achinstein, 2006; Thomson and Sparkes, 2020). This has led to the consideration of the way in which first-time teachers become acclimatised to becoming new teachers (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002, Kelchtermans, 2019) at one end of the career spectrum, whilst at the other end of the career spectrum scholars have studied new novice principals as they take up their first principalship (Blase, 1989; Caruso, 2013; Pineda-Báez, 2019). Whilst transitioning through the socialisation process, new teachers use a framework to understand their new environment – this is based on five interests and how these interests interact: (1) self-interests, which are concerned with protecting their professional reputation, e.g. how their line manager or principal sees their performance; (2) organisation interests, relating to the job role the new teacher has, the formal tasks within the organisation and whether the role is part time, full time or temporary; (3) social-professional interests – the quality of working relationships, characterised by trust and co-operation or conflict and competition; (4) material interests – the access to financial resources and materials, e.g. for teachers who invest time creating new materials for games and learning; and (5) cultural ideological interests, e.g. what ideology underpins the organisation culture of the school (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002; Kelchtermans, 2019). They are challenged by finding out how they fit in within a department and how to acquire resources for a project i.e. establishing themselves as a credible teacher (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002; Kelchtermans, 2019).

At the other end of the education career spectrum, the novice principal is challenged by becoming an administrator for the first time. This means that their job role has to manage external facing relationships – parents and children as customers, and the local government administration; and internal facing relationships – the senior management team, heads of department, teachers, and other members of staff (Caruso, 2013; Pineda-Báez, 2019; Ramarajan & Reid, 2020; Thomson & Sparkes, 2020). The novice principals are likely to face educational change, spending cuts on resources, and public calls for educational excellence (Caruso, 2013). In order to increase their credibility, the novice principals will seek to form strong relationships with their local government supervisor, who is responsible for monitoring how government initiatives are implemented (Caruso, 2013). Caruso shows that the novice principals also made positive personal impressions through contributions at meetings e.g. giving examples of how government initiatives were working effectively in their school, and modelling behaviour for other principals. Moreover, they created networks with other principals who either had the same mentor or were more experienced (Caruso, 2013). It was important to put forward an image of a principal who was at one with their colleagues and following the government strategic rhetoric i.e. using the key language in team meetings inside

and outside the school. Impression management was very important as the novices were keen to show unity rather than division and conflict at their school. The latter may be perceived as revealing a new principal who was potentially weak, ineffective, insubordinate, or uncooperative (Thomson and Sparkes, 2020).

Cushion and Jones (2014) highlight that football coaches perpetuate the traditional football culture that they were socialised into when they were players. Coaches are keen for academy players to learn how to be a professional footballer and, within this, to be embedded in the values, ideology and culture of the field (Cushion & Jones, 2014). The main objective is one of socialisation by coaches, enabling new players to fit in with the expectations of the football industry – this may mean not only on-pitch behaviours, but also lifestyle choices e.g. quality of sleep and nutrition in everyday life (Molan et al., 2016; Cushion & Jones, 2014). Whilst on the surface, coaches provide formal, observable, technical skills training, below this, at a subconscious level, they are reinforcing the social status of players, and the rights and responsibilities to be expected when graduating as a professional footballer. Coaches compete with one another to maintain their own status within the coaching hierarchy (Potrac et al., 2012). However, more importantly, they re-establish the social order between themselves and academy players, for example. Edwards and Jones (2022) highlight the use of humour to undermine fellow coaches, and also to put young players in their correct place i.e. subservient, as they are apprentices. The practice of coaching reinforces the individuality of the coaching staff and their status, for example, when players call them “gaffer” or “boss”, whilst players are given instruction as part of a homogenous group. Through daily routines and the power to impose short, sharp punishments for not achieving the standard of practice required (e.g. press ups, running round the pitch), the coaches reinforce the hierarchical nature of the football habitus. Manley et al. (2016) highlight the expectation of silence from academy players, which potentially causes tension as there appears to be a dividing line between asking questions or challenging a coach’s perspective and being perceived as disrespectful (Manley et al., 2016; Edwards & Jones 2022).

The micropolitical aspect of football management may be seen to extend to the changes in some club structures with the introduction of sporting directors (directors of football) (Parnell et al., 2022). It has been commented that the appointment of sporting directors may be perceived as a mechanism to support managers, whilst reducing their autonomy to sign the players they would prefer (Parnell et al., 2022). This study looks to unlock an understanding of the relative power relations aspect of socialisation, i.e. the political astuteness that managers may need to be socially acceptable to stakeholders (Mitchell et al., 1997; Wood et al., 2021).

3.7 Chapter Summary and Key Points

This chapter identifies that socialisation is still not well understood as a process, although there are scholars who have contributed to a wide range of building blocks (and models) over more than 50 years. Socialisation is complex, with socialisation content **highlighting six domain areas to be learned** – the two that need to be explored more are **people and politics**. In the socialisation stage models, there is no resolution on whether socialisation is a **single level or a multi-level process**. Socialisation tactics used by the organisation are assumed to be effective in delivering the information to help the newcomer adjust. When a newcomer starts at a new organisation, they seek out information that will help them to gain a more detailed mental picture of the situation. However, insiders may not welcome newcomers, and may use **strategies to protect themselves from competition** or differentiate themselves from newcomers through language.

Socialisation studies, when delving into socialisation tactics, have on many occasions alluded to multiple **stakeholders engaging with the newcomer simultaneously**. However, there have been many studies that have concentrated on explaining the impact of one particular stakeholder, rather than adopting a multiple stakeholder approach. As such, these studies **miss the socialisation aspects of prioritisation and competition, as well as the newcomer's agency** to negotiate their socialisation.

Whilst the sport and education sectors are engaged in highlighting the micropolitical aspects of socialisation in sports coaching and educational change, management has more recently adopted a sensemaking approach, which has seen a much deeper, fuller picture emerge. This picture is fine grained with attitudes, perceptions, emotions, behaviours, and emotional displays. It embraces the more complex events, along with their potential outcomes.

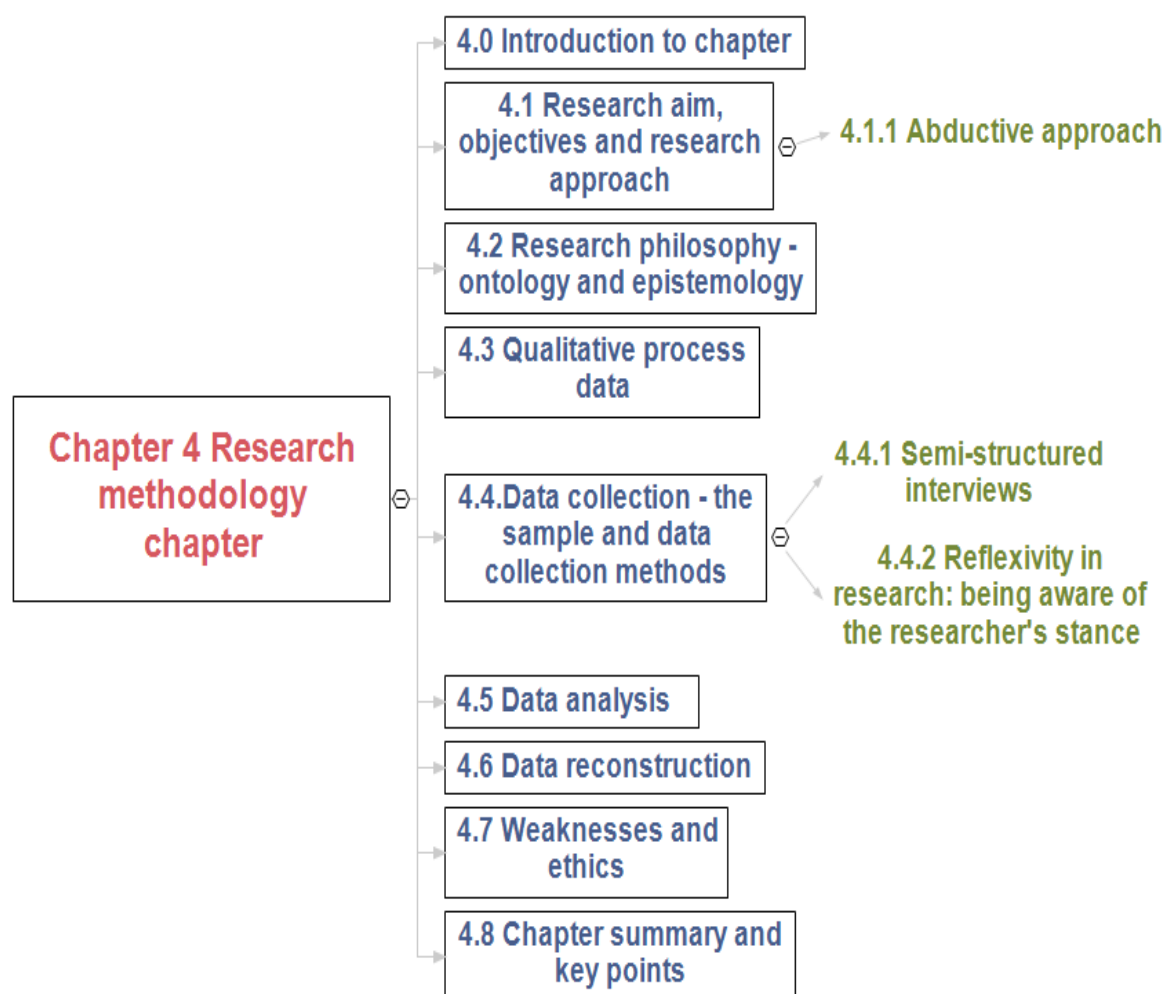
Micropolitical power is exercised through **three overall power strategies**. 'Power with' shows that a leader can work collaboratively with a subordinate to obtain an outcome. Alternatively the leader may use 'power over' to drive through change when there is some potential resistance. This is the adversarial way, using power through strategies, imposition of authority, dominance and control. 'Power through' uses rewards and punishments, this occurs when the leader can choose whether to reward an individual or not.

Chapter 4 – Research Methodology Chapter

4.0 Chapter Introduction

The chapter will begin by identifying the research question and the type of data that the researcher will engage with. The chapter will proceed by considering and justifying the choices of research epistemology and ontology, the research approach, research strategy, and sampling method for selecting participants. The data collection methods used will then be analysed, and the data analysis methods applied will be discussed. The chapter will conclude with the ethical considerations that were embedded in this study. Collectively, the chapter aims to highlight the choices made by the researcher, the challenges that those choices may have created for the researcher, and how those challenges were dealt with in a professional and ethical manner.

Figure 4.1. Chapter 4 Plan – The Methodology Chapter



4.1 Research Aim, Objectives and Research Approach

As stated in Chapter 2, this study explores the football management context, and the aim of the thesis is to **explore the experiences of managers socialising into a new football management job role**.

The four main objectives that underpin this aim are, namely, to:

1. Critically review and evaluate the existing literature on organisation socialisation identifying the relevance of this literature to the context of English football management;
2. Explore, using the managers' experiences, the transition into a new football management job role;
3. Present, in narrative form, a detailed understanding of the development of social relations during the socialisation period; [critical incident technique].
4. Contribute to the organisation socialisation literature by producing a new model through the analysis of interactions between the newcomer and a wide variety of stakeholders.

The research aim highlights that this study revolves around the collection of data from managers about their socialisation experiences. Consequently, it follows that the research philosophy, i.e. the ontology and epistemology, must be in alignment with the managers' social construction of their subjective reality. As Barker et al. (2002) suggest, exploratory questions are suitable for qualitative inquiry when the topic area is highly complex. Elliot et al (1999) highlights different types of exploratory question – in this case the questions used are interpretive, e.g. how does socialisation unfold over time for the new manager?

4.1.1 Inductive, Deductive or Abductive Approach

There has been approximately 50 years of socialisation literature development, since the seminal works of Schein (1968), Van Maanen (1976) and Van Maanen and Schein (1979). This study looks to add to the socialisation literature that already exists; thus, making a process theory contribution could be complex (Cloutier & Langley, 2020). In this study, process theory refers to a conceptual focus on the way that phenomena emerge, evolve or terminate over time. Moreover, there is a distinction between narrative and scientific ways of knowing (Langley & Tsoukas, 2010).

In this study, the researcher is using an abductive approach. That is, the data is collected first-hand and then analysed in tranches, and the initial themes are found using open coding. The researcher then reviews the data using socialisation theory and assesses what surprise(s) come from the data –

for example, that managers may recruit players already known to cut down the socialisation process? The researcher then conducts a further round of semi-structured interviews, and notes down any further surprises. Qualitative researchers using an abductive approach are enabled to be creative, by selecting the surprises in the data they will review (Thornberg, 2012). However, abductive reasoning produces only exploratory hypotheses, these would need to be tested empirically. Of the three forms of reasoning, abduction's claim to certainty is the most tentative. As Peirce (1997, p.230) summarises, "Deduction proves that something must be; induction shows that something actually is operative; abduction merely suggests that something may be".

The other potential alternatives were, as described in Shani et al. (2020), inductive reasoning and deductive reasoning. Inductive reasoning takes specific observations to make a generalisable theory (Behfar & Okhuysen, 2018). However, as Ketokivi and Mantere (2010) highlight, there is an assumption that the phenomenon being studied has caused the results being produced; there is no challenge by the researcher to seek out other factors that may cause the same results. While deductive arguments rest on an internal, logically valid structure, with or without evidence, inductive reasoning generates probable conclusions, often basing generalisations on "evidence accumulated from various investigations" (Folger and Stein, 2017, p.307).

4.2 Research Philosophy – Ontology and Epistemology

Bell, Bryman and Harley (2022) put forward the view that the philosophy of social science seeks to address three domains: ontology – what we understand reality is; epistemology – our understanding of how we can know reality; and research methodology – our understanding of the best choices to underpin our ontological and epistemological assumptions. It is important for the researcher to make known to the reader of a thesis the main assumption made when making research choices. Bell, Bryman and Harley (2022) highlight a fundamental question that a researcher needs to answer. Is the social phenomenon constructed through interactions between humans? If the answer is yes, the phenomenon is made real through interpreting the meaning of language, acts or symbols used. The relativist ontology means that the researcher believes that, in this case, socialisation experiences are constructed by the individual manager. Each manager will construct their own reality through interacting with other social actors (Bell, Bryman & Harley, 2022). For example, the terms 'organisation' and 'culture' are considered to be socially constructed – which is negotiated by individuals and reinforced (Manley et al., 2018; Edwards and Jones, 2022). Organisation culture can also be thought of as socially constructed (Becker, 1982), which means that organisation cultures are

seen as phenomena that are constantly being worked on. The culture changes in order to update the ways in which the organisation goes about solving challenges and problems.

Epistemology is the theory of knowledge. At one end of the spectrum, it considers that there are multiple relative realities (Hudson & Ozanne, 1988). Interpretivism views reality as being made up of individuals' subjective experiences of the world. This means that the socially constructed epistemology is based on relative reality and is underpinned by the ontological view that reality is based on social constructivism (Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008). Walsham (1993) argues that there are no correct or incorrect theories; rather, theories are judged on how interesting they are to the researcher. Language, symbols and shared meanings enable the researcher to access social constructionism (Myers, 2009; Reeves & Hedberg, 2003).

4.3 Qualitative Process Data

Strauss and Corbin (1998) refer to researchers being aware of potential nuances in data collection.. When preparing for a study, the researcher should become familiar with the phenomena to be studied and the types of data that will be collected. In this case, the research aim highlights the capturing of managers' experiences. These factors will have implications for the data collection method selected, the shape of analysis and the subsequent interpretation (Langley 1999). The literature review in Chapter 3 highlights the shift in organisational studies, including socialisation studies, from using quantitative data to understand the factors that make up socialisation to using more dynamic process modelling (Cloutier & Langley, 2020).

In this study, qualitative data collection will be used, as the socialisation process is indeed highly complex, with potentially a wide variety of stakeholders and interactions (Barker et al., 2002). At present, as Elliot et al. (1999) cite, qualitative data enables the researcher to discover definitional aspects – what are the defining features of the phenomena? Moreover, what variety of the phenomena happen, and how do the phenomena unfold over time? In this research, socialisation is a process, which means that the researcher will be collecting data that pertains to the development of a manager's socialisation. When collecting process data, there are several challenges that need to be borne in mind by the researcher. The first is that process research focuses on teasing apart how things evolve over time (Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008); consequently, process data consists of narratives. The narratives yielded from process data are likely to highlight what happened, who did what, and when.

When focusing on process data, there are some complications, as Cloutier and Langley (2020) highlight. Firstly, defining what an event is – this could be a conversation, a handshake, a meeting, or a poor financial year. This means that processes tend to include multiple levels of analysis and units, as well as embeddedness in temporality. With processes, it may well be difficult, if not impossible, to gauge the exact time that one process finishes and another one ends. For example, Traeger et al. (2022) highlight three aspects of socialisation – getting to know the job, bonding with the group and embedding in the organisation; it may well be that these are simultaneous, rather than linear processes happening sequentially (Chao et al., 1994; Taormina, 1997).

Qualitative data will enable the researcher to give voice to the participants (Gioia & Corley, 2013) as they share their experiences of socialisation. Elliot et al. (1999) highlight that qualitative data has some distinct advantages over quantitative data, for example, enabling the researcher to explore an area rather than being bound by hypothesis testing. Moreover, qualitative data also enables a phenomenon to be studied in its own right, rather than studying from an outside perspective. This thesis aims to capture data that bring to life experiences with the nuances of relationships developing during the socialisation of a newcomer (manager). These nuances may include the behaviours, attitudes and emotions expressed, as well as the managers' perceptions of what was occurring (Moreland & Levine, 2002; Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008; Traeger et al., 2022).

Recently in the socialisation literature, as highlighted in Chapter 3, data collected to represent processes have covered dynamic aspects of relationship reconciliation (Ramarajan & Reid, 2020) and a sensemaking approach adopted by Haski-Leventhal and Bargal (2008), highlighting the language used by insiders to keep volunteering newcomers at bay on their first night of volunteering. Qualitative data collection is flexible in the method used to enable collection of first-hand experience in ethnographic studies (Potrac et al., 2012; Gilmore & Harding, 2021) or case studies (Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008). As Barker (2002) states, exploratory questions lead towards the collection of qualitative data. Consequently, the researcher considered the key features of qualitative data – firstly, that the data collected will be linguistically-based (Polkinghorne, 1983). However, as the research methods literature exemplifies, there are other potentially more important features. There is an emphasis on understanding the phenomena (the socialisation experiences, in this case), and the researcher has to be mindful that questions are open and will stimulate the participant to explore these experiences (Elliot et al., 1999). The qualitative researcher has the flexibility to select from a wide range of design options and analyses (Elliot, Fischer & Rennie 1999).

4.4 Data Collection – The Assistant Manager Role and Data Collection Methods

The sample was a purposive sample of current managers. The definition of a current manager is any manager who has managed a team between the 2014 – 2015 season and the season when the study started, 2018 – 2019. This includes managers who manage men's or women's teams within the English Football Association's football pyramid: levels 1 – 10 in the men's game, and 1 – 7 in the women's game. The researcher would have preferred to attract a sample that was based on approximately the same number of participants from the women's game and men's game e.g. 20 men's managers and 23 women's managers. Table 4A on page 94 shows the actual breakdown, which had an approximate ratio of 3:1 in the men's favour.

There was a perception that attracting a sufficient sample may have proved difficult, as managers have limited time during the season. Those involved in the professional leagues (levels 1-4 in men's football) are known to have very little time during the 10-month season, from August to May. These managers are usually employed full-time, whilst those in the non-leagues (levels 5-10) are only likely to be full-time at level 5 – the majority of teams at levels 6-10 are likely to have part-time managers. As such, these managers have additional full-time job roles as teachers, black cab drivers, and self-employed builders, for example. The researcher sought out interest prior to ethics approval being granted by the Oxford Brookes University regulations and ethics committee in February 2020. Firstly, the researcher contacted local football associations throughout England to find some initial interest.

The researcher used snowball sampling, as football is a highly networked industry where managers know each other well. Moreover, each manager will have their own network of football contacts, with whom they experienced the game when they were academy players. These friendships have grown over time as they have moved through senior football into football management. The sample developed as a snowball sample as the managers were interviewed, a process which enabled them to relay their experiences. Some commented that they see things differently since that particular socialisation, i.e. an early new management appointment, and they explained how they may have dealt with the situation now, some 10 years later. The researcher asked, if they found the experience useful, whether they would be able to recommend some colleagues who may be interested in participating. The majority of managers were able to suggest at least one or two other managers who would be worth approaching.

Table 4A (below) shows some pertinent details of the participants, in order to provide some measure of transparency. For example, it includes their longevity as a manager, the highest level experienced as manager, and the beginning of the individual's career – as a professional, non-league

or social player. The researcher, in order to protect anonymity, has withheld other information, such as the age of the manager.

Table 4A. Sample of Participants (Football Managers)

Blue highlights women's team managers, white men's team managers

Interview Number	Pseudonym	Gender	Beginning of football career: professional/non-league/social	Management experience in years	Highest Level managed
1	Agnetha	F	Social	24	Women's level 3
2	Stefanos	M	Professional	2	Men's level 10
3	Justine	F	Social	1	Women's level 2
4	Santiago	M	Non-league	2	Women's level 6
5	Francisco	M	Non-league	3	University team
6	Jamil	M	Professional	1	Men's level 5
7	Blare	M	Non-league	5	Men's level 7
8	Rhodri	M	Non-league	5	Men's level 7
9	Ribeiro	M	Professional	3.5	Men's level 6
10	Petr	M	Professional	4	Men's level 7
11	Jaap	M	Professional	5	Men's level 8
12	Smudger	M	Professional	3	Men's level 9
13	Kai	M	Non-league	30	Men's level 8
14	Heals	F	Social	2	Women's level 2
15	Roberto	M	Professional	11	Nat League – level 5
16	Davison	M	Professional	2	Men's level 9

17	Wajtullah	M	Social	1	Women's level 5
18	Paulo	M	Professional	9	Men's level 7
19	Claude	M	Non-league	1	Men's level 9
20	Joao	M	Non-league	7	Women's level 1
21	Dan	M	Professional	2	Men's level 9
22	Maric	M	Professional	2	Men's level 8
23	Andrea	M	Professional	2	Men's level 7
24	Christian	M	Professional	30	Men's level 8
25	Carlos	M	Non-league	5	Men's level 8
26	Alessandro	M	Professional	12	Men's level 7
27	Tommaso	M	Social	2	Women's level 3
28	Jesus	M	Professional	5	Men's level – level 5
29	Marcus	M	Professional	9	Men's level 8
30	Ricky	M	Professional	2	Men's level 4
31	Darko	M	Professional	2	Men's level – level 5
32	Pedro	M	Non-league	3	Men's level 9
33	Rambo	M	Professional	6	Men's level 8
34	Clinton	M	Professional	25	Men's level 5
35	Rodrigo	M	Professional	14	Men's level 4
36	Sebastian	M	Non-league	3	Women's level 4
37	Farrokh	M	Professional	2	Men's level 9
38	Dragan	M	Professional	3	Men's level 10

39	Juan	M	Non-league	6	Men's level – level 9
40	Samuel	M	Non-league	4	Women's level 8
41	Dimitar	M	Social	4	Women's level 8
42	Matias	M	Non-league	2	Men's level 10
43	Paulo	M	Professional	6	Men's level 8

4.4.1 Semi-Structured Interviews (SSIs)

Semi-structured interviews (SSIs) were chosen in order to collect the socialisation experiences of managers. The rationale behind this was that SSIs place the participant centre stage. It is for the interviewer to encourage and facilitate, whilst it is the participant's narrative that is of particular interest. The SSI enables the researcher to be flexible after the initial questions. For example, an introductory question, "Can you talk me briefly through your football career?" may lead to another, "Who were the key people at the club who you learnt from?"

The SSI as an instrument enables the participant to give a more in-depth description of their experiences. This may include emotions, attitudes, values, or rationale behind the actions taken at the time (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

The table below (4B) below shows that 43 interviews were conducted in total. Time was a key issue with current managers, as the majority were actively managing when they were interviewed. The researcher aimed to conduct the interviews face-to-face, in order to maximise the rapport with the participant (Bell, Bryman & Harley, 2022). In order to fit around the end of season 2018-19 and pre-season 2019-2020 activities, the managers' face-to-face interviews were held in a range of locations.

Table 4B. Sample of Participants

Total interviews	Face to face interviews	Telephone interviews
43	39	4 plus (3 follow up)
Recruitment	Initial phone call to local football associations and snowball sample	Snowball sample
Location	Quietest location for recording Office, boardroom, unoccupied changing room	In car mobile – signal poor where researcher lives
Timing	Between 9.00 am and 9.30pm	Between 9.00 am and 8.00pm
Consent	Consent form	Given verbally and/or followed up with consent form
Recording	Dictaphone and/or phone	Dictaphone

The majority of interviews were face-to-face; however, it was necessary to use telephone interviews with some managers in order to reach data saturation. As Braun and Clarke (2019) state, saturation in qualitative studies is open to debate. For example, when a researcher is using thematic analysis (TA) to highlight the themes coming through in the data, there is indeed a subjective element, i.e. the interpretation of the researcher. In this case, with several areas that came up as surprising using an abductive approach, the researcher wanted sufficient data to point to a tentative hypothesis on what was causing the managers' experiences to unfold in a particular way. Alternatively, data may provide themes around the type of subjects that a manager discusses with, or does not discuss with, a particular stakeholder group.

There were four interviews that were undertaken on the phone originally, and three follow up telephone interviews to ask additional questions based on the managers' experience of football agents. This was in addition to four interviewees who raised the relationship with football agents – the majority of managers were not involved with football agents, or their clubs did not pay commissions to agents. The consent to be interviewed was given verbally on the telephone and was followed up with a consent form in the post. The three follow-up interviews (an additional 15 minutes each) involved managers who had already signed a consent form. Irvine (2010) highlights that telephone interviewing has some novel challenges, in particular the length of time of the

interview. Bryman and Bell (2011) suggest no more than 25 minutes, as Irvine (2010) suggests that telephone interviewers need to be careful of their mind wandering. Concentration and focus may indeed waver during a long interview on the telephone. In this study, the interviews were between 30 mins and 1 hr 15 mins. The participant was asked if they were prepared to continue after 1 hour, and some participants gave additional time. The interviewer enquired when starting the interview if it was a good time to speak, or whether it would be necessary to reschedule. The managers, once they had agreed to an appointment, by and large were available; only one interview had to be re-arranged due to illness.

Recording of the interviews was done using a dictaphone or a mobile phone. On one occasion, the batteries on the dictaphone had run out. This incident resulted in the loss of some data; however, the participant provided four key contacts, all of whom agreed to be interviewed. After that point, both a dictaphone and a mobile phone were taken to all interviews as best practice (Irvine, 2010).

Semi-structured interviews (SSIs) were chosen as a method to collect the narratives from managers about their experiences. The researcher produced an interview guide (see appendix F). The guide was used to standardise the process of the semi-structured interview. In order to gain some insights into the potential challenges involved, the researcher performed a practice interview with a neighbour. The neighbour gave some feedback on the process, prior to the researcher undertaking the first tranche of interviews.

Data was collected with privacy by design at the forefront of the researcher's mind. The participants were pseudonymised – this was done by assigning a manager with a pseudonym based on another nationality. For example, if Steve Taylor was a manager, the pseudonym could be Roberto.

Moreover, the teams that the managers are associated with were also pseudonymised; for example, if Ashridge Park Rangers FC were a team, they may have been called Town FC. The participant information sheet provided details of the study, why the data was needed, and how the data would be dealt with (see appendix B). The data was stored on a personal computer and two memory sticks which were secured in a locked drawer when not being worked on. The interview files were given a password to protect the data and the original transaction that would identify the football clubs that the manager had an association with. Ethical clearance had been given by UREC in February 2019, upon some additional information that was produced by the researcher. The only manager names that were not pseudonymised were those of relatively famous managers who have passed away. There are many players who have played under Graham Taylor and Brian Clough, on the various teams they have managed. So these players, who are now managers, are highly unlikely to be identified with the measures taken above. Ethical compliance is fundamental in the football industry,

as this is a highly competitive industry in which any quotations from professional managers and non-league managers are highly prized by the media.

Another qualitative design considered was that of an ethnographic approach – for example, Potrac et al.'s (2012) work on his experiences as a football coach. An ethnographic approach would need the researcher to be able to legitimately embed themselves in the organisation. From this embedded perspective, the researcher could describe and interpret the shared and learned values of values, behaviours and beliefs (Brown & Coupland, 2015). In order to carry out this type of research, the researcher would have to be capable of playing the role of assistant manager. As the researcher has no formal coaching qualifications or professional football experience, this was also discounted. With an ethnographic approach, in the football environment, people regard strangers or outsiders as potentially threatening. The researcher found this when he contacted several potential interviewees – one asked “are you writing a book?”

4.4.2 Reflexivity in Research

The semi-structured interview questions are designed to elicit responses in narrative form. The participants are expected to give a sense of the events and the experiences linking to those events as part of the process of socialisation. Consequently, this research project places the participant and researcher in a relationship in which there is a co-construction of narrative. In order to try to make sense of the manager's experiences, the researcher must engage in questioning in areas of interest. The non-league manager who is being given a voice entrusts the researcher to give them a full voice, not one that is diminished by the researcher's biases, prior knowledge, or background (Berger, 2015).

Reflexivity is a continual process of self-awareness – of being able to untangle the researcher's potential interference with, and influence over, the process of collecting the narrative and outcome narrative (Bradbury-Jones, 2007). In a qualitative study, it is impossible to produce a narrative completely free of interference. However, it is possible to reflect, take care and use due diligence methodologically to produce a trustworthy narrative – a narrative that does justice to the participant's experiences and their personal story.

Using a reflexive process will enable the researcher to uncover and assess the positive or negative impact of biases. Berger (2015) highlights a useful framework for analysis by categorising reflexivity as a process in which the researcher:

(1) shares the experience of study participants;

(2) moves from the position of an outsider to the position of an insider in the course of the study; and

(3) has no personal familiarity or experience with what is being studied.

The researcher's own internal dialogue and self-critical evaluation acknowledges his positionality as researcher, and the explicit recognition that his position(s) may affect the collection and production of narrative outcomes (Bradbury-Jones, 2007; Stronach et al., 2007). The researcher reflected, as the batches of interviews progressed, on some of the potential impacts his relationship with the participants could have on future interviews using Berger's (2015) framework.

The researcher found that he had more in common with the participants than expected. The following is a record of his reflections as he progressed with the study. These were kept as notes in a field diary.

Sharing an experience as a football fan:

The participants and managers are all football fans, with a favourite club. When our team loses, we experience hurt and pain at the loss, we experience the derision from those who have beaten us, and of local rival fans. Football is a game for massaging egos. When we win, life is a better place, we bask in reflected glory, our team, our tribe has won. The emotionality that social identity brings, the kinship with other fans, the rivalry and tribalism, is all understood.

This understanding of emotionality and the pride that a participant feels when playing for their team as a professional, the disappointment when not making it at that club, and the happiness when one of their heroes (who played as a senior professional) recognises them as a fellow manager, enabled the researcher to gain deeper insights through empathy. On occasion, this would show itself through summarising what a participant had said, to make sure that the researcher was capturing the experience – yes, that's right. However, showing too much empathy with the participant may have brought back painful memories, one event had only just happened in the month before (a dismissal).

However, gaining access to a restricted membership – managers who have been ex-professional players, couldn't be achieved. Fans are on the outside of this membership – having tried to foster a connection by stating that the researcher had actually seen a manager in their playing days gained no response.

Sharing football knowledge – social history of football clubs:

Participants are operational managers who, in the non-leagues, have a full time role e.g. engineer, gardening consultant, or educator, as well as being a part-time manager. Time is a precious commodity, and spending 45 minutes to an hour with someone they would have to educate about football would be a non-starter. This meant that when the interviews took place, when a team was mentioned, the researcher could deepen the connection by talking about the teams that were 'top dogs' in the 1980s and 1990s, but have now fallen on hard times.

This aided the credibility of the researcher and potentially deepened the bond with participants. The researcher having been a manager of a local team of friends when at university provided some small insight into some of the challenges faced.

Sharing people development experience: teaching/coaching philosophy:

The majority of the participants have experienced being managed at professional football clubs and are now managers themselves. Their ethos is one of helping young footballing talent to develop to their highest potential. Most are honest and want players to succeed as they have, and take pride in the achievements of players they have worked with. The researcher and participants share a passion for developing people. Whilst their experience is in different areas(accounting/business and football, respectively), this passion enabled participants to open up by trusting that the researcher understands issues of safeguarding and confidentiality, and that as an academic, he knows what putting in a shift is (working hard).

However, it was stressed that although players' names were mentioned, they would be anonymised. On occasion, during an interview, a participant would ask, "You definitely don't mention names?" One participant's first question was, "Are you writing a book?" It was noticeable that the managers who had a successful career at the highest level in the English game were accomplished at keeping concepts very generic, almost hygienic at times.

No formal experience of football management:

However, the researcher was mindful that they were in the position of a researcher who had no experience of the phenomena being studied – the challenges of a manager during a socialisation period. The researcher was mindful that the participants had the key to open up their world of

experience, and was respectful when asking questions, as the football world is highly competitive. Information and careless whispers can mean that trust is broken, and access denied very quickly.

By being respectful and by meeting participants at short notice, appreciating their commitments and priorities, it was possible to interview managers. The interviews occurred in empty changing rooms, discrete corners of golf clubs, training facilities, offices and coffee shops. The key message of the project was an appreciative review of managers' experiences, which allowed some access. The main outcome was of earning respect and being trusted. The researcher was careful about how questions about finance were couched – "Was the club budget in line with a mid-table outcome, a Championship winning season, or lower end of the league?" This enabled an answer that gave an overview relative to other competitors. Also present was the appreciation that some clubs will always put in more money to buy higher quality players – it is how the football business works.

Not sharing formal academic qualifications:

The researcher, as a matter of research protocol, explained what a PhD was and the ethical considerations that participants needed to consider. Part of this was to convince the participants that their information would be anonymised, and their identity highly unlikely to be discovered. Those who had been in the professional game as players were guarded as to whether the researcher was gathering these narratives for a book. Once the researcher explained that this was a qualification and not a book that was to be published, they usually gave consent.

The researcher has been employed as a trainer, developer and educator for 30 years, training professional students in Business and Accountancy qualifications. He has been passionate about helping people develop to their potential, the qualification that he identified with most was the Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT). This qualification represented professionalism, and an opportunity to assist many to build a career after having a family, or as an alternative to a traditional academic career, i.e. degree. Whilst delivering this programme with some degree of success (pass rates and student retention), it was a source of irritation that he himself had not made it as a qualified accountant. Having said this, the researcher acknowledges that his career has had many very joyful moments. When arriving in further education, the promotional structure was Lecturer I, Lecturer II, Senior Lecturer and Principal Lecturer. However, within the sector there has been, in line with business outside the public sector, a layering of management from the hierarchical organisations of the 1970s and 1980s.

The reflections above helped the researcher as he progressed with the collection of interviews. The researcher had been warned not to let his enthusiasm get the better of him when interviewing. To focus on 90% listening and 10% questions, and on guidance by Dr David Bowen. When transcribing, it was found that one or two interviews were approximately 80% listening and 20% questions or interaction. The first three interviews comprised just 60% listening and 40% questions. The researcher has put this down to not knowing what data he was looking for, and sometimes due to participants asking “What do you want?” Perhaps these participants were nervous and happy to help, whereas the process needed to involve minimal guidance and prompting, whilst putting the participant’s voice centre stage (Gioia & Corley, 2013).

Using abductive theory to interpret the data:

Using an abductive approach has certain advantages, in that a researcher is not bound by trying to formulate a theory and then testing that theory to form generalisations. Neither is the researcher exploring data trying to build theory from the ground upwards (Hurley et al., 2021; Gioia et al., 2012). For a researcher, an abductive approach enables a focus on unexpected results from the thesis (Hurley, 2021). For example, when answering the question “What is the role of the football manager?” One of the key differences is the amount of time available to change a team and to socialise them to the football operations culture. Some managers did have the autonomy to appoint and create a culture as they wished, whilst others did not. Revisiting the socialisation literature, many new managers, e.g. new school principals, do not have the opportunity to dismiss personnel almost immediately, or to change the organisation culture (Horvat, 2010; Caruso, 2013; Thomson & Sparkes, 2020).

In an ideal world, being able to revisit to clarify interesting findings with managers would be most effective. Indeed, an abductive approach requires an iterative process, aiming to find a useful explanation for a phenomenon. In this research, it was necessary to conduct further interviews with selected managers who had experience of dealing with football agents. Some initial enquiries with a small cadre of managers highlighted that managers with experience below level 6 were unlikely to deal with football agents in their job role. In this particular study, although a rapport had been built between the researcher and participants, and many had given feedback that they were happy to be contacted for a follow up, emails that were not worded carefully and of interest to managers did not receive a reply. More favourable responses were received during the initial positioning of the study – the stance of a novice outsider wishing to appreciate the manager’s perspective was more warmly

welcomed. It was also understood that, when using an abductive approach, if there is scant theoretical development in an area of interest it may impede investigation of that area (Thompson, 2022).

The researcher had to be mindful of the nature of any follow up, and to consider what the implications of this may be. Was there already sufficient theoretical grounding to justify further recourse to a participant, and was it an appropriate time within the season? Several potential participants highlighted that they were willing to participate, but as part-time non-league managers with full-time jobs, they were unable to find the time. Theoretically, a researcher who uses an abductive process should not attempt to test the data by hypothesising (Thompson, 2022).

In the socialisation literature, the underrepresentation of sensemaking as a process guided the researcher to uncover what information the new managers were prepared to discuss with a variety of stakeholders. The findings showed that managers were aware of the information that they could discuss with each stakeholder, while some competitive data could not be released until a player was recruited.

Below in Tables 4C-4E the researcher shares some of the learning during these phases of data collection. With the collection of abductive data there are several processes that are happening simultaneously – this makes the data collection and analysis a challenge. Researchers are collecting, transcribing and analysing. At the end of several cycles the researcher is left with many small parts of a much bigger data jigsaw – as the participant interviews are collected questions maybe asked from a generic level to a very specific level. For example, what surprised you when you joined the club, why did the promise for a top 3 place budget did not materialise?

4.5 Data Analysis

The study yielded 31.35 hours (2 d.p.) of recording, which produced 342 pages of transcription using 1.5 spacing text. The interviews lasted between 30 mins and 1hr and 15 mins, with an average interview length of 43.75 minutes.

The data analysis was managed in two distinct processes. Firstly, familiarisation with the data through three tranches of interviews. The data was manually processed using Microsoft Excel spreadsheets to highlight trends and examples under themes. **It was decided that, although NVivo training became available at Oxford Brookes University, it would not be utilised, because the data analysis was already underway (several months of data had already been processed) and it would**

take the researcher at least 6 months to upskill and become an intermediate practitioner with the NVivo package. The researcher's experience using Microsoft Office as a professional accountant provided significant expertise in the use of this package, with which he chose to summarise the data. Microsoft Excel was able to offer the same functionality as NVivo – a key part of the exercise was to use open coding at the start of the process, then to refer to the socialisation and micropolitical theory within socialisation. The next step was to develop additional insights, which existed at a different layer of analysis, for example using symbolic interactions to tease apart the actions, emotions, attitudes and perceptions of the newcomer.

This process gave the researcher an idea of where this study could contribute to the development of socialisation theory – a contribution to developing a multi-level socialisation model, highlighting the stakeholder management aspect of socialisation, or, alternatively, developing insights into the micropolitical strategies and acts used by managers to promote personal credibility.

Secondly, in order to give some rigour to the construction of a thematic analysis, a Gioia and Corley (2013) analysis was used. In order to deconstruct the data, the researcher used the critical incident technique (CIT) (Butterfield et al., 2005). The purpose of using the CIT was to use a framework that enabled the researcher to: (1) identify the event (in this study, an interaction between a manager and individual); (2) consider the objective of the manager (hypothesising); and (3) evaluate what the manager did, and the outcomes of those actions. For example, a manager is having a meeting with a player in his office as he decides who to retain and who to let go. The manager says that he wants to build a team around the player. The player is happy that he is part of the manager's plans for next season.

Qualitative studies differ from quantitative studies in that the analysis of data happens concurrently as the collection of data progresses (Gioia et al., 2013). This is unlike quantitative analysis, when the data is collected and then desk-based analysis takes place using statistical techniques to analyse the data. Tables 4C – E below, show the cyclical nature of the research, which involves conducting interviews, transcribing the interviews and data analysis. The first eight narratives that the participants used to describe their socialisation experiences were explored for themes that were emerging – at this stage, any themes that may have warranted further investigation. The second cycle of transcription and data analysis enables another layer of interpretation, i.e. initial familiarisation with the second tranche, alongside a more nuanced view of the first tranche of interviews. Silverman (2005) highlights that the initial data analysis is where new themes can be introduced into the semi-structured interviews. The initial themes were identified using open coding

below.

Table 4C. Initial Themes Identified in First Tranche Interviews 1-8

Tensions and conflicts	Captain's role	Player turnover	Values	Relationships	Team status	Initial evaluation
Researcher observations: A review post coding shows that the researcher was concentrating on capturing surprise and ambiguity (e.g. what did you know about a club before joining?). The result was that whilst there were a few surprises e.g. the personal impact a manager could have outside the pitch, there were very few surprises about the teams they were joining. The managers had been involved in the game in men's football for some 20 years – this led the researcher to question his initial thoughts. These were around how does a manager socialise so quickly at a new club with the tensions and conflicts and player turnover. The first few interviews the researcher was unsure what participants they would provide? What experiences he would encounter as managers appeared to come from a variety of backgrounds. This led the researcher to think about the different stakeholders and their relationships – was there any differences between the contexts. There were some key commonalities to the manager experiences e.g. an initial assessment process, and many people coming and going (including player turnover), the majority of managers had basic values – were these personal or industrially based. Main learning: That the first initial tranche is scoping the research. Where the researcher is trying to understand what is possible. How to interview managers and what issues maybe taboo – e.g. player wage budgets can be discussed in relative terms. An abductive approach enables the researcher to try different plausible explanations, and to seek out new pieces of information.						

The second tranche of 16 interviews gave the researcher an opportunity to explore links between the first tranche, through re-reading and analysis of interviews 1-8, and the second tranche of interview transcripts (9-24) which were read for the first time.

Table 4D. Second Data Analysis – Developing Links Between Interviews 1-8 and Interviews 9-24

Tensions and conflicts		Groups loyal to managers	Values	Relationships	Team status	Initial evaluation
With board and/or players	People influencing skills	Player turnover	Early academy players' experiences	Boards, players, fans, media	History of the club	Speed of change – select new players
Researcher observations: The themes from the second tranche are linked loosely to the first tranche of themes. The second tranche of interviews developed the researchers knowledge of potential issues e.g. that managers did have tensions with player behaviour and board behaviour. This then started the questions to delve deeper what type of behaviour i.e. what are some of the potentialities? People skills of managers and different strategies that are used to resolve conflict. There was also a temporal aspect that was apparent when carrying out an initial evaluation. This then had the researcher looking at other industries – the Army, CEO's, Nurses, Police Force. There was some information from the first question – tell me briefly about your career that enabled the researcher, fortuitously, to experiences in the manager's formative career. What, how, when and why they had learnt and applied certain political strategies and actions later on in management. The differentiation between the interactions that managers had with different stakeholders. One of the key issues was that everything was dynamic, the relationships changed based on interactions and how those interactions went forward. Main learning: As new themes are linked at the time there was a mass of data being collected. Once the transcription had been completed the analysis became much more difficult as there is organisation socialisation and the sub-processes, e.g. recruitment, letting go development and how the managers approach this. There was also temporal aspects – i.e. the experience that managers had of the football habitus when they were players, and the practices they felt they could still use and those that were unacceptable i.e. swearing at players. When analysing it was evident that the data could be analysed using some models – Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002) political interests. Having a set of questions that all participants were asked was becoming impossible as the researcher would have to revisit participants. One of the main challenges was to let the data develop without making decisions when some tentative decisions where the future data would lead. Also giving yourself time to think and digest as data accumulated.						

The third tranche of 19 interviews gave the researcher an opportunity to explore links between the second tranche, through re-reading and analysis of interviews 9-24, and the third tranche of interview transcripts (25-43), which were read for a first time.

Table 4E. Third Data Analysis – Developing Links Between Interviews 9-24 and Interviews 25-43

Women's and men's football	Impact of board representations	Relationships	Values	Initial evaluation
Job role differences	Promises and lies	Boards, players, fans, media	Early experiences as academy players	Speed of change – select new players
Financial aspects	Managers still keep doing the role	Emotionality of fans' feedback	Inappropriate emotional displays	Player turnover
Researcher observations: When analysing the data for possible links it became very difficult to get an overall feel for the data as the researcher had been immersed in it for so long (Months). Ideas linking threads of data to the sensemaking process, the complexity of socialisation as a process i.e. processes happening at the same time and at multi-levels and dynamic interactions to settle the manager and the players in. One of the key issues with building process theory is issues such as identifying the processes – then the different potentialities. The researcher reviewed Feldman's stage model and whether the stages were indeed linear. The evidence suggested a chaotic experience where all stakeholders engaged at one. How would this competitiveness to have stakeholder needs satisfied identify itself? Emotionality also came to the fore – fans expressing themselves post-game, face to face and social media. So the data was growing with an initial loose framework that was being added to – finding out what was being added to the socialisation literature was difficult. Categories included dynamism – speed or urgency which has been used in stakeholder theory. The quality of relationships over time as some managers were successful at remaining in post, whilst others were unable to remain in post. Main learning: There were patterns emerging when the researcher was finishing the last tranche of interviews. For example, managers were aware of the fragility of their position as they were appointed by the chair and board. As a consequence they choose strategies that enable them to manage upwards – concede when necessary i.e. wage budget and use their discretion when managing the team. There were changes in relationship which could be linked to interactions – these were studied as critical incidents (CITs). Sometimes it was necessary to go back to the participants e.g. football agents – initially this was thought of as a potential deficiency.				

However, only managers who had managed at level 5 and above were likely to experience football agents. This did cut the potential list down to 7 participants. There was a sense of discontinuity when carrying out a second interview which meant the re-establishment of a rapport. How are you ? What has been happening for you ? The second interview did take care for some just at the start or during COVID19 – so this issue of furlough and what this may mean going forward for playing staff at clubs did come up. This would have been interesting to develop but within the time scale going back to all 43 managers would have been difficult within the time constraints of the thesis. Some managers who the researcher had good rapport with did not have any experience so the initial enquiry for a follow up was an email that they could not help with this area. This then felt as if the relationship had stalled and may make it difficult to go back to them on any further issues – as these managers were always pressed for time.

The challenge for the researcher at the end of the data collection was that there were groups of stakeholders at different socialisation levels and with different job role tasks, in addition to the participants' football clubs being at different levels, with unique challenges based on history, ambitions of the chairperson, fans, interactions between the manager and stakeholders, levels of turnover and football operations culture. This is to be expected to some degree, as Cloutier and Langley (2020) highlight. The researcher drew from the socialisation literature tentative frameworks for analysis, e.g. Saks and Ashforth's (1997) multi-level socialisation process model and Kelchtermans and Ballet's (2002) professional interests – consisting of five political aspects in schools (self-interests, organisational interests, material interests, social-professional interests, and ideological-cultural interests).

4.6 Data Reconstruction

Care was taken when reading the transcripts on several occasions to prepare the data carefully. This meant deleting repetition, redundancies, and digressions, e.g. football conversation used as part of rapport-building during the interview (Langley, 1999). The first data analysis gave a wide range of codes in a process akin to Strauss and Corbin's (1998) open coding. As shown above, as the data collection proceeded, the researcher re-analysed interviews 1-8, then conducted a first initial analysis of interviews 9-24 in order to reduce the data categories (Gioia & Corley, 2013). When all the interviews had been read and coded, they were re-read to allow time for the researcher to process the data gradually. The initial coding revealed many different aspects of the socialisation process, as stated above – more than 50 codes were used as a loose framework to seek out potential links, whilst the data collection and analysis continued simultaneously (Langley, 1999; Lincoln &

Guba, 1985; Locke & Golden-Biddle, 1997). The coding of data was undertaken using an Excel spreadsheet, part of the Microsoft suite of packages – version 10. Data was manipulated using pivot tables in order to search for links that may provide interesting insights. Each Excel spreadsheet was given a name and date when the data manipulation took place. The secondary analysis carried out was more akin to axial coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) which resulted in 30 first order codes.

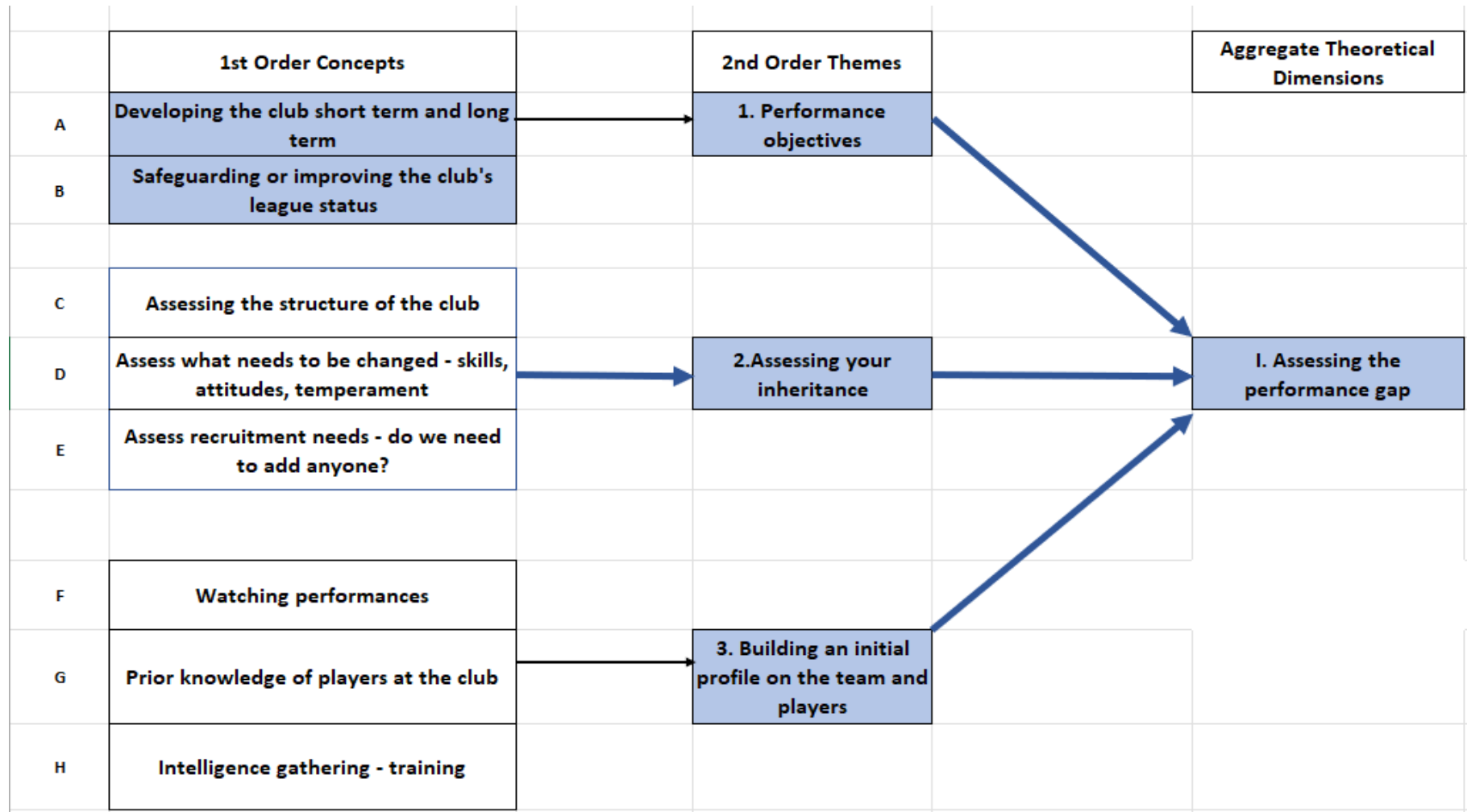
The Gioia and Corley (2013) method makes some key assumptions. The first is that the organisational world is socially constructed. The second assumption is that the participants are considered knowledgeable agents. Effectively, this means that people in organisations are fully cognisant of their thoughts, intentions and actions. However, as some managers are learning the job role, this may be a questionable assumption. In the role of qualitative researcher, it is the researcher who should make the effort to do justice to the participants' experiences. This means making every effort to report the participants' voices prominently.

The open coding is represented in Table 4F, showing the manager job role. This is then displayed in Figure 4.2, a thematic analysis which uses Table 4F as a basis.

Table 4F. The Manager Job Role – Representative Data (Dimensions, Themes, Categories and Data)

	Second order themes and first order concepts	Representative data	
1	Performance objectives		Manager source
A1	Developing the club short-term and long-term	“The club said they wanted to sustain themselves in the league, rather than go for promotion from the leagues”.	Davison
A2	Developing the club short-term and long-term	“Yeah, when we went to Town FC in May they were averaging 140 (attendance per game). When we left, they were averaging 750 – 850 people. We got 12 debuts out of that academy; we sold players while we were there. We won the league – Town FC are a seasoned level 6 team now”.	Roberto
A3	Developing the club short-term and long-term	“Money talks, some managers you could look and see what players they brought through, the way they play football. That reputation you get – you can say that is success. You bring players through and they get sold for £20/30/£40 million. And you’ve had a big part in that – this says a lot about you as a manager.”	Andrea
B1	Safeguarding or improving the club’s league status	“If we could get Rovers out that situation, they were in. In mid-table – if we can stabilise them. The next season – we could really evaluate in the summer and have a look to see where we can go”.	Rhodri
B2	Safeguarding or improving the club’s league status	“My main priority is keeping the bulk of that squad. I know from being a player in that squad that it was coming together in the previous season. That squad were already good enough to be in the playoffs – tweak one or two, then we are not going to be far off again”.	Japp

Figure 4.2. Thematic Analysis of Manager Job Role Based on Gioia and Corley (2013)



4.7 Ethical Considerations

This study was granted ethical approval (UREC Registration No: 191265) on 14th February 2019.

This particular study has ethical considerations that the researcher has taken measures to mitigate. The sample of managers includes a majority who are still actively employed as managers in various leagues up and down the football hierarchy. Football is known to attract a high degree of media attention, consequently it is necessary to anonymise the names of the football clubs that they have served at, and the names of the managers themselves. For that reason, the researcher has chosen names that are foreign and anonymised as this appears to give a double level of protection.

In the quotes used, the researcher has changed the names of the teams – for example, if there was a Chalfont Rangers FC they may instead be referred to as City FC or Town FC. The given generic names included Wanderers, United, Rovers, Rangers, Town and County FC.

For the recruitment of managers to participate in the study, the researcher began with some contacts he had made at local football clubs. The emphasis was to initially gauge who would potentially be interested in participating. It was important to give managers the ability to volunteer to participate. Contacts were asked to forward an email from the researcher, enabling managers to come back to the researcher with a general indication of interest or not. It was emphasised that managers could change their mind about participation. Some asked for other measures to protect their identity, such as meeting at a location which they knew, and the researcher did not – a private venue such as an office at work or a club.

The only names that have appeared in this study are those who have sadly passed away. Any references to EPL clubs are by way of example of clubs in that league, and do not imply that managers have played at the particular club mentioned. Any references to clubs or owners are a matter of public record, i.e. that the Glazer family own Manchester United F.C. or that Chelsea is currently a member of the EPL.

When carrying out the SSIs, the interviewer was mindful that there was a high incidence of managerial dismissals. Reflecting on their own dismissals may be difficult or potentially emotional, although it was highlighted that in order to be a manager in men's or women's football, an individual had to be psychologically robust. In fact, Carson (2015) highlights that managers can usually deal with their notoriety. However, when they want private time with their family and a fan wants to admonish them for some mistake in front of their children, this can be too much. The researcher approached the interview from a standpoint of appreciation for the very public nature of the job role. This is a role that not only has authority when players are playing, but also stretches far beyond

the pitch and into personal lives e.g. diet, sleep habits, behaviour when socialising (Molan et al., 2016).

4.8 Chapter Summary and Key Points

This chapter has identified the choices that the researcher has made in order to select a coherent research methodology. With the original aim and objectives in mind, it demonstrates how the researcher decided to adopt an interpretivist epistemology and a social constructionism ontology. The chapter went on to highlight that the researcher adopted an abductive approach in order to try to add to the wealth of socialisation literature, i.e. process data. The qualitative data was collected using SSIs, to enable as far as possible the participant's voice, and the narrative descriptions of their experiences, to be the centre of the study. The research methods for collection and data reconstruction were justified – one of the main considerations being the reconstruction of data using a Gioia and Corley (2013) methodology. The data analysis was the hardest part of this study, as highlighted by the theoretical papers of Langley (1999) and Cloutier and Langley (2020), who highlight organisational literature moving to a more inventive phase as it tries to unpack the dynamics of socialisation as a process.

The chapter was completed with a section on ethical considerations. All studies have their shortcomings, and the researcher has highlighted this in the overall review of the thesis in Chapter 9 – Conclusions and Recommendations.

Chapter 5 – The Manager Job Role

5.0 Chapter Introduction

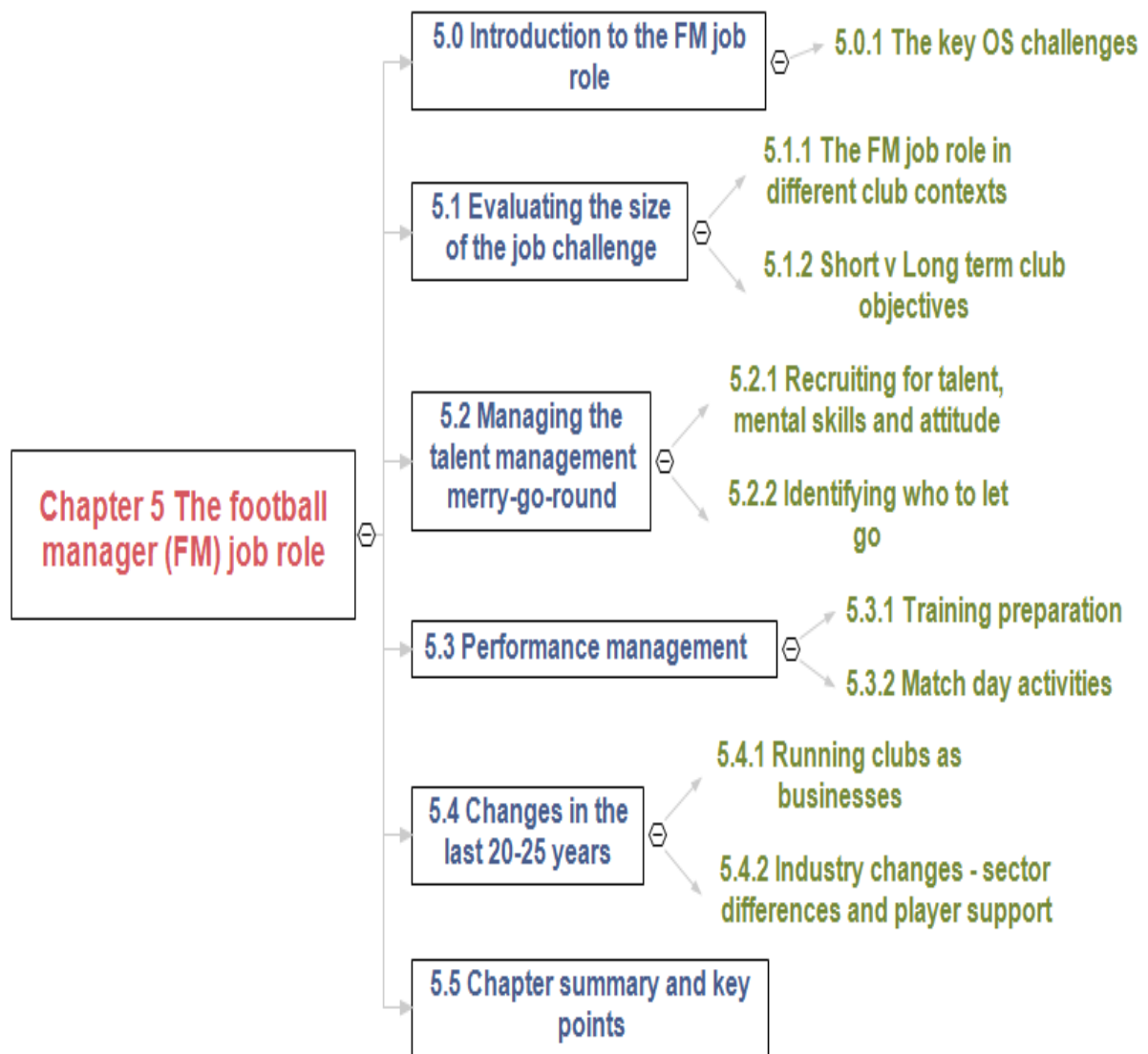
“Football management is management in an exceptionally unpredictable world. One of the main reasons that fans remain in thrall to the game is that, unlike going to the theatre or watching a film, we never know what the end will be. That is great for spectators, less good for fans...and worse still for the manager whose job and livelihood may rest on the outcome”

(Bridgewater, 2010, p.4)

This chapter marks the start of the empirical part of this research project, which consists of three individual chapters (Chapters 5, 6 and 7). The current chapter’s objective is to highlight the main areas of responsibility a manager has at a football club. The chapter will develop by providing participants’ insights into each aspect performed by managers, in order to capture the essence of what they do in their role. Once the reader understands the manager’s responsibilities, Chapter 6, the stakeholder management chapter, will highlight the power relations between the manager and a variety of key stakeholders (e.g. fans, the board and regulators). The chapter develops by showing how the power relations between the stakeholders affect the manager’s ability to manage upwards and downwards inside the organisation, and outside the organisation. The third empirical chapter, Chapter 7, examines the micropolitical strategies and acts that managers use when socialising into a football management role; for example, how the managers go about setting and monitoring a football operations culture (FOC) and what strategies and acts they use to create allies.

In brief, there were several main challenges that the new managers in the study shared. These were: the quick assimilation of socialisation content, being socialised into a new club whilst changing the team’s membership, establishing a football organisation culture aimed at performance success on the pitch, and embedding the players into a squad who were hungry to succeed and willing to accept and absorb the new football operation’s cultural values, norms and working practices.

Figure 5.1. Chapter 5 Plan – The Manager Job Role



5.0.1 The Key Socialisation Challenges

The challenges outlined below portray a job role that potentially stretches the newcomer with a wide array of socialisation content to be learnt. The environment provides a time constraint that means that any changes, such as the socialisation of the manager and of new players by the manager, would ideally be almost instantaneous. The managers need to make sense of the situation in order to diagnose the issues underlying poor performance, whilst key messages (sensegiving) from the new manager to the players need to stimulate a positive reaction. The following themes were deduced from the managers' narratives by the researcher.

One of the first challenges is to make sense of the potential new job role i.e. the organisation history, goals and values, the people, politics and performance proficiency. This means that the participants research the job role opportunity, performing an initial assessment which includes considering the football club's internal and external context. This might encompass fleeting moments of glory at the club – the past achievements that resonated with fans as part of their history. Added to this information is the current league status and the trajectory the club has been on in the last three or four years. The managers shared that the size of the club could be understood by looking at the size of the fan base, the financial commitment by the chairperson, and the ambition to grow and progress up the football pyramid (see Chapter 2 for context). There was a wealth of socialisation content to knit together into a coherent understanding.

A second key challenge for the new manager was the temporal challenge. In this context, the managers highlighted that they made quick decisions when taking over. Effectively, the managers had 5-6 weeks to show an improvement in the results of the first team at a new club. The first team here is the highest-level team that represents the club, the one that draws the attention of the media (local and potentially national). In socialisation, one of the key criteria for success is performance proficiency, i.e. being a productive member of the organisation when performing a job role. The managers explained that they must understand what performance proficiency means to the new football club. The chairperson (owner) will state what outcomes are acceptable, i.e. what is the required standing in the league to avoid relegation (protect the status of the club) or to win the league and promotion (improve the status of the club). In the case below, Blare highlights that he was given a mid-table budget, which means that he is justified in claiming that he overachieved when his side won promotion.

“Mid-table, so if we could make mid-table the next season it would have been a fine season. We would have met expectations. The budget kind of dictates who (what players) you get in, the budget they gave us was a mid-table budget. So we managed to exceed that, go above that, winning promotion.”

Blare (Interview 7)

“Most people will tell you that nine times out of ten the budget you get will indicate where you are likely to come (in the league). You have room for your overachievers, there will also be room for clubs that underachieve with that money. There are no guarantees in football – but generally if you pay more money you get better players.”

Davison (Interview 16)

The second quote highlights that managers understand that, as a rule of thumb, the more player wage budget a chairperson invests into a team, the higher the performance proficiency and league placing at the end of the season. The investment is relative to other clubs competing in that particular league.

Forming a diagnosis is another challenge to make sense of what is happening with the team. Managers set out to collect information quickly, for example by observing the team playing, or asking key players and the captain to identify the other key players in the squad. They may need to ask themselves, “Why is the team performing so poorly? What needs to be changed? What is the plan moving forward?” Some managers shared that for them to be appointed meant that the previous manager and team tended to underperform. A new manager, the majority of times, means player turnover – those who were socialised by the old manager may be let go. To change the performance level, a new manager may recruit several new players, who to some degree are already socialised. The socialisation content that has already been assimilated prior to appointment usually differs between outside appointments and internal appointments. Internal appointees painted a picture of the politics and people of the club already being familiar and predictable, whereas while the outside appointee knew how to win games and promotions with another team, they did not usually know the politics and people at the club. Thus, one type of manager crossed an

organisational border (external), whilst the other type crossed a job role border (internal) via an internal promotion.

Changing a team's performance can mean changing several members of the team in key positions. The managers shared that they make almost instantaneous decisions on who they will let go. Moreover, they need to assess how to attract players who are socialisable very quickly, who can knit into the side within 5-6 weeks and make an impact. This challenge was focused on recruiting players who could be socialised into the team quickly and effectively. In the situation below, Rhodri found a team who were expected to be challenging for promotion now struggling in the relegation zone. The performance is manifested in players who seem low on confidence and who are in need of a new manager with some fresh ideas to help them reinvigorate their love of playing football.

"I went to the 8-0 defeat on the previous Wednesday. It stuck out like a sore thumb; the players were on at a low, low confidence level. Some that seem like they hate playing and had just given up. It really looked like they need fresh, fresh ideas. The players were struggling in these environments."

Rhodri (Interview 8).

Another key challenge managers shared was to set up a football organisation culture, based on the values, norms and working practices that the managers modelled. The managers brought in close friends who were part of their football network – people they could trust, who would work to the same standard and be unlikely to betray their trust. The socialisation challenge is to bring in one or two people who can help the manager to socialise the players as quickly as possible into adopting a team mindset and a common set of values, norms and working practices.

Alternatively, it could be that players who had been promoted with a team take time to adjust to the demands of a higher league.

"We change things behind the scenes – we didn't change personnel at all. We just change the mentality a bit, we made it more enjoyable, we make the environment more relaxed. Expressing themselves, the brand of football we changed it."

Smudger (Interview 12)

Internal promotees already knew the players and could quickly assess whether they needed to change the brand of football, for example, the mindset of making the first pass a forward pass rather than a sideways pass. However, for the external promotees coming to a new club, the first meeting is vital to start relationships off on a positive footing. Here, the joint managers phoned the players to introduce themselves and make clear their expectations.

“The first impression of us was going to be honest talk at the training session on the field. So we had it all mapped out, we got there really nice and early, we were all set up. Shook everyone’s hand and made eye contact, everyone in the room that no one was late. Which was good. We spoke for five minutes, it was short, it was no waffling, straight to the point. The reason it was to stay in the league – this is how we’re going to do it.”

Blare (Interview 7)

Blare adds to the conversation that they had carefully choreographed what was to happen that night in training. The message was clear: the team objective was to avoid relegation. Then they explained their plan to make the team more competitive, by outlining their key footballing priorities.

“We set up low risk football. We played a four – five – one, centre forward in Macca upfront – we said no football in our half, I know that’s not pretty. The ball must go up to Macca and the reason why we thought that way of playing because it is low risk. Because the majority of time we have the ball is going to be in the opposition half.”

Blare (Interview 7)

The quote shows that the new manager has simplified the game. To stay competitive, the team must play the ball in the opposition half as far away from their goal as they can. This then keeps the opposition’s chances of scoring at a low percentage, keeping the score close, and their team may just steal a goal.

One of the most important challenges, if not the most important, was understanding the chairperson’s (owner’s) priorities – what they are looking for on the pitch. Are they happy with a hard-fought win, or do the team have to win in style, playing attractive football? Maybe the

chairperson is looking for players who look proud to play for the club. This may be observed through the effort expended during the game – ‘playing for the shirt’. Are the owners prepared to be patient, to give the manager some time as long as they see progress (small stepping stones to success)? The managers discussed the immediate need to show quick wins to the chair and board running the club. The quote below shows that the manager is socialising the players by giving them very specific priorities, just as the chairperson has with avoiding relegation.

“The small steppingstones we need to defend really well and we need to get the ball in their half. The biggest pieces in football are set pieces and counterattack. So on Thursday we did a bit of set pieces – how to defend throws defending free kicks, defending corners, we did that and how to stop the counterattack.”

Blare (Interview 7)

The dynamic aspects of the managers’ relationships will be presented in Chapter 6, as mentioned above, and the process of disintegrating and reintegrating a team with different players will be presented in Chapter 7.

5.1 Evaluating the Size of the Job Role Challenge

Evaluating or making sense of the job role challenge overall was a task that managers highlighted. Both the men’s and women’s managers highlighted that there was a constellation of factors that they had to consider when applying for a job role. These factors combined in different ways, almost like a kaleidoscope, to represent the context that they were entering – a particular club. The managers shared that these factors, broadly speaking, were: the structure of the football club; their financial resources; the aspirations of the chairperson at the club; the social history or organisational culture (social or professional football orientation); and last, but by no means least, their current status in the league pyramid.

5.1.1 The Manager Job Role in Different Club Contexts

The social history was one key factor that was likely to give a flavour of the club’s culture. The majority of clubs had grown from local roots (either a church, an employer or a school team that had

grown beyond its origins). For example, the Thames Ironworks and Shipbuilding Company Limited operated at the mouth of Bow Creek on the River Thames between 1837 and 1912. Thames Ironworks FC was replaced in June 1900 by West Ham United, nicknamed the Irons (West Ham United, 2017). Moreover, a new club, FC United of Manchester, has grown from a protest against the Glazer family's ownership of Manchester United. FC United was formed by fans in 2005..

The participants highlighted that it was difficult to provide a manager job description that could cover the job role up and down the football pyramid. The current status of the club was one key factor that the managers looked at, e.g. Hemel Hempstead men's team play at level 6, while Manchester United women's team play at level 1. Moreover, participants across the sample highlighted that the higher a club rose up the football pyramid, the higher the level of financial resources they are given for players. The organisational structures that the managers moved into were also contingent upon the level of the league that the club played in. Most participants gave examples of the status of the club being linked to professional level, which was characterised by managers and players being employed full-time. Participants illustrated that non-league men's managers are likely to be full-time at level 5, where football is their main occupation. Sometimes clubs invest in a full-time squad to break into the professional divisions (levels 1-4).

Ostensibly this means that a manager is likely to be more involved with more members of staff in a full-time professional club, e.g. specialist coaches and a sports scientist. However, clubs below this level (for example, at level 6) rely on managers who balance a part-time manager role with other full-time employment, and a home life, potentially including a partner and family. This means that the part-time managers have to do their own scouting and opposition analysis, rather than having an employee available to watch games on their behalf. In the women's game, the job role was somewhat different: the manager focus was more operational and focused on being a specialist coach who was responsible for performances on the pitch. However, women's managers had some limitations on input into the talent management cycle and financial management/stakeholder management, aspects which the men's manager in this sample is accountable for. This impacted on the people that each type of manager interacted with regularly, and how much control they had on the appointment of players being recruited into the first team.

The manager job role includes several key areas of responsibility: the talent management cycle (human resources – recruiting, developing and letting go), performance management (education – coaching in training sessions and match day preparations), and stakeholder management (discussed in Chapters 6 and 7). The talent management and performance management aspects are examined

below.

5.1.2 Short v. Long-Term Club Objectives

Participants from men's and women's sectors shared a fundamental tension, which was held between the organisation's short-term and long-term objectives. The long-term objectives were to help grow the club generally; however, typically the managers pointed out that if they did not satisfy the short-term objectives, they would not be in post to contribute to the long-term objectives. Managers explained that they had to turn the team performance around in approximately 5-6 weeks. This involved an evaluation of the club structure, i.e. the finances available to invest in players and the current playing staff at the club. The end of season league position determined whether the team was relegated (and the manager likely to be dismissed) or promoted (and the manager likely to be retained). Winning the next match was a weekly objective that consumed the managers mentally, physically and emotionally, across the sample.

Each club's history played an important part in the determination of the short-term objectives, and the club's organisation-wide culture. Managers spoke about organisation history as an amalgamation of several factors – the prior status of the club, the achievements of the club and the current trajectory. The manager participants synthesised this information (more detail in Chapters 6 and 7) to understand what their objectives were and how likely they were to achieve them. In the situation below, a team who should have been in the top 6 of a league were at the bottom, so the board had decided to replace their manager.

"I believe the size of the club, Rovers FC is a very big club, ... And thought if we could get Rovers out of that situation they were in. In mid-table – if we can stabilise them. The next season – we could really evaluate in the summer and have a look to see where we can go."

Rhodri (Interview 8)

Another manager's situation was the need to avoid relegation with only a few games to go:

"The chairman knew if we did come rock bottom, or second bottom, he knew we would get a reprieve. Other clubs grounds weren't up to

standard – so it was pick up points where you can. I think we won 4, drew 2 and lost 3.”

Roberto (Interview 15)

Winning games and moving up the league positions in the next 5-6 weeks was a tension that all managers shared: the relentless intensity of competition, week in, week out – and looking over their shoulders at their results and those of other teams around their league position. Participants emphasised that to thrive longer term, they needed to survive in the role during the short term. In the example below, a manager reflects on the history of his new club.

“Yeah, I think my mate was playing for them at the time. My joint manager/my assistant now. Yet they were a big club, a big-name that found themselves at the bottom of step three. Just declining – they had had three relegations in a row. They were a juggernaut, when you got a juggernaut like that, the weight of that club. It takes a lot to change that around.”

Paulo (Interview 18)

5.2 Player Talent Management

Participants highlighted that managing the player talent process is a vital part of their job role. This meant that the managers had to socialise themselves into the football club, whilst creating the new football operations culture and then socialising new recruits into that culture. The football operations culture was effectively the values, rules, working practices and norms that the managers wanted their players to adhere to. There were three human resources processes: recruitment, development and the letting go of players. Managers shared that they needed to focus on securing a pipeline of talent, which meant that they focused on assembling a competitive squad now, and had one eye on the future development of the squad. Managers shared that they were focused on making sense of building a team based on reflection, and also envisioning where the team could be in one or two years' time. So, whilst there was a focus on the immediate future (surviving), some managers were also partly focused on a vision of what the club could become with a large academy of talent being matured year by year.

Figure 5.2, below, shows that recruitment and letting go are complex decisions. There are a number of reasons why players may be let go; for example, players who can no longer move at the pace of an 18-25 year old may be at risk. The speed at which players react and run diminishes over time – this will happen to all players at some point in their career. Others, when the new manager comes in, may be loyal to the previous manager, or may want to leave to protect their reputation – as managers stated, players do not want a relegation on their CV. With others, dismissal may be down to poor attitudes which make a player hard to work with. On the positive side, new recruits who have proven themselves, can play the way the manager wants, are team focused, and are loyal to the manager, may help the new managers to reduce the socialisation time.

5.2.1 Recruiting for Talent, Mental Skills and Attitude

Recruitment was identified by participants across women's and men's football as a vital job activity, one that a manager had to do well to succeed. If a manager got this part of the talent management process wrong, it was likely that performances would be poor. Recruitment was a complicated process, wherein a manager would try to evaluate the individual player on a range of variables, not just their technical footballing skills.

"We recruited a very, very good bunch of players. I would say they would not be the best team in the league, but in terms of mental skill, in terms of being disciplined, in terms of fitness level, in terms of playing for the management."

Blare (Interview 7)

Blare highlights that a manager should be mindful of the players' football skills, but also the players' attitudes, physiological condition, and productive working relationship. Having the most skilful players may not mean that they possess the attitudes, mental resilience or emotional stability to deal with their different opponents every week. For example, the manager may deselect a player one week as they are not the right type of player for this opposing team.

The manager, whilst developing the current squad, is also focused on developing the talent pipeline for the future. This involves talent spotting, identifying players with future potential, and simultaneously trying to get the best value for money with the players who are 'the finished product'. The finished product is an individual who has fully developed skills, physiologically and

psychologically.

“A player might be on City FC’s under 23’s, 2 years down the line – he’ll be in the book – he’s a good player. To be honest it’s like Javier – I watched him play a few years ago at Town FC.”

Roberto (Interview 15)

“Hannu – he is going to be a great player. But he (Hannu) is still learning, while Vinski is the finished article.”

Petr (Interview 10)

Thus, managers are constantly dealing with the present squad and also planning simultaneously for the future. Checking to see what happened to players they scouted some time previously and updating their files on individual players was a common part of the role for all participants.

The manager is faced with a system wherein players can be driven to play at the highest league level as quickly as possible. Participants drew attention to the limited duration of a footballer’s playing career. A playing career here consists of academy football from the ages of 10 – 16, then apprentice football from 16-18 and senior football from 18 years old. *“A footballer’s life is a short life; it all depends on injuries, you may get 10 – 12 years playing at the highest level”* (Petr, Interview 10). Players have a short window of opportunity to play professional football. This means that there is a pressure to move on quickly so that the player can maximise earnings. The clubs that play in the highest leagues can afford to pay the highest wages. They are at the top of the football league pyramid and pay wages that reflect the uniqueness of the skills and tricks that can unlock the most steadfast defence. These players are considered marquee players – the top-notch entertainers with international reputations and the ability to impact and win a game.

Participants also identified that a key factor in player transfers between different football clubs was the football friendship network. A player movement here is when a player is transferred from one club to another employing club. The managers, over the course of their careers, had developed productive working relationships with players at previous clubs. The consequence when a manager moved on, was to look to recruit friends and ex-colleagues with whom they had worked previously.

Participants discussed that there was an inextricable link between the talent management process and the budgetary management. The managers shared that they often had to choose between buying a senior player with experience (high cost) or an academy player (low cost). The senior player had experience of playing men's/women's football and could play straight away. The junior player still had to mature physically, psychologically, and emotionally.

"At this level I think it is all about producing players that are capable of winning games of football. It's about growing footballers who can go on – that's a big part of our recruitment. We may lack ability at times, lack experience at times. Experience costs."

Roberto (Interview 15)

The quote by Roberto highlights that managers have a key job role, which is budget management. The budget available, participants shared, often dictates the recruitment strategy that managers use. Growing academy players over a number of years takes time, whilst experienced players who are at their peak cost more money to recruit.

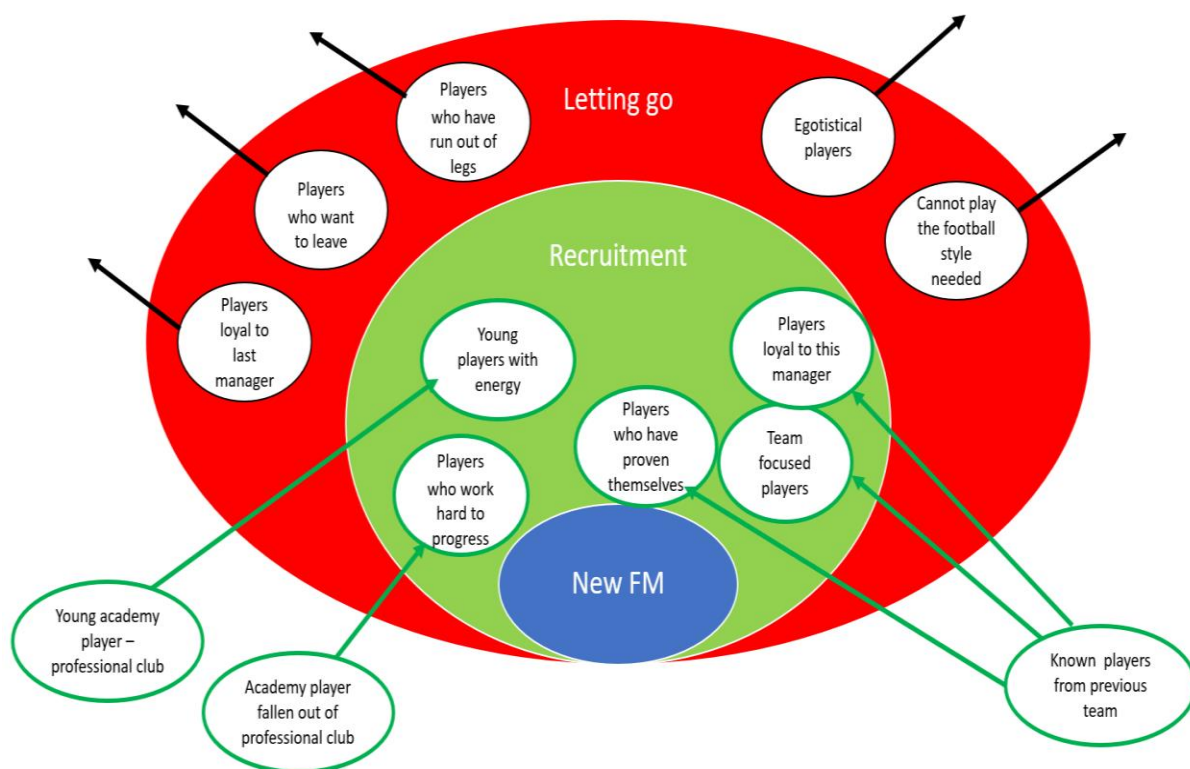
Participants showed that there was a great deal of complexity in their job role. Player performance can now be reduced to a group of statistics on performance outputs (for example, the number of kilometres run during the game, or the number of shots on target). Moreover, as well as the physical metrics that can be measured, there are the attitudinal and emotional aspects, which managers have to become skilled at reading. For most managers, this came from being an ex-player who competed regularly and had familiarity with the attitudes, actions and emotions needed to win.

5.2.2 Identifying Who to Let Go

The last part of the talent management cycle was letting players go. Participants highlighted that this happened almost inevitably when the new manager arrived. As shown in Figure 5.1, below, players are let go for a number of reasons. These could fall under performance issues (e.g. lack of technical skills or physical speed), poor attitude when not selected, and/or political issues (e.g. allegiances to previous managers). The quote above shows that managers are constantly evaluating the costs and benefits of retaining a player. Experienced players tend to be costly, and whilst some still add value to a team, others may be questioned about their motivation levels. For example, an ex-professional

moving down the football pyramid as they age may not play with the same enthusiasm as in their formative years.

Figure 5.2. Recruitment and Letting Go When the New Manager Begins in Role



“The team that I took over was very experienced, they had all played at high level. But they had no legs. I had to use the budget better, the top earners left – they didn’t have the appetite.”

Clinton (Interview 34)

Playing with confidence is considered a key issue in football performance. Managers described how players can be affected by a poor run of results – this can turn some players’ emotional state during a game into one of uncertainty or nervousness. Moreover, some participants highlighted the transient nature of players’ confidence. With the turnaround in performance starting from day 1, managers generally could not afford to let players recover confidence. The impact on the team of players in key positions, e.g. a goalkeeper, not inspiring confidence means that managers may need to make an immediate replacement.

“One was the goalkeeper who was particularly struggling with his confidence. He is actually a good goalkeeper and there is another player who we felt fell a bit short. So those two players – so after the first training session we had a conversation with them.”

Blare (Interview 7)

The quote above highlights the temporal pressure that managers were under to effect performance improvement. Moreover, negative emotions from one player could spread like a contagion throughout the dressing room. Managers looked for players who could generally inspire confidence in other teammates.

5.3 Performance Management

Participants highlighted that performance management was central to their job role. The teaching and learning aspects were central – these areas included football tactics and philosophy on how the game should be played. However, some managers shared that it was not always about tactics – sometimes it was about an attitude of mind (mental attitude) getting a consistent level of performance from a group of players to win games. Managers shared that although winning a game took 90 minutes, they had prepared the team over a week-long period, with match day preparation, such as training and opposition analysis, and match day activities such as pre-match talks and half-time team talks. The managers shared that their ability to understand the constituent parts of a football match – those that were most important – enabled them to focus simply on the messages they gave the players.

5.3.1 Training Preparation

The manager job role was identified as a relentless biorhythm of activities that contributed to maximising the performance of the team. One of the main activities that the managers performed was organising training once a week, to give feedback on the previous week’s matchday performance. This also gave an opportunity to brief the team on their next opponents. The briefing, managers identified, could be based on a variety of opposition analysis techniques, such as video or statistical analysis.

“I think most of our work is done on the training ground. We look to build on a philosophy – we look to fix areas of weakness that we might find. Every training session we have a focus towards matches or results. We are trying to maximise our time together – we are doing match preparation on a Thursday night. Specific game preparation for an hour.”

Sebastian (Interview 36)

Participants shared that the main focus of training sessions was to prioritise activities that would underpin the manager’s football philosophy and tactics. The managers demonstrated that this was an integrated process, wherein the philosophy (brand of football) had to be aligned with the tactics that were being used to win matches. In the case below, a team has been conceding too many goals; consequently, the manager targets defending as the main priority.

“On Thursday we did a bit of set pieces – how to defend throws defending free kicks, defending corners, we did that and how to stop the counterattack. Everything was defend well, defend your set pieces, stop the counterattack. We did nothing on attacking.”

Rhodri (Interview 8)

The alignment between football philosophy, tactics and training was a consistent feature of the findings. Managers would identify their philosophy (brand of football) and the team’s current performance deficiencies, and then devise training programs for learning.

Opposition analysis, participants shared, was inextricably linked to financial resources at a club. The club’s resources determined whether a manager had sufficient money to pay an individual within the club to scout the opposition for them. Alternatively, for the majority of managers who were working at levels 7 and below, it was likely that the managers did this task themselves. The techniques used ranged from primary research, i.e. watching a team in person, to using secondary research to carry out a video analysis of tactics, or a statistical analysis, as identified in the key metrics above (for example, creating an overview of an opponent’s last 10 games).

“I went over the videos – the right back and left back are not very strong. Midfield there are lots of gaps. One versus one defending, not quick enough.”

The fullbacks don't dictate where they want you to go. You can go on the outside or you can go on the inside. When they lost the ball – we could exploit the gaps. Goalkeeper is not fantastic.”

Tommaso (Interview 27)

The quote from Tommaso shows that managers are looking partly for the weaknesses in the opposition that they can exploit. Managers use this analysis to give them the information that they need to pass to their team before the game. For managers in the women's game, analysing game footage of the opposition and their team was one of their main duties in their job role. These managers concentrated on the operational side of football, and the majority were employed by professional football clubs i.e. levels 1-4. This meant that they had the equipment and personnel to record live game footage. However, as stated above, the managers in the men's game were employed by non-league clubs (levels 5 and below) where the job role was also more strategic. Thus it could be argued that the managers were spread so thinly that they needed others to do this work for them e.g. an assistant manager.

5.3.2 Match Day Activities

The coaching and practicing of defending or attacking were then the basis of the match day plan. The players had been given their instruction – what role they were to play in the team, and the shape of the team both in and out of possession – on the preceding Thursday.

The participants highlighted that the pre-match briefing, match analysis and half-time team talk provided a continual process of collecting, analysing, and synthesising of information. The objective was to make sense of the game as it progressed and to use key messages to get the players to react.

The majority of managers highlighted the short, sharp interventions, pedagogically speaking, used to reinforce key messages given at training prior to the game. The sensegiving pre-game tended to involve 5-10 minutes as a team, giving general messages, and specific 30-45 second interventions one-on-one, as players warmed up on the pitch. This was followed by the manager standing, almost as a general would, reviewing the battle as they unfolded.

The quote below explains what information a manager is looking for when assessing the game in action.

“Areas in the opposition shape that we can exploit. Then what they might exploit in our shape. We might be leaving ourselves open to counter-attacks – whatever. Within the women’s game in the current trends in football – the press is quite an important thing. Individual battles: why are we winning them and trying to make that more in our favour. To a certain degree it is what football matches come down to.”

Sebastian (Interview 36)

The data that the manager is paying attention to appears to show a layered approach. For example the manager is assessing gaining territory – are the team playing in the opposing half of the pitch? How effective are the team at winning the ball back close to the opponent’s goal? This enables a manager to assess the likelihood of each team scoring, and lastly which individuals in the team are giving their team the upper hand. This then feeds into what a manager can do to help their team win more battles, and thus the game.

The half-time team talk was a key intervention that a manager could make. The intervention was tailored to the situation that the manager faced – was the team winning or was the team losing? How was the tactical game being executed (or not)? Managers shared that they wanted to send the players out with the right emotional state, if the team was winning players were usually relaxed. Messages were given to energise the relaxed state to prepare the players to watch for any dangers the manager had spotted. *“If you drop your work rate by 10%, the other team will come back into the game”* (Paulo, Interview 18). As this quote highlights, players need to keep on task and not let the opposition gain momentum.

5.4 Changes in the Last 20-25 Years

Participants in both women’s and men’s football demonstrated through examples that the manager’s role had changed significantly in certain aspects in recent years. The changes appeared to be at two different levels – at club level and at industry level. The main changes have seen an increasing business focus for the manager role at club level, whilst at the industry level, industry sector changes and player support have changed the challenges managers in those sectors face.

The Financial Fair Play (FFP) regulation has placed an increased burden on managers, as they are now expected to contribute to club stability by managing the player wage budget effectively. FFP

means that a club must run with revenues equal to costs, i.e. break even rather than accumulating debt. This factor has an impact on player recruitment. Participants shared that being financially prudent when signing players, for example negotiating to get the best deal for the club, was important. The new manager wants the highest budget that they can get to build a team.

"I think their expectations will be to manage the finances. Um the reason why I say that first is because a lot of Chairmen and Boards want to keep the club sustainable. They don't want you to go over your budget which you have been allocated/given."

Blare (Interview 7)

"You're a new manager you know what it is when you've gone in you come to me – I want you to come to Rangers FC, this is what I'm prepared to offer you, this is your budget. We have five candidates; you are the one we want. Are you sure you can't squeeze a bit more out. No – you have a decision to make. I say yes, no more talking about the budget because we have already agreed. I've now got to do my job by getting the players in".

Christian (Interview 24)

Managers highlighted that they had a role to play in controlling their expenditure on players, to remain within the budgetary limits set by the board. This was their contribution to the future of the organisation. This effectively meant that some managers had to be focused on being good at negotiating deals with players. Some managers discussed that they negotiated a basic wage level and an appearance fee, so players who were injured only received a portion of their total wage. This provided the manager with some money to seek out a temporary replacement.

Having commercial awareness means that managers are aware of the value of players throughout the different leagues. Some of the managers discussed how they were always looking at players who were in English Premier League clubs' academies, to gather data on players who may be available in the transfer market in two seasons, whilst others were focused on the immediate challenges and what benefits they could offer a young professional academy player. The benefit for a young player coming on loan was that they could experience men's football, which was far more physical and

nuanced, in that fouls were committed cynically sometimes to break up a pattern of play.

“We have a player on loan from Wanderers FC, we have a lad from Town FC. We can give their players an idea what it is like to go and play in a physical man’s league. When 90% of the players have come from pro clubs.”

Smudger (Interview 12)

In this case, Smudger highlights that the club gets an energetic youngster from a professional club for one or two months, and the academy player gets to experience what is like playing in men’s football; for example, the physical and tactical side of the game.

5.4.1 Running Clubs as Businesses

Managers are being expected to run a football team as a businessperson would. Players are evaluated on their productivity as a factor in playing performance, *“Recruitment for me was to get to as many games as possible out of players – lads that fall out of the professional game.”* (Christian, Interview 24). The men’s managers spoke of the money that they paid players in very general terms – at levels 4-6, players were likely to be *“paid mortgage money to play”* (Roberto, Interview 15). “Mortgage money” here signifies an average mortgage, which may be between £800 and £1,200 per month. Whereas, players below level 6 may be *“on beer money to play”* (Roberto, Interview 15). “Beer money” here signifies an average consumption of alcohol on a night out or two at the weekend, between £150 - £300 per month (please note that there may well be regional variations in this).

Many football clubs do not offer contracts to players – effectively, this means that a player is on trial every week with the club. The managers shared that many clubs at level 7 or below in the men’s game could not afford to pay players when they were not playing. For example, an injured player with a contract may be paid whilst they are injured. Consequently, having players on non-contract terms means that if a player is injured, they are not paid by the club. For a small club with a minimal financial investment, these sorts of practices are vital for financial survival.

Participants shared that the power relations had shifted with the Bosman ruling, which allows a player to move for free, without incurring any financial penalties, at the end of their contract. Prior to that, football clubs could hold onto the registration of a player, preventing them from moving to

another club. Now, a player has the power to run down the term of their contract until they can leave the club for no fee. This makes them a free agent. Thus, the pressure is on the manager to renegotiate the player's contract before it expires. From a socialisation perspective, when a manager takes over, they take stock of the squad of players they have registered at the club. This may include players that they will want to sell before their contract expires and they become a free agent. This makes business sense, as some young players in particular have been trained and developed, and it seems logical that a business would wish to recoup its investment in that player.

5.4.2 Industry Changes - Sector Differences and Player Support

Participants highlighted that the women's game was in a different phase of development to the men's game. The women's game is in the growth stage, with the EFA setting challenging targets to be achieved between 2016 and 2020 (see Figure 5.3, page 135). The women's game has seen an upsurge since the Women's Super League was launched in 2010, and participants commented on their job role being different from the men's game.

Both the women's and men's managers had a core of responsibilities around training, developing, and picking the football team. However, in the women's game, the job role reports to the general manager, who takes responsibility for budgetary management and works with the manager to identify and recruit new players. A general manager position usually reports directly to the board. This model is the European model, and has been used since the re-inception of women's football (see Figure 5.4, page 136).

The men's sample mainly represented the high-level non-leagues. This meant that these clubs were relatively small in stature compared to their full-time counterparts in men's professional football. These clubs were still using the traditional UK model of football management, in which the manager directly reported to the board.

The quote below highlights how a women's manager works with the general manager to recruit players to the team.

"Since I've come in – we have identified who do we need, and I have left it with the general manager. The head coach manages the team and the general manager works with the head coach. But nowadays there is so much that goes on – we had a game on Sunday and I've watched the game back four times"

Tommaso (Interview 27)

Tommaso discusses how he works in partnership with the general manager to recruit a new player. The women's manager identifies the need for a new player, then passes the recruitment decision on to the general manager. Findings show that the women's managers did not usually know the specifics of the wage budget, which was part of the general manager's job remit. Men's managers highlighted that they were in full control of the talent management process, which meant that they would know the players that were being recruited, whereas the women's manager could find that a player signed by the general manager was relatively unknown to them.

Figure 5.6 shows that men's managers and assistant managers share the extensive role between them. In the UK model of football management, the men's managers deal with a larger range of stakeholders than their women's manager counterparts. The participants highlighted that the women's managers worked for professional clubs who had started engaging with women's football in the last 10 years, in order to widen participation in the game. However, those in the men's manager sample were working for high level non-league clubs whose financial resources meant that the men's managers at those clubs did not have the technology to assess game performance (other than through personal observation). The women's managers talked rarely about their relationship with their assistant manager, whereas men's managers' narratives highlighted the close relationship with their assistant manager. Participants did highlight that it was the manager who did the budget management, although some assistant managers were very active in the talent management cycle – scouting prospects for example.

Both sets of managers (men's and women's) discussed how players today get more support than 20-25 years ago. Both sets of managers identified that there had been a fundamental shift in societal attitudes in general and in coaching practices. Coaching has moved in alignment with educational practice in identifying barriers to performance and learning that may impair on-pitch performance.

"Before we had a training session one night. 'Miss, can I see you?' Then we sat in my car, and she said: 'Miss, I am pregnant. I don't know what to do, the baby wasn't planned. Can I train?' 'No you can't train'. The FA advice and guidance mentions that pregnant women in the first trimester can't train."

Agnetha (Interview 1)

Figure 5.3. The EFA Targets for the Women's Game 2016 - 2020



Source: The FA, 2018, [The Gameplan for Growth](https://www.thefa.com/news/2018/mar/28/gameplan-growth-one-year-280318), <https://www.thefa.com/news/2018/mar/28/gameplan-growth-one-year-280318>

Figure 5.4. The European Model of Football Management

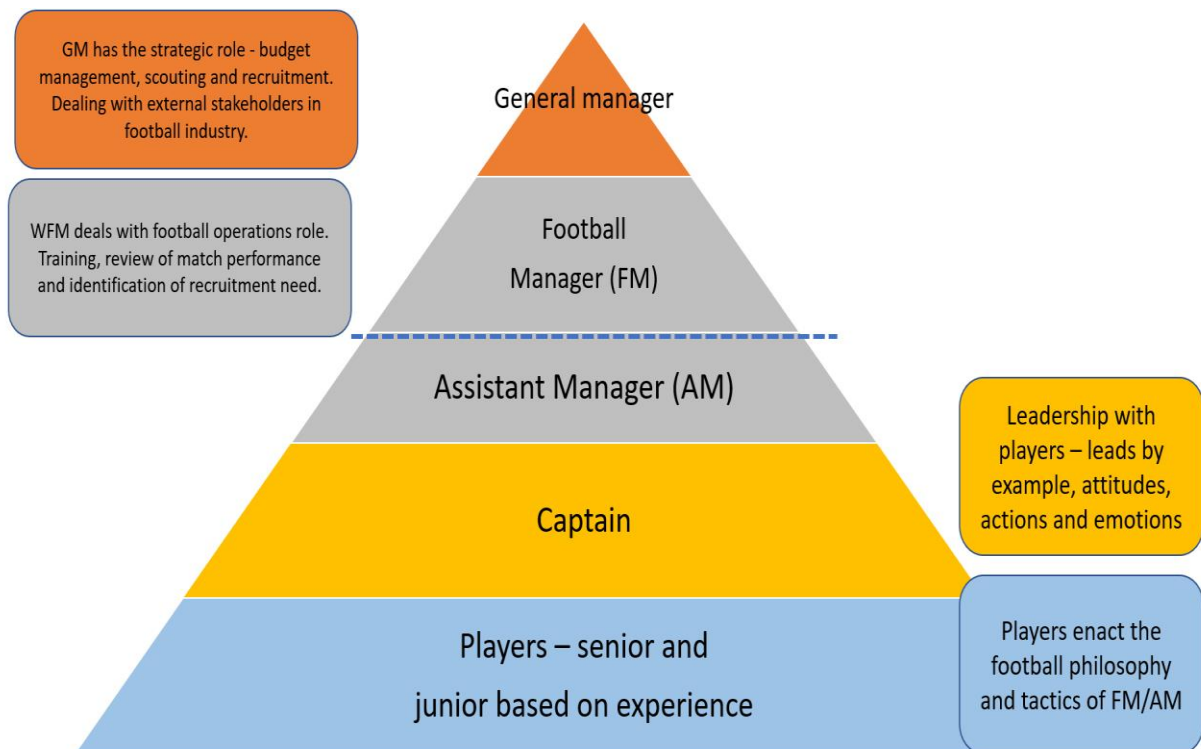
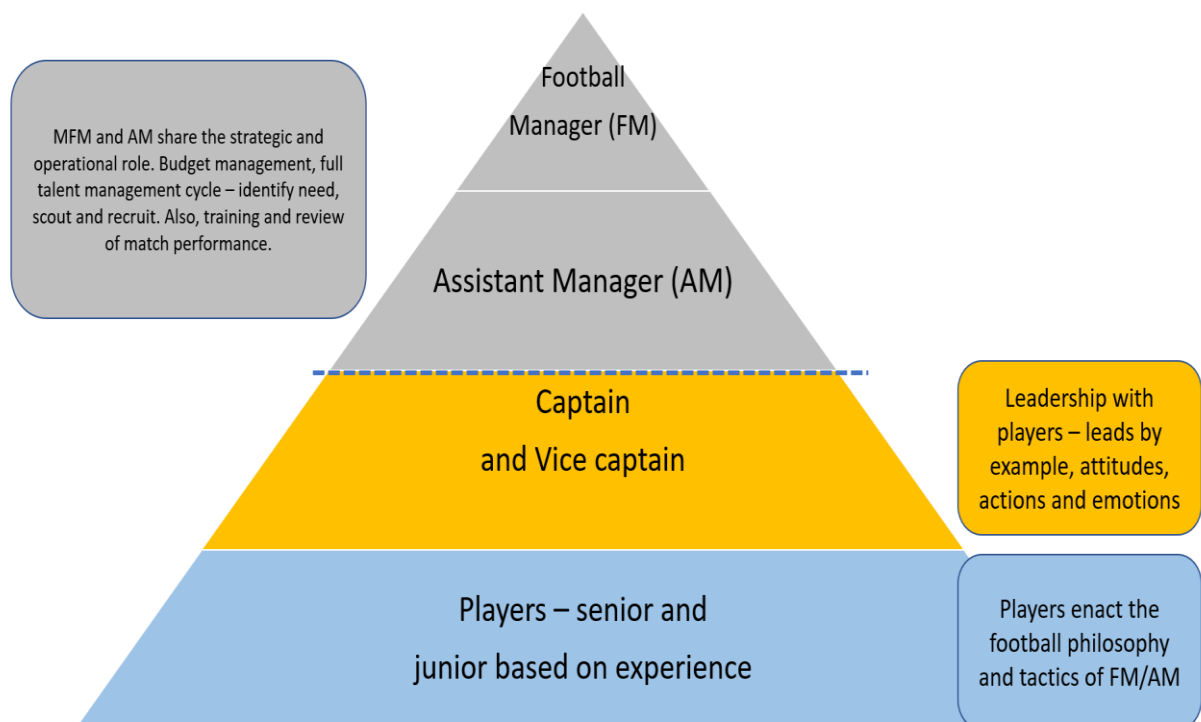


Figure 5.5. The UK Model of Football Management



"We've got a lad, his mother in hospital. I'm texting the kid – 'everything ok? Don't come in if you don't want to', 'no I'll come in get my mind off it'. I have another player whose girlfriend has left him for another guy. These are two personal things I am dealing with – 'do you want a week off – go on holiday?', rather than 'yeah, so what, get another girlfriend'."

Roberto (Interview 15)

The majority of managers pointed out that they were expected now to be more attuned to players as human beings who must cope with unexpected life events. The participants were, from time to time, faced with a range of player life events. In the majority of incidents, the response was to support the player by giving them options, as in Roberto's example, whilst in Agnetha's quote, she had a duty to the unborn child, as per EFA rules. Managers highlighted the way in which they were treated as players 20-25 years ago, when their managers were only interested in them as footballers. Relationships, unexpected pregnancies and family illnesses were for the individuals to deal with, and were not part of the manager's remit.

5.4.3 Managing Stakeholder Relationships

Managing stakeholder relationships was mentioned at the start of this chapter, and it is very important in the socialisation process. Chapter 6 will cover the socialisation journey that managers experience, including how they manage stakeholder relationships. Players have been the focus of this chapter, however, the fans, the media, football agents, regulators, chair and board all have a vital part to play in the football environment – one in which the manager will have to be both flexible and adaptable to survive.

5.5 Chapter Summary and Key Points

This chapter adds to the organisation socialisation literature by highlighting several important factors affecting new managers. These are the temporal pressure that the newcomer is under to perform, the agency to make swift organisational changes, and the position of the job role in the organisation structure (strategic or operational).

The temporal pressure that newcomer managers face to socialise themselves and other stakeholders, in this context, consists of 5-6 weeks to dis-integrate and re-integrate a team to perform at a higher level. The socialisation literature provides examples of one year for new volunteers (Bargal and Haski-Leventhal, 2008) and temporary school teachers a year to become accepted tenured school teachers (Kelchtermans and Ballet, 2002; Kelchtermans, 2019). This study foregrounds the impact that temporal pressure adds to organisation socialisation, and what it is that newcomers do differently to speed up the organisation socialisation process. **In this study, it was found that managers truncated the general workgroup socialisation model (Moreland & Levine, 2002) by appointing pre-socialised, pre-approved players from their previous employer. These individuals were immediately accepted as full members of the group (see chapter 7 also).** This meant that, contrary to the assumption that organisation socialisation is the entry of one newcomer (outsider) who is socialised by the organisation employees (insiders), in this case it was the new manager with a small cadre of allies (outsiders) socialising the remaining players (insiders).

In this context, it is key that the manager has a) the ability to identify the key performance improvements necessary – attitudinal, emotional displays, and actions during competitive games; b) access to a network of talent; and c) the autonomy to recruit new team members unfettered, and to dismiss other team members expeditiously. This is in contrast to studies situated in schools, where a new principal does not have the agency to change the organisation culture immediately, due to being constrained by regulators (Caruso, 2013; Thomson & Sparkes, 2020; Johnson et al., 2021).

The study found an important contrast between those who had football management roles in the men's game and in the women's game. The men's managers had the agency to design the football operations culture, and to recruit and retain players, as well as to dismiss players. This meant that they were able to change the values, norms and working practices of the club themselves, and appoint new players who had already proven that they could operate successfully within the football operations culture that the manager was creating. Using a developed network to recruit quickly (with limited contract constraints) enables a fluidity that is not present in the highest echelons of the football hierarchy. Thomson and Sparkes (2020) highlight that redundancy or dis-employment in some contexts is a long process; in this context, with this sample, it can be instantaneous.

The strategic position within the organisation structure under a UK governance model enables significantly more agency in the job role than an operational position within the organisation under a European governance model. The European governance model introduces the role of a sporting director (general manager) who interacts as a custodian for the club's organisation culture (Parnell et al., 2022). The women's manager, this study found, concentrates on football operations,

such as match day preparation, and has autonomy to identify recruitment need. However, the women's manager has little or no involvement in directly recruiting players or in budgetary management, which is the purview of the general manager. The use of the European governance model could be perceived as encroachment into the manager's traditional job role space, by taking recruitment of players out of their remit. The men's manager has to deal with a much wider set of stakeholders, in particular those external to the organisation. This is examined in Chapter 6.

Chapter 6 – The Socialisation Journey and Managing Stakeholder Relationships

6.0 Chapter Introduction

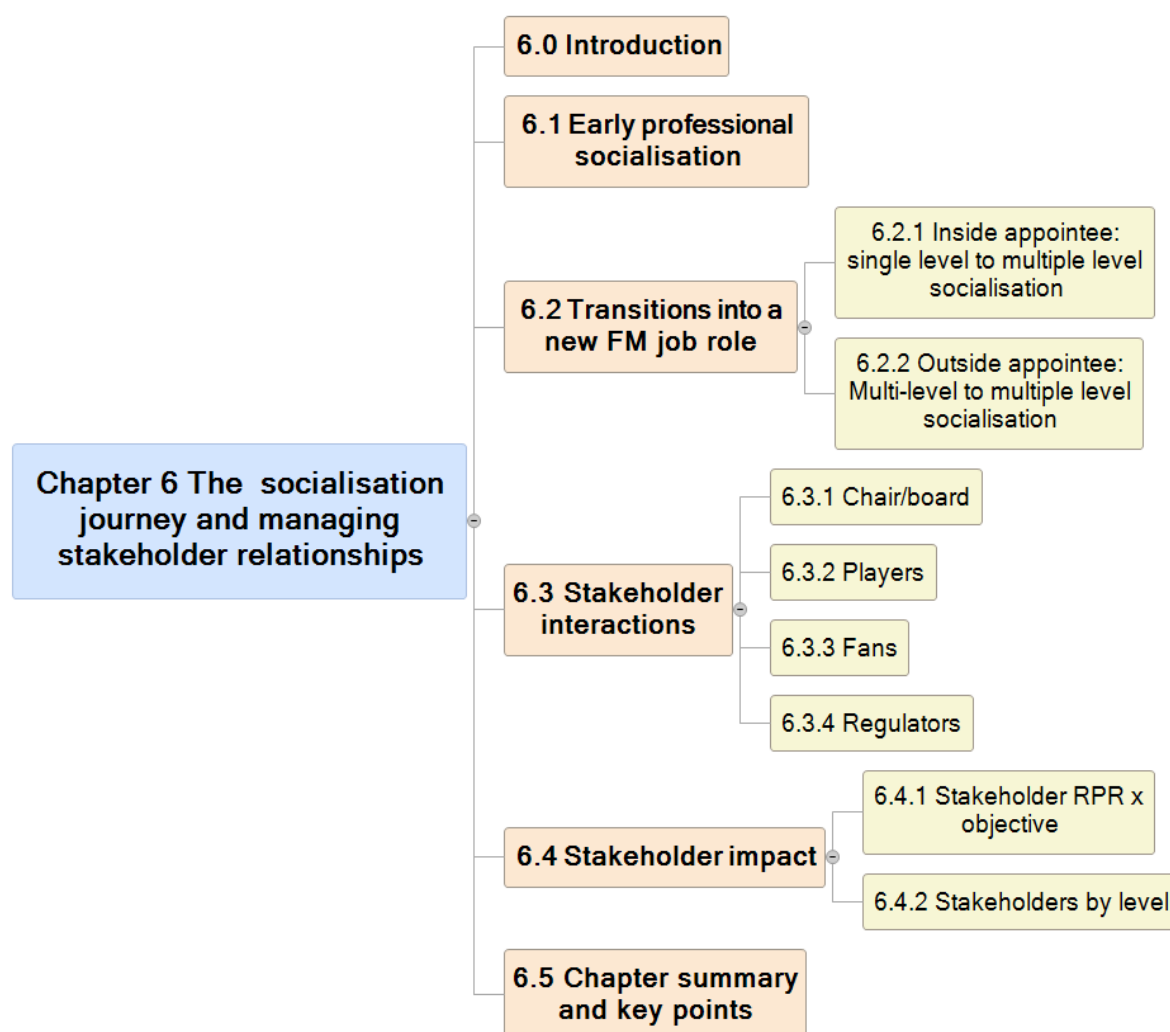
Chapter 5 developed an understanding of the organisation socialisation challenges that a manager faces when taking up a new football management job role, and the main job role aspects that new managers have to perform when they join a new football club, including managing stakeholder relationships. Chapter 6 will be broken down into two main parts. The first part develops by highlighting the socialisation journey that the manager undertakes as they transition into their job role. The two types of socialisation journey discussed highlight that the outside appointee has a different journey (organisational border crossing) from the internal promotee (job role border crossing). Examples of internal promotion were the assistant manager becoming the new manager, or the club captain becoming the new player-manager. The second part shows that stakeholder management is a fundamental part of the manager's job role. The researcher is using Freeman's (2004) definition of a stakeholder: "any group or individual that can affect or is affected by the achievement of a corporation's purpose" (Freeman, 2004, p.229).

The stakeholder management aspect is presented by highlighting the types of interactions that the newcomer manager had with key stakeholders. The evidence of how the new managers acted is taken as indicative of the agency (relative power relations) between the manager's job role and that of the stakeholder group. The researcher examined, for example, the interactions that the new manager had with the chairperson, e.g. setting the player wage budget or accepting the joint role of player-manager. The relative power relations help the new manager to decide which stakeholders they can socialise, and which stakeholders are likely to socialise them (Mainardes et al., 2012). The relative power relations/objective combination shows that some stakeholders have the same objectives as the new manager, and has relatively less power to influence (relatively passive

stakeholder). The convergent/passive combination stakeholder has potentially very little agency (or desire) to hinder the new manager's actions. However, a divergent/controller combination stakeholder has a divergent objective which challenges the newcomer and has relatively more power to push through their agenda.

Lastly, this chapter will highlight the simultaneous multi-level aspect of socialisation, by being the first study to provide empirical evidence to support Saks and Ashforth's (1997) multi-level socialisation process model. This model highlights a more complex view of the socialisation experiences that managers face (i.e. a wide variety of stakeholders) when they start their new role. The manager's socialisation experiences are embedded in a highly competitive environment wherein each stakeholder is competing to socialise the newcomer, and vice versa. In particular, the extra-organisational stakeholders are found to be difficult to deal with. Dealing with the new relationships with different stakeholders takes social dexterity – an awareness of which stakeholders have relative power, and which need to be dealt with more cautiously to build up quality relationships. The managers highlighted that they needed everyone pulling in the same direction, i.e. supporting them, during socialisation – this means the support of the players, the chairperson/board, and the fans. Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002) highlight that social-professional relations are very important when newcomers have an impermanent tenure in an organisation, where developing social ties and getting to know colleagues and earning their respect is an important factor (Kennedy & Berger, 1994; Korte, 2010)

Figure 6.1. Chapter 6 Plan – The Socialisation Journey and Managing Stakeholder Relationships



6.1 Men's Football Managers' Professional Socialisation

Managers shared that they had a long professional socialisation period, in which they learnt about the football industry and the football clubs that they were playing with, as they progressed through the ranks from academy player (8 – 16 years old) and apprentice player (16 – 18 years old). For details of socialisation stages, see figure 6.2 on page 144. The managers shared that their socialisation journey started when they were children, between the ages of 8-10 years old at a Premier League club as an academy player. During the early stages of their career, they learnt from the values of the football club – these were also considered life skills, such as working hard, discipline, putting the team before yourself, and valuing all members of staff at the club. At this

stage, the boys also learnt hard lessons from organisations that appeared to be militaristic in nature. Militaristic here means that the organisation is hierarchical, and that management was exercised through command and control strategies. The hierarchy within a football club was, and still is: manager > assistant manager > senior player > academy player. The management style used in the 1970s-1990s was referred to as 'old school', in which the managers used their authority based on their experience in the game, and their position within the organisational hierarchy. For example, the captain of the academy squad could be expected to shine the boots of the first team manager as part of their apprenticeship (see below).

*"I had worked on them (the manager's boots) and they were gleaming, and you used to knock on the first team staff changing room door, wait for what seemed like an eternity for him to say come in. You are going absolutely sh*tting yourself and he had this aura of presence about him of a disciplinarian. He would look inside and out and say sort that out."*

Ricky (Interview 30)

Other experiences taught the young academy players to learn the value of teamwork, and their position within the football club. In the example below, the young players who want to be football professionals are pulled into line with their current status.

"The youth team were all showered and changed into our normal clothes and in the canteen at lunchtime. The youth team manager (an ex-premier league player) came in. He came in and called us all back to the changing room – he basically said who do we think we are, there was one sock out of the squad of 15 pairs that was folded the wrong way. That is disrespectful to the kitman – who do we think we are? Everybody folds their kit the right way."

Ricky (Interview 30)

This quote highlights that the youth team (academy players) need to learn the value of teamwork and their position within the football club. The kitman, the club's laundry staff and the hospitality staff are all valued for the job roles they perform. In particular, the players have to present their kit the correct way so that the kitman can perform his role. Infractions are met with punishments: in

this case, the youth team coach made the youth team “run their b*lls off all afternoon” (Ricky, Interview 30). In other words, they were given a second training session to reinforce the message. This period of professional socialisation also taught the then players (today’s managers) about the different types of manager, and the skills or attributes that managers could display. For example, some managers liked to focus on buying and selling players (the wheeler dealer). The wheeler dealer would leave the training and coaching to the coaching staff while spending a lot of time on the telephone, negotiating with other managers for players. There was the Churchillian orator, who could make the hairs on the back of your neck stand up – motivating the team to conquer their opponents in a Cup final for example. The tactician was a strategist, great at reading the game as it developed, and at an appropriate time making a change in the team, e.g. making a substitution to win the game, when a gap has been spotted in the opposition’s defence. Then there were the managers who ruled by fear – the participants shared that this was perhaps more of a societal norm at that time. Some managers let it be known that if the players did not perform, the chairperson had promised the finances to have them replaced with a better player who would.

“Bradley was a different type of character again, a wheeler dealer type. He didn’t do a lot of coaching, team shape stuff like that – he spent his time walking around the pitch on his phone, whilst his coach took the training.”

Darko (Interview 31)

As senior professional players, at age 18 and above, managers recall that they learnt from being in the changing room, observing the relationships between the manager who was managing them and the different players, seeing, for example, what happened when a manager promised to play a player and then did not.

“That happened to me as a player, and it’s the worst thing you can do to me as a player is to build my hopes up all week but I have a game at the weekend. Or you you’ve got some managers will put the team sheet up on Friday, you read as opposed to them telling you”.

Jamil (Interview 6).

Figure 6.2. A Comparison Between the Professional Socialisation Stages for an External and Internal Promotee

EXTERNAL APPOINTMENT	PROFESSIONAL SOCIALISATION				ANT SOCN	PROFESSIONAL SOCN		ACCOMMODATION AS CARETAKER MANAGER	
INTERNAL APPOINTMENT	PROFESSIONAL SOCIALISATION					ANT SOCN		ACCOMMODATION AS MANAGER	
	As an academy player (age range 8 – 18 years old)		As a senior player/captain (age range 18 – 35 years old)			As assistant manager (age range 30 – 40 years old)		As a manager (age range 35 plus years old)	
	Learning domain	Examples	Learning domain	Examples		Learning domain	Examples	Learning domain	Examples
	Values	Discipline, Respect for all club members	Management job role aspects	Categorising manager by characteristics. Wheeler dealer, Charismatic, Tactician, Speech maker.		Job role as assistant	Act as a confidante for players – worries and concerns	Full responsibility for talent management cycle	Remodelling the team – recruiting and letting go players
	Status within organisation	Ignored by manager, made to wait outside managers door, polish managers boots	Managing conflict	Some managers duck out of conflict, do not like accountability, may not be able to justify decision.		Job role split with the manager	Dependent upon skills – emotional management, tactician, researcher, orator	Creation of new football operations culture	Bring in assistant and other to help reinforce this new culture with new team
	Emotions	Enthusiasm, fear/respect of FM's authority, love of the game	Management mistakes	Making a promise and not following through, performing an aspect of the job role that reduces personal credibility		Team talks – how to get a reaction	Playing a role during the half time team talk, good cop – bad cop. One to let them have it – wake them up. One to keep the confidence high.	Scouting for new players and using contacts from previous clubs and football friends	Young loan players from old clubs and players through friends who are also managers
	Hierarchical football organisation	Authoritarian command and control structures in place. Football side FM – assistant – captain – senior players	Relationship between assistant and manager. The same values, different personalities	The job role split between manager and assistant. Personalities and values.		Learning how other managers run their changing rooms – player management.	Football manager making himself look big – bullying youngsters unacceptable.	Budgetary management for team wages	Manager is accountable to the Board
			Relationship between chairman and club	Financial misconduct – the club went into administration due to the chairman skimming money from the club		Stakeholder management	Players and manager. Acting as a conduit between the players and the manager. Workgroup mainly – no interaction with chairperson expected	Stakeholder management	Workgroup level – players and assistant, Organisation level – chairperson, Extra-organisational – fans, media, regulator and agents

The managers pointed out that experiences from their academy days were still the subject of review and analysis today. On one hand, the managers tended to be against motivating through fear, though on the other hand, they pointed out that it often got good results, and as long as the manager was winning, he was considered successful. In the quote that follows, Andrea evaluates whether, in his opinion, he would adopt this example of coaching.

“I’m buying you – if you do not do it from day one I will get rid of you, bring someone else in’. He had money at his disposal, old school in terms of shouting, bawling, swearing, ‘do this, do that’ you know. We all talk about him; you look back and he got results. He got promoted, it wouldn’t be the way I would do it as a coach.”

Andrea (Interview 23).

The managers highlighted that they had learnt from their experiences and now adapted, adopted, or rejected what they had experienced personally. During their careers, they had also learnt about how to manage players, and what they needed to be aware of in the changing room regarding the different types of player. For example, Andrea shares:

“It’s the reaction – someone might be playing brilliantly, a star player; you don’t need to say anything to him. He’s done it in the first half, a little wink, keep doing it in the second half. Because he is that player and in the right frame of mind – ‘I know what I need to do. I don’t need you to tell me. I am having my 15 minutes down time, come the second half and I’m back in the zone. And I go again’.”

“Some players will do well first half and then their performance will peter away. It’s because they can’t mentally focus for another 45 minutes. That’s where you get mistakes, you get some people where you say ‘you’ve done well – but it is up to you to keep your standards’. It’s how they think mentally. For managers, how do you get the best reaction out of a player?”

Andrea (Interview 23)

The examples here show that, during an extended professional socialisation, today's managers learnt from observing relationships first-hand in the changing room environment during a game. This gives a nuanced view of how different players perform, and how to keep them performing at a consistent level. Managers pointed out that having an in-depth knowledge of a player enabled managers to predict how a player would react. The ability to be able to predict how a player behaves and displays emotions, or their attitudes, gives the managers some certainty about their relationship with the players. In effect, the men's managers, who had a vast library of personal professional socialisation experiences over a 20-25 year period, had a nuanced, expert mental model.

6.2 Women's Football Managers' Professional Socialisation

There were some interesting contrasts in professional socialisation between the manager role in men's football and women's football. The manager in men's football had progressed from an apprenticeship route, wherein they were socialised through practical football experience. The impact of this was that they entered football management after approximately 20 years in the industry. In women's football, a high proportion of managers entered coaching after their A levels or degree, i.e. they entered more often from an academic background, with less practical playing experience.

Many of the women's managers had started coaching early, and had been to university whilst they were involved in football coaching. For example,

"Yeah, um so I really started off coaching when I was at school. Helping out with sessions, after school clubs, in my own free time and holidays. So I did my level 1 when I was 16 years old, so I got my level 1 early on. I went on at university and studied sports coaching and PE, so at that time I fell into a coaching role with the talent pathway."

Justine (Interview 3)

In this case, Justine started a career in coaching very early on compared to the men's managers, who themselves played for as long as their bodies would let them. Then Justine asked the question "What do I do next?" The men's managers had themselves played for as long as their bodies would let them. In contrast, some men did join the ranks of the women's managers after graduation.

“I was 17. I enrolled on my level 2 coaching. I started university at 19/20, I did my UEFA B whilst at a university – it was a sports studies degree. I completed my UEFA B at 21, got my undergraduate degree. So girls under 14’s, under 16’s, boys under 15’s and under 11’s of County FC. From 24 years old – that’s when things started accelerating into more senior football. At 24 – 25 I worked with WSL team women’s under 17s as head coach.”

Tommaso (Interview 27)

The finding here is that men’s football still has a large cohort of young boys who start at age eight and then move to an official apprentice role at 16 years old. However, women’s football is currently in a huge growth phase, on the back of the European Championships 2022. This means that some managers have moved into centres of excellence and academies, and have become coaches with qualifications much earlier than their male counterparts.

“When I was younger playing women’s football – I had a coach that would just shout, scream his head off and swear at everything and you know it wasn’t a particularly positive environment. I tried to create the complete opposite. I like them to have an opportunity to practice a lot of little skills, because that is where they can express themselves. Within that we always encourage them to make mistakes and try new things”

Heals (Interview 14)

Similarly to the men’s managers, the women’s managers also highlighted the old school methods and the control through fear tactics. Both men’s and women’s managers highlighted that society had changed, and were encouraging players to try new tricks and to accept that they could not get everything right first time. These values came from their coaching badges (training courses) that encouraged values of inclusivity, diversity and participation.

The split between the general manager job role and the head coach was not analysed. The head coach women’s manager data was used in conjunction with the men’s manager data, as there is a significant overlap of these roles. The general manager data was a very small sample – 1 participant had moved to the general manager role from the women’s manager role.

As highlighted in Chapter 5, the women's managers were specialising as head coaches. This meant that on-pitch performance was their sole aim and objective, as the quote below illustrates:

"The head coach manages the team and the director of football works with the head coach. Again if I spoke to my dad – people of a certain generation they would say 'no, the manager runs the club'. But nowadays there is so much that goes on – we had a game on Sunday and I've watched the game back four times. Looked at different things – that is a full day's work just preparing for this week's training"

Tommaso (Interview 27)

6.3 Transitions into a New FM Job Role

The newcomers shared that there are two main ways to be appointed to the manager role. The first was unplanned and informal – often managers left quickly, some examples were given where a manager left at the end of the game. Alternatively, the manager had phoned the chairperson to say that their business interests were now getting so large that they could not be a full-time entrepreneur and part-time manager. As assistant managers (at the time), the now managers shared that they were not privy to the financial information of the organisation, and although they did interact with the chairperson, it was the managers who interacted with the chairperson predominantly. Assistant managers socialised as part of the workgroup, but had limited interaction at the organisation level, although they socialised occasionally by interacting with the board. See Figure 6.3 (below). As such, they usually did not deal with the extra-organisational level, i.e. fans, regulator, football agents and the national/local media. However, when an old manager leaves, the assistant manager may well get an informal tap on the shoulder with a polite question: "Can you take over the running of the team?" This means that it is arguable how much anticipatory socialisation the internal candidate has. On one hand, the internal appointee is already at the club, on the other, they may need to make an almost snap decision in the moment.

A number of newcomers were prepared to jump into the manager's seat, as there was usually competition for the job role. Other managers were given assurances by the chairperson that if they took charge of the team and it did not work out, the newcomer would be retained as a coach. One of the main challenges for the internal appointee was the stakeholder management sea change, from a single-level process model (workgroup level) to a multi-level socialisation process model. As can be

seen in Figure 6.3 below, the newcomer (manager) has to deal with the workgroup, organisation, and extra-organisational levels. In order to understand the potential impact upon the newcomer manager, this chapter will consider each level of the multi-level model separately. The key findings were that the extra-organisational level is inhabited by stakeholders who have some divergent objectives and are at least as relatively powerful as the newcomer. This will be dealt with in the next section. Moreover, internally, the newcomer has to deal directly with the board, who may also have far more relative power to try to push the newcomer into complying with requests.

This transition for the newcomer as an internal appointee seemed to be potentially more hazardous than that experienced by an external appointee. The external appointment was planned and formal, where the football club had vacancy for a new manager. An external manager had already acquired some experience with managing a wide variety of stakeholders and thus they may have devised micropolitical strategies and acts to deal with the differing stakeholders. Chapter 7 will provide further analysis.

The diagram below uses Mainardes et al.'s (2012) classification which has been modified. In the model the labels used give an impression of absoluteness i.e. a controller stakeholder as having total control. The researcher recognises that everyone in an organisation has agency even if they chose to leave an organisation rather than stay post encounter.

A relative **controlling stakeholder** – has **significantly more power** than the manager.

A relative partner stakeholder – has **approximately the same power** as a manager.

A relatively passive stakeholder – has **less power** than the manager.

A non-stakeholder – has **no relationship with** the organisation.

Figure 6.3. A Comparison Between the Number of Stakeholders Engaging an Assistant Manager and Manager for an Internal Appointee Transition

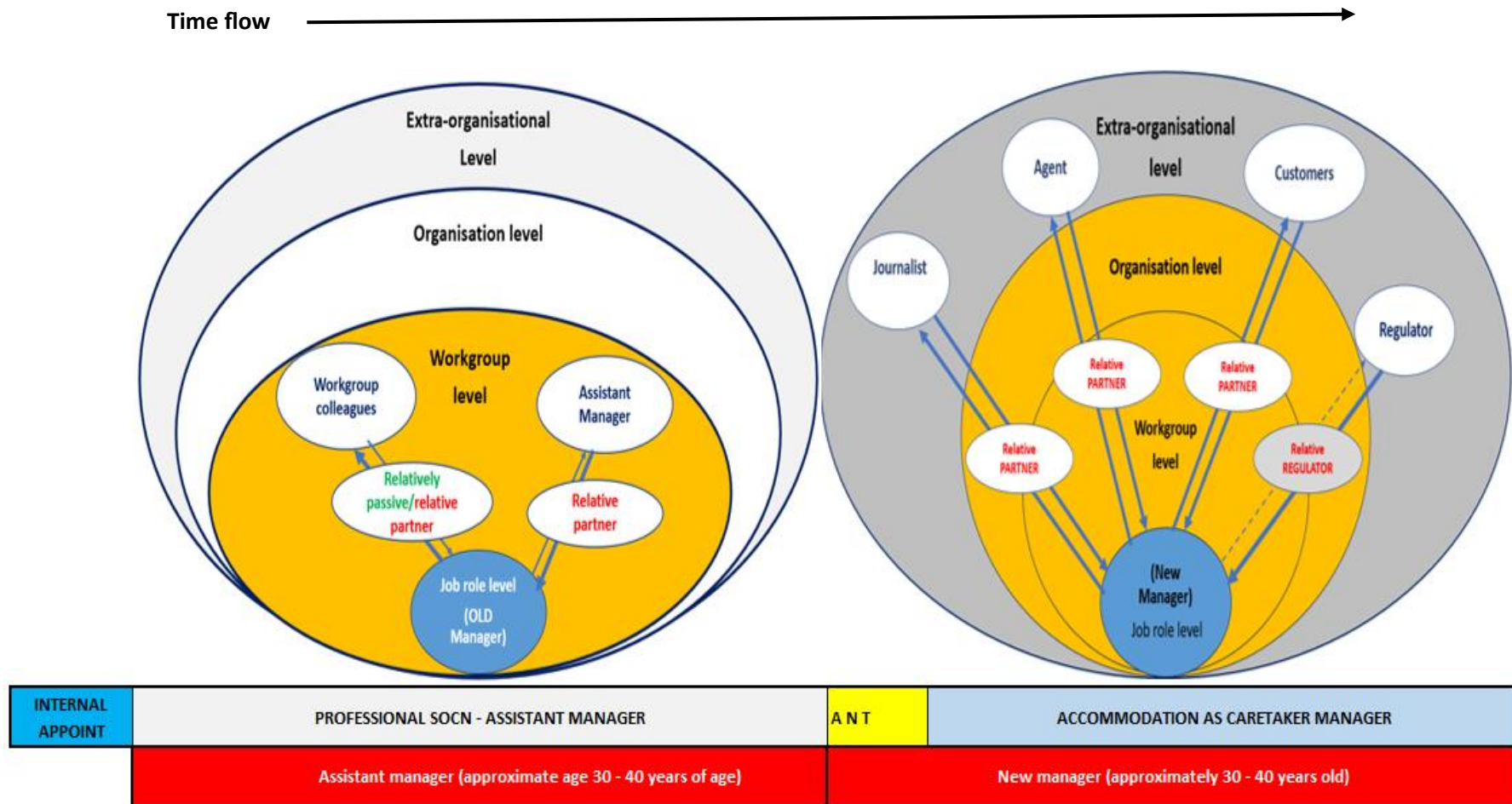


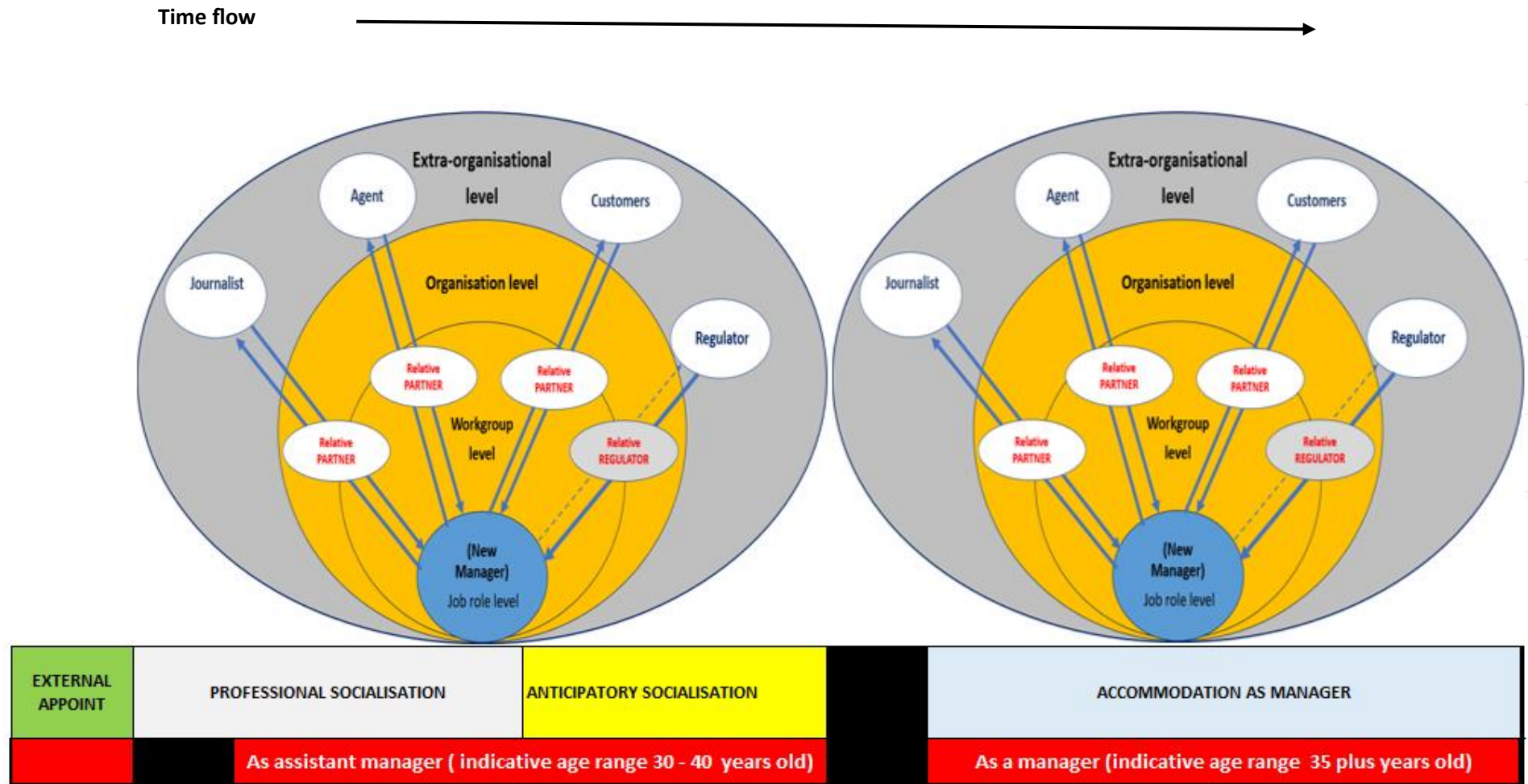
Figure 6.4 on the next page shows that the external appointee has no difference in the number of or the levels of stakeholders that they deal with. The extra-organisational stakeholders level represents the current values of society, i.e. the types of fan engagement considered necessary today. For example, which initiatives on inclusivity and diversity are set to increase participation in football. Although it may look easier for the outside appointee, internally appointed managers highlighted that, by virtue of being an assistant manager at the club, they had certain knowledge not open to an outsider. This included established relationships within the club, where the assistant manager already knew the habits of the players, e.g. which players needed to be given positive feedback regularly, and which players were capable of being leaders on the pitch. Moreover, they could be aware of the people inside the organisation and the internal politics that may play out. For example, when a club had several teams, it could be difficult to get a player who was in the reserves released for first team duty.

“If the first team was short on the Saturday and you need a couple of players for the bench, you would look to take them from the reserves. So if someone played well in the reserves there was no promotion to the first team, and if the reserve players were selected would they settle into the first team? I knew if I ran the reserve team then the fluidity we needed, moving from one team to another, would be there.”

Agnetha (Interview 1)

Agnetha’s quote shows that, within this particular club, there is a parochial attitude, wherein players are loyal to the manager and the team they play for. For example, the reserve players are loyal to the reserve team, and may not been keen to play for the first team. Some managers said this was an issue - a very nuanced issue - that you would not be aware of unless you were inside the club. The findings showed that some internal appointees had a much more nuanced knowledge of what needed to change in the team, e.g. attitude and emotion, such as confidence and personal resilience when dealing with adverse events. However, outside appointees did highlight that they were hired on their ability to win, having already won promotion or having a good management track record.

Figure 6.4. A Comparison Between the Number of Stakeholders Engaging a Manager of Another Club as they Transition into a New Manager Appointment



6.4 Stakeholder Interactions and Relative Power Relations

In order to understand the dynamic contested socialisation experiences that managers go through, the next section will review the objectives of the stakeholder groups. Furthermore, it will unpack the relative power relations that the different stakeholder groups have, i.e. the relative power conferred in the job role relative to the newcomer (manager). For example, the board and chair employ the new manager, and managers agreed that they were expected to support the board and chair's objectives. Thus, the chair has relative power over the new manager. The managers highlighted that they differentiated how they dealt with different groups:

"So, your interaction with the board and chairman is different to when you interact with fans. With fans you are normally managing expectations and you're not giving away too much -- because they want to look to dip in too much. They want to ask about players, formations and tactics, that kind of stuff. You are there to not tell them too much -- obviously with boards they are there to run the football club. They are there to keep it stable and sustainable with the finances as well -- which I totally understand. Then obviously you have the player side of it as well."

Blare (Interview 7)

As Blare reflects on his socialisation experiences, three of the central stakeholders mentioned are the board and chairperson, the fans, and the players. The board have organisational objectives to run the club in a sustainable manner, whilst the fans seem to be ferreting around trying to find out operational information.

6.4.1 Chair and Board

As reported in Chapter 5, the managers highlighted that when they were appointed, the chair and board had a short-term objective. Generally speaking, the chair and board made a financial investment and expected a league position based on that investment. This was the earliest form of socialisation, as it set out the performance proficiency that the chair and board were expecting in the job role.

“Most people will tell you that nine times out of ten the budget you get will indicate where you are likely to come (in the league). You have room for your overachievers, there will also be room for clubs that underachieve with that money. There are no guarantees in football – but generally if you pay more money, you get better players.”

Davison (Interview 16)

The majority of chairs and boards were wealthy entrepreneurs who had been successful in the business world. This meant that sustained financial investment was not always possible; in fact, some managers talked about competitors who actively varied the financial investment if the manager was not on target. The quotation below highlights the risk and return strategy that some chairs support:

“I’ve spoken to teams that are at our level – a lot of them will go hell for leather first half of the season putting money in and if they are not challenging pull it. Then the players rotate – there is no consistency.”

Smudger (Interview 12)

The financial investment strategy here focuses on gaining promotion. Therefore, until Christmas, the team is funded for a promotion position, i.e. a top 6 position. However, if this is not achieved, the funding may be cut in half – the knock-on effect is that players’ wages are cut. This then leads to the players moving to other clubs to increase their playing wages. Then, next July, the player will sign for the team that is paying the higher wage again.

The managers highlighted that they were hired due to their knowledge of football, which meant that they expected to be able to create the football operations culture (FOC) mentioned in Chapter 5, and to assemble a team that would win games. They had a clear vision of what was needed to achieve this.

“The chairman and the board have been a different class. When I came in, they said ‘you are the first team manager and we will let you get on with your job. However, if you need help from us then you know where we are’.”

Ricky (Interview 30)

The managers did highlight that once a chair and board had tasted success, i.e. promotion, it meant that the work had only just started.

“It was a conveyor belt – the club wants promotion, you get more money each promotion year, as in playing budget: you had to try and better the team each year. That was what we tried to do, we had three promotions in the five years we were there. We got them promoted to the football league.”

Alessandro (Interview 26)

The unfolding of events would mean that, more often than not, ground improvements needed to be made, e.g. more turnstiles, more stands, and a larger clubhouse. The chair and directors may have expected promotion, but each level has higher costs, for example increased player wages, and travel as the leagues become less local. The National League covers a wider geographical area than the National League South, for example. The managers put forward that the relationship with the chairperson was their most important relationship; in fact, some likened it to a marriage. The interactions that were discussed most frequently by managers were meetings where budgets were discussed. Those managers who were new to management shared that this part of the job was where they needed to prove themselves to the chair and board. This was the main area which appeared to steer the managers towards being financially responsible. The managers did speak with the chairperson about the general performance, but did not expect to talk in detail about the team they were trying to build. Table 6A details some examples of interactions managers had with chairs and boards, to assess the relative power relations of the two roles.

Table 6A shows that the player wage budget was a central issue that was discussed by the newcomer and chair. The managers highlighted that when the initial discussion was made on player wage budgets, they were at a disadvantage – firstly, there was competition for the majority of manager roles; and secondly, the chair and board knew the true financial state of the club. The financial aspects appeared to be a blind spot to some who were very keen to progress into football

management. However, some managers did mention that they had experienced chairs who had been a party to financial irregularities, often with the result of a club going into liquidation (this was in their playing days before Financial Fair Play (FFP) in 2010).

The timing of this interaction was advantageous to the chairperson and board. In some instances, the information given on the financial state of the club was erroneous. Moreover, there was an example where a promotion from manager to general manager was described as “doing some additional administration”. In fact, the actual job role as general manager was to be in charge of 25 coaching staff at the football club, and to take overall responsibility for women’s football Heals (Interview 14).

Another example involved gaining access to the WSL, where a manager was hired when the general manager really wanted a licensed UEFA A coach for the EFA’s paperwork. What was surprising was that even though there had been some manipulation of information to gain agreement, the appointees stayed and did the job they were offered. However, as their employer, the chair/board had the ability to influence the new manager – this is represented by the chair/board having a positive relative power relation. This was evident when the chair began to encroach into the manager’s job role when the league results and league position were not going according to plan. The longer the underperformance lasted, the more intrusive the encroachment from the chairperson and board became.

A number of managers highlighted that encroachment could easily occur, and that they may have to stand up to the chairperson.

“You have got to be really strong as a manager to say: ‘actually he doesn’t fit what I want to do’. The chairman could say ‘see you later’ i.e. he sacks you. I’m sure that this is no different in business.”

Paulo (Interview 16)

Rarely did the managers disagree with chairman due to their positions in the organisation structure. However, when financial promises made during appointment did not materialise, or if a chairman became involved in influencing player selection managers had to be prepared to stand their ground. The relative power relation category, using Mainardes et al.’s (2012) categorisation, would be a controller stakeholder. This classification enables the newcomer to understand that they have to work around the controller stakeholder. In the case of the chair and the manager, they both want to

win games and improve the league position. However, the chair has the relative power to micromanage, if necessary, for example, if there is an underperformance by the team. Managers shared that usually they had approximately 5-6 weeks to change performance proficiency in the team from the time they took over. However, a poor run at any time (such as 4-5 games without a win) may start to put the new manager under pressure.

Table 6A. Decision Making Dynamics Between Manager and Board

1. Key issue	2. Description of interaction	3. Quote	4. Decision options - Accept/reject/clarify and why?
Player wage budget	Negotiating the initial budget at interview	"This is what I'm prepared to offer you, this is your budget. We have five candidates; you are the one we want."	Accept and get the job
Player wage budget	Asking for additional finances halfway through the season	"We would go back to the board Christmas time. We've done okay but for us to kick on to the end of the season we may need... Most the time we would meet halfway."	Accept the counteroffer from the board
Player wage budget	Being asked to take a reduced budget	"The chairman was building apartments on one of his pubs, so he needed lots of money. So he asked us could we work with a lesser wage bill, it was about 40% less than what we were on. We said OK yeah because that is his money."	Accept the reduction to the budget – keep your job

Player wage budget	The initial budget discussed at interview was misstated	"When I was negotiating my contract that I had £10,000 to spend, when I went into sign my contract, I was told they had miscalculated because of one thing and another it was £4000 to spend."	Accept as the job was ideal to learn from as first appointment.
Player wage budget	Promised investment did not materialise	"The chairman approached me to be the manager – it was a disastrous appointment. Within the second week he didn't give me the budget that he promised me. That was a disaster – so I left there not long after. I was out of football for a bit."	Reject – experienced manager decides to walk away from job.
Player selection	Chair wanting promotion this season with seasoned professionals	"Then it got to a point where he would phone me on a Friday night: 'who is in the squad? Name the squad – he shouldn't be in there; he shouldn't be in there'. Well the chair never turned up to training, he doesn't see the performances."	Reject – manager asserts authority over player selection.
Player selection	Giving the chair's favourites a chance	"The chairman begged me to give some of his favourite players an opportunity, as long as I don't/won't lose my job? – he said 'you ain't going to lose your job'."	Clarify – manager agrees to give players 12 weeks, after 8 weeks replaces them.

The initial appointment	The chair wants the caretaker manager to take the role full time	"When they offered me the job – I'll be honest I wasn't sure I wanted it as I was at college at the time, and my wife was having a little one – there were a lot of things going on behind the scenes."	Accept – manager takes the job although it is not the right time.
The initial appointment	The general manager leaves, and the women's manager is told that it is just some extra administration	"I was told that the club were fully behind the women's team. The main duties were a bit of admin and sorting out the community arrangements. Increasing fan engagement stuff, don't worry you'll have a really good support network around you."	Accept – manager finds out that there are financial irregularities, a small amount of administration is taking over 25 coaching staff.
The initial appointment	The chair promises a new stadium within two years	"To be fair we still have a laugh to this day – he promised me a brand-new stadium in two years. It has still not been built. I believed him – we actually got it – it was built I have the pictures (it's City FC's ground). Laser level pitches on the outside – you think 'wow this is it!'"	Accept – move to the new club. The construction company falls into liquidation – the ground is sold by local authority to the highest bidder.

6.4.2 Players

Table 6B shows the most frequently identified interactions between a new manager and player. These are regarding monitoring player behaviour in respect of an accepted set of rules, values and working practices. The managers provided a wide variety of player behaviour issues, ranging from not re-registering for the club in a timely manner, to displays of egotistical behaviour, in which the player displayed a 'me first' attitude. Examples given showed a blatant disregard for teammates and the unity of the team – threats to tear up a contract, or not warming up properly when acting as a substitute. Dealing with availability issues was another concern, as were selection and development

interactions, such as justifying why a particular player was not the right tool to unlock an opposition's defence.

The managers shared that they needed to keep all players motivated and ready to be selected. One of the main interactions between players and the manager is when they tell a player they are or are not selected for the starting eleven on match day. The simple fact is that players have to earn the right to do what they are good at. Managers shared that this is the hardest part of the job:

"What you are saying to the player is – 'if I call on you when you go in, it's now up to you. You can sulk and you would never get that opportunity. You can train hard and work hard and then I know I can always call on you. When I call on you, you do the business then I will stick with you'."

Jamil (Interview 6)

The managers shared that they were looking for players who were team focused. Sometimes this meant backing your teammates when the opposition were being physical, or working for the manager in a cohesive team rather than being a player who is there for themselves only. The findings showed that the managers had a great deal of flexibility in how they dealt with the variety of behaviours, emotional displays and attitudes. Managers know from past experience that the majority of professional players want to play football – but this is a highly competitive sport in which most teams have 2 or 3 players who can compete for each individual position.

"If a player asked a question, I'll give them an answer. He may not like the answer. I know he will get over it, at least I know who will tell me. If you're not good enough that's why you are not getting in, if you're not playing well enough that's why you're not getting it, if you're not working hard enough that's why you not getting in."

Jamil (Interview 6)

The managers mentioned being honest about their opinion when socialising others. The managers felt that under the old school of management, there were managers who would say that they had made it and it was their opinion that mattered. There appeared at times little justification, which may have been a sign of the times or may have indicated that there was no genuine rationale for

leaving a player out.

“As a player I just wanted the coach/manager to look me in eye and be completely honest. Don’t sugar coat it. If I’m not playing at the weekends, tell me I’m not playing at the weekends and tell me the reasons why. Then I can do something about it. A lot of coaches/managers don’t like confrontation so they will avoid the conversation if possible.”

Jamil (Interview 6)

The newcomer had the responsibility to set the football operations culture (FOC), which meant modelling behaviours that were acceptable to them. The FOC included emotional displays, attitudes, and behaviours that players displayed when they were on duty and representing the football club.

“Discipline, punctuality, conduct of the players, interaction with the youth teams, interaction with the supporters. Interaction after the game is a massive thing for a non-league manager as for any manager at any level really.”

Blare (Interview 7)

Whereas the relationship between board and manager was controlling from a power relations perspective, the relationship between the manager and players was, unsurprisingly, very different. Most interactions represented in Table 6C showed that players were passive stakeholders (Mainardes et al., 2012) in negotiations between the manager and players. NB: in Table 6B, the manager rejecting poor player behaviour shows a positive power relation, because the manager has the authority to monitor and enforce the football operations culture (values, rules, and work norms).

Table 6B. Decision Making Dynamics Between Manager and Players

1. Key issue between player and manager	2. Description of interaction	3. Quote	4. Decision options - Accept/reject/clarify and why?
Poor player behaviour	Players messing around re-signing for the club	"They are messing about re-signing for the club. I have told him to stop chasing them, you have a squad of twelve who will run through walls for you. And that is far better than having one or two that will bang you some goals in every now and then."	Reject - sign other players who were keen to play for the club. Not be held to ransom.
Poor player behaviour	Player threatening to leave the club because not selected	"Yet there was one player who didn't get on who is talking to the chairman about tearing up her contract. That was fine by me because as a person if you can't be happy for the team..."	Reject - player won't play for the manager again. She showed a disrespect for her teammates.
Poor player behaviour	Player sulks when they are asked to be on the bench.	"You're asked to sit on the bench, not warming up properly, sulking in the dugout, whispering behind people's back, be it management or players. Social media gets involved. That's a killer for players now - vent something in anger, it's still there."	Reject - Player exhibiting rotten egg behaviour
Poor player behaviour	Player dropped to bench - constant back chat	"Gianni was always very chirpy, always had something to say. One game I left him out – 'why have a been left out gaffer?' 'You need a rest', I said. 'I don't need a rest', 'no you may not but my ears do'."	Reject - player left on the bench for a game. Then when he gets the message, he is put back in the side.
Players' availability	Three goalkeepers only want to play in Cup ties	"We've got three goalkeepers signed up. If it's not a big match and none of them want to play, we do have two or three outfield players who can play in goal. So if it is a cup game -- no problem getting a goalkeeper. If it's a league the game and you can't get one."	Accept - search for a new keeper. Sign a new keeper for the coming season.

1. Key issue between player and manager	2. Description of interaction	3. Quote	4. Decision options - Accept/reject/clarify and why?
Players' availability	Stag dos and weddings - social events	"Maybe an injury, suspension, a holiday – particularly early in the season. People get married, they're all off on stag dos. We don't pay enough money for people to commit their whole life to us, nobody wants to sit on the bench."	Accept – Understands that players are not on contracts. We don't pay the players enough at level 8 to commit to us.
Players' availability	High profile player can't manage two games a week	"I let JJ play in games he wanted to play in – I'll struggle on Saturday. Why? – if I play Saturday, I'll struggle Tuesday night – Tuesday night's game is more important. 'I assure you can't do two 90s – be on the bench if you need 20 minutes Saturday'."	Clarify - manager discusses with high profile player which game they should contribute towards.
Player selection and development	Developmental feedback helping the player improve	"Mario is in the squad when he is doing X, Y and Z. Is winning more second balls, he's more aggressive and we think we can get 95 minutes out of him. What needs to improve, you need to get that fitness up."	Accept - player asks for detailed feedback. The manager gives fine detailed feedback.
Player selection and development	Keeper regularly feigns injury when the team are losing	"Last season didn't know whether my goalkeeper would last this season. She would have a meltdown when we conceded a goal, even though we were 8-0 up. How is she going to cope in this league"?	Accept - support a player who has potential, even though egotistical.
Player selection and development	Keeping players happy	"I was captain for him three years – he would come to me as I headed the changing room. What's he saying, is he going to be patient? Have a little word with him telling stay patient. He would come to some of the senior boys."	Clarify - pass a message to player via captain.
Player selection and development	Manager asks players how they want to know about not being picked.	"...modern day some like it face-to-face, some rather by text, some rather an email. I'm going to use that information – one player said 'could you send me a text message before you send the team out on Friday? That gives me a couple of days to digest it'."	Clarify - players given a choice on how they hear about their inclusion or exclusion from team.

Table 6B (above) presents the negotiated decisions made between the participants and players. Managers put forward three themes when it came to interactions between the players and managers: poor player behaviour; player availability; and player selection and development. The participants, as one voice, shared that, as a manager, they were in a more powerful position to make the key decisions concerning these three themes. In the manager role, the participants were able to develop players in alignment with their football philosophy and playing tactics (brand of football). This meant that the manager held the power relations balance, i.e. managers had more power over the players than the players had over the manager.

There was a clear distinction in the participants' minds, across the board, that they wanted players who could put the team first. This meant players who could form part of a group, who were prepared to play for the group, and who realised that this was what was required. Those who could do that were called "good eggs". However, the participants highlighted that, in their playing career, they had been competing to make the cut since the age of eight, to be kept on at a club.

"We squeezed about as much as we could out of the boys. They were a great group of lads – no bad apples/rotten eggs"

Ribeiro (Interview 9)

"Good eggs" here are players who exhibit the right attitudes, behaviours and values, e.g. those that have a positive relationship with the manager, put the team first and their own interests second, and can listen and learn from the manager.

"I believe to win at a football you need to get players in that are hungry (for success). My expectations are that the players listen, learn, and work hard"

Clinton (Interview 34)

Participants shared that, for some players, this was a key tension – between competing hard to win a place in the team and co-operating with fellow teammates. However, whilst striving to compete against their teammates and rivals, some players indulge in behaviour that may undermine team unity. "Rotten eggs" or "bad apples" are those players who exhibit poor attitudes, behaviours and values. Examples of poor player behaviour are talking behind the manager's back, threatening to rip up your contract, or playing hard to get when re-signing for a club. The sample of managers

highlighted that, as there were few contracts in the leagues that they were managing (level 7 and below in men's football), and payment was not a significant motivator, it was easy to move these players on. However, it should be noted that managers had the choice to support a player who they thought may make it, e.g. trying to support some attitudinal adjustments – the goalkeeping coach for example. Therefore, players would be considered as having convergent objectives, i.e. to win games and be classified as a passive stakeholder (Mainardes et al., 2012).

6.4.3 Fans

Table 6C presents the negotiation of decisions made between the participants and fans. Managers put forward three main areas when it came to interactions between the fans and managers: access to the manager; the manager as an outsider; and fans registering disappointment in performances.

“Supporters will always be happy when you’re winning games of football. For me you’ve got to try and win as many games of football as you can, whilst also playing a certain style of football, obviously appealing to the eye rather than not. Ultimately, if you are not winning games you are not going to be happy, it’s as simple as that. It’s a very cutthroat business unfortunately because you are always judged on those results. It’s a results game if you know what I mean.”

Davison (Interview 16)

The quote above emphasises the convergent objectives of the fans and the manager. The fans want the team to win games and improve their league position. If the manager can get their team to win games and move up the league (in an entertaining way) then the fans are happy. From a temporal aspect, fans expected to see almost immediate changes in performance – small steps, but a turnaround that is effected in the first 5-6 weeks.

The participants highlighted that the fans are a very important stakeholder group – the life and soul of the club. Engaging with fans was a difficult task – ideally managers want fans behind them and supporting the team. However, the managers shared that the fans could be behind them one minute, then swing against them very quickly. Sometimes this would occur during a game, if they did not like the performance. For example, if the team were losing at half time, the manager is a zero, but if by the end of the game they are winning, the manager is a hero.

The quote below illustrates the precariousness of relationships with fans.

“Over the last few seasons the fans were very vociferous, I had hate letters because we weren’t doing well. But it makes you all the more determined to succeed. I’ve never experienced anything like that before, but I have got to say when you have won, what a feeling. It’s not for yourselves it’s for everybody (including the fans)”

Christian (Interview 24)

The volatility of emotional swings is evident above - from the wins, when everyone shares the victories, to the defeats, when the manager is left to stand alone. Some participants mentioned that you had to have a thick skin in the football business, which meant being able to cope with intense scrutiny. They mentioned that managers need to be confident in their own abilities, even though fans think they may know better. The fans are considered partner stakeholders, as the manager could run the football operations as they saw fit, i.e. creating the football operations culture they wanted. However, the managers highlighted that, whilst they wanted to open the football club up to the fans, this had to be managed very carefully. Fans in general tried to encroach, if they could, by asking about things that were the manager’s job role – for example, why a player was not playing or why the team was playing in a particular way.

The quote below shows the informational boundaries that managers generally try and keep to.

“Key things about the budget, I don’t think it is appropriate to go into that, um key things with particular players. Fans may be asking why that particular that player played? Why are you playing that formation with those players? And not giving too much away on the player front. Any sort of conduct issue that is going on.”

Rhodri (Interview 8)

Managers discussed that, whilst the fans paid their money and they were entitled to express themselves, at times this could be through alcohol-fuelled communication and being abusive on social media when the team was losing. Managers did try to engage with fans at bigger clubs (a big club here is defined as a club with an average fan attendance of 1,000 – 1,500 per home match).

Some managers believed in their own ability, and questioned what some fans knew about being a manager. For others, fans could be very intimidating, and some managers highlighted that they had received threatening mail. Others cited a less than warm welcome as they took over teams that were very parochial. As they were not members of the small community, they were observed with suspicion. The fans, the study shows, could be considered to have convergent objectives as a partnership stakeholder.

The micropolitical strategies involved in how managers tried to engage with the fans are reviewed in Chapter 7, where the managers highlight ways in which to buy themselves time to move from the emotions post-match into a calmer emotional state, enabling a rational analysis. Whilst the manager had the ability to manage the team the way they saw fit, the study shows that the relationship was one that could be categorised as a partnership. The ease of access to managers in the non-league meant that managers could talk to fans over a drink after the game, which meant that the relationship with fans at this level of football is much closer i.e. managers are contactable.

Table 6C. Decision Making Dynamics Between Manager and Fans

1. Key issue between fans and manager	2. Description of interaction	3. Quote	4. Decision options accept/reject/clarify and why
Access to the manager	Manager thinks fans aren't involved enough in the club	"I went on to Facebook after every game – the club hadn't been very good at making the fans feel part of it. What I did was give them an honest account of the game – they might not agree with it."	Accept - manager tries to involve fans by using Facebook to give an account of the weekly game.
Access to the manager	Manager attends a 'meet the manager' evening.	"If we can give you an honest team that will run hard through brick walls... We may lack ability at times, but experience costs. If we can give you an honest team, you can clap them off at the end – because they've worked hard for you."	Accept - manager states his ideas on what fans should expect.
The manager is an outsider	New manager goes to the new clubhouse to meet the MD.	"I walked into their new pavilion and walked across the bar and they must've been probably 20 people there gave you that look what the f*** are you doing here? It was quite intimidating."	Accept - manager has to win over new club's fans.
Fans register disappointment in performances	Fans are getting on the manager's back	"I personally don't listen to it. That's my personal opinion. I believe in my own abilities as a manager and the way my teams want to play. I think you have to be realistic you know. 60% of the supporters coming to the game have been on the drink since 12:00 on Saturday – well that's non-league football."	Reject - manager ignores the opinions of alcohol-fuelled fans. Believes in his own ability.
Fans register disappointment in performances	Fans are getting very negative on Facebook	"What I did was give them an honest account of the game – they might not agree with it. Win, lose or draw, after every game I wrote something. I learnt pretty quick not to look at the comments. Because that got tasty as we weren't winning."	Reject - manager learns not to look at responses when team loses.

“If your team has not worked hard enough, they want to know that you are going to demand more of your players, it's as simple as that. They, the fans, are not going to accept the team that doesn't work hard enough. That should never be on the table, fans will forgive you if it has not worked, a bit of bad luck, an off day. But if they are not working hard for the manager that is unacceptable.”

Jamil (Level 5 national league, 2 years' experience ex-professional)

6.4.4 Regulators

The regulators were mentioned by some new managers, in that the English Football Association (EFA), as the overall regulator in England, was involved as their tenure moved forwards. The areas of interaction between the regulator and club fell under areas of licensing, application of regulations and disciplinary measures. With the relative power relations the managers had, when regulators imposed sanctions or made recommendations, they generally had no choice but to comply. Table 6E shows that there are several areas that regulators became involved in. At the day-to-day operational level, the regulators made sure that players were legitimately registered with clubs, that they had signed on within the correct timeframes. If that didn't happen, the English Football Association (EFA) had the power to deduct points for fielding an ineligible player. This technically means that the club has sought to gain an advantage by playing the player before their registration has gone through and, probably, they are still registered with their previous club.

Moreover, the EFA had the ability to grant licenses to new football clubs to operate, having inspected the facilities and application. This included the appointment of a qualified manager. Other examples managers supplied were the running of a women's football academy, and the application of new rules and regulations. This meant helping the academy determine what these new regulations meant in practice. Lastly, the EFA also had the ability to confirm or deny promotion of a team. When a team are promoted, this is usually subject to the facilities, the football ground and stadia being upgraded. If the football club do not carry these out on time, then the promotion will not be confirmed. This could have the impact of a manager and their team earning promotion after a 10-month season only to find that they stay in the same league.

Thus, a regulator has the same relative power relations as a regulatory stakeholder (Mainardes et al., 2012) – the regulator can influence the manager, but it is effectively a one-way influence. The manager cannot influence the regulator unless they appeal a punishment, which is not usual in the non-leagues. This is very different from the highest leagues, i.e. the EPL, where everything is captured on TV and can be played back again and again with a video-assisted referee.

The issues discussed with the women's managers were different to those of the men's managers. In particular, the women's managers portrayed a sector of football that was growing quickly, where the regulator was involved in licensing applications for the women's super league (WSL). However, it appeared that women's football at the time of these experiences was still being funded largely by the income from their men's football club income. This situation meant that sometimes an English Football League (EFL) team would commit to having a full-time women's team and gain a WSL or women's championship license, only to find, one or two years later, that the club could not maintain the financial commitment. The women's game growing quickly did mean that sometimes a meteoric rise meant that new opportunities opened up quickly; for example, a women's manager becoming a general manager. Overall, the key message, whether playing men's or women's football, was that everyone in the club had to be performing their job role well. This meant the board, i.e. the club secretary, registering players on time, or getting the facilities upgraded during the close season.

Table 6D. Decision Making Dynamics Between Manager and Regulators

1. Key issue between regulator and manager	2. Description of interaction	3. Quote	4. Decision options - accept/reject/clarify and why
Club secretary had not registered a player in time to play	Regulator informed the club they had played an ineligible player	"The board came up to me and said 'I think the FA are going to deduct us 3 points'. They charged the club with fielding an ineligible player. So, from then until March I knew it, none of the players knew it."	Accept - Accept points deduction - and keep the information private, until the right time to disclose
Ground improvements had not been carried out to affirm promotion	Regulator did not confirm promotion after ground upgrade not carried out in time	"...it was our third promotion, so we had momentum – it was denied because we hadn't finished a turnstile in time. That was when we were told the Ryman league would not sanction the ground. Who do you blame? The builder? The club? The league? I don't know."	Accept - Accept decision that the team stayed in the League they had just won.
Developing academy football	Application of FA rules within the Academy	"The FA were a pain in the backside, they never came round, and they made so many rules that were unrealistic. So I was challenging them all the time. Later on we had another guy who came in who has much more common sense."	Clarify - Contests the application of rules by challenging regulators.
Maintenance of new club licence	Regulator stipulates conditions for continued licence approval	"The FA, fair play to them, said manager needs to be paid properly. The owner wouldn't do it, even though the FA extended the deadlines. That is why we didn't get the licence; in the newspaper they backed us; in real life they did not."	Accept - manager happy with FA's conclusions, internal politics mean Chair did not comply.
Approval of new women's super league licence	Regulator grants licence to a small club in EFL Div 2 to run a full time WSL women's team	"The men's team were at level 3 at the time. The WSL team was going to be funded off the back of the men's team. As the new manager getting players to come down to a Rangers FC was difficult – I had 6 interested. Then two players were snapped up by very big clubs."	Accept – the WSL licence, however, within two years the club had filed for liquidation.

6.4.5 Football Agents

Football agents were mentioned by some participants as part of the game. In simple terms, a football agent can be considered a sales agent who represents their client i.e. players. Football agents effectively had divergent objectives that worked against the stability of the football club. The manager was keen to build a team and gain some stability, whilst the football agent worked for their client only. The main issue participants pointed to was that football agents only became engaged with football clubs down at levels 4 - 6 in the sample. Participants highlighted that when they were players professionally, agents were paid by the players (approximately 20-25 years ago). The situation now was that football agents are paid a commission by the club receiving a player – analogous to a recruitment consultant. Football agents and player representation was portrayed by participants as being a sales process – the football agent would contact the football team, mainly by email, with a list of clients that they claim to represent.

Participants highlighted that they were bombarded with lists of players for sale. The primary objective for the agent was to gain a commission from the sale. A few participants (Darko, Ricky and Roberto) highlighted that football agents are from three backgrounds which had an impact on how they negotiated.

“You’ve got the agent that is associated with a large company, they will have a lot of players to represent. Their National League player will be down their list of priorities, which makes them easier to negotiate with. These agents will prioritise their Premier League and Championship players”

Ricky (Interview 30)

Ricky’s experience with agents highlights that contracts for Premier League and Championship players earn a higher commission than an agent’s National League players. This, in Ricky’s experience, meant that they invested a much lower level of energy in negotiating, as the commission on the deal was relatively small. It was identified that the football agent area has now been de-regulated, so anyone can represent themselves as a football agent.

“At the other end of the scale, you probably have agents who are not agents. I talk about those in the middle in a moment. They are saying they’re an agent, they probably haven’t got any players to represent, or they are trying to make out they have a few players”

Ricky (Interview 30)

This quote highlights that dealing with agents depends on knowing who you are dealing with. Examples were given where the participant was confused by two different agents contacting him within two weeks, claiming to represent the same young professional player.

Some participants highlighted that they saw football agents as part of the game. The ability of an agent to sell a player, in their experience, was based on how well the player had performed that season. As Darko highlighted, the agents were interested in selling the club’s best players onto another club.

“The agent, if they are any good, will be saying to a prospective manager that his player did this, this and this between January and May. ‘The team stayed up, he was a big part of it, what do you think?’ At the end of the season I lost most of my best players, basically because the agents were doing their job”

Darko (Interview 31)

If the team are doing well, i.e. in line for a promotion, participants highlighted that the player was likely to stay. However, if the team had just survived, the player was looking to improve their earning professionally. Players were effectively the commodity, and the agent and player had to make the maximum of the players’ good performances – when a player’s stock price was high, the agent would aim to get them a new contract at a better team. The good performances could have come as part of a team winning promotion or avoiding relegation; it was the individual player’s impact that the agent was selling on to the new club. Football agents’ main objective was to maximise their earnings. A minority of managers highlighted that it depended on the agent’s situation. If they worked for a large agency, with Premier League players, non-league players are a small fraction of their commission. However, those who owned their own business were haggling over every £5 of commission. The football agent may be considered as a partner stakeholder, depending on how

established they are. Those managers who dealt with agents felt that they were indeed a part of the game; the downside was that, rather than the money coming back into football, the commissions were taken out of football.

6.5 Stakeholder Influence as Competition During Socialisation

The managers shared that when they take over a new manager role, particularly from an internal promotee's perspective, their job role becomes more complex. Prior to the promotion, the assistant manager usually interacted with the players and other coaches. As the second layer in the hierarchy (men's football - see Chapter 5), the assistant would be in a relatively powerful position – if the manager was ill or away, the assistant may take charge of the team. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, when the internal promotion is announced, extra-organisational stakeholders seek the new manager out. The outcome is a competition between different stakeholders with their own objectives and relevant power relations trying to influence the newcomer manager, and vice versa.

6.5.1 The Variability of Stakeholders Influence

This section will now show the potential impact that stakeholders have on newcomer managers. Table 6E shows the stakeholder groups (column 1) and their main areas of interaction (column 2). Based on the manager's interviews, the overall short-term objectives are to win games of football and improve league position. Column 4 represents whether these main areas are convergent or divergent with the manager's objectives. For example, the chair/board's objectives are convergent, as they also want to win games of football and improve league position. Column 5 shows what relative power relation the stakeholder has, relative to the manager. For example, the chair/board, based on the study, would be classified as a controller stakeholder, having much more power than the new manager. Column 6 then views the combination of objective and relative power relations as the ability to influence the manager. The chair/board would be considered to have significant power over the manager in day-to-day interactions. This particular combination of stakeholder does not stretch the newcomer, i.e. they have convergent objectives with the manager, but they have significant power to influence (a controller stakeholder means that, when interacting with them, the new manager is likely to have to comply).

Divergent objectives create stretch for the manager, for example, a football agent whose objective is to sell their client (a player) to another club to gain a commission. The player may be settled, playing

in a team with a good relationship with the manager. However, the football agent may put offers to the player to get them to move on. The relative power relations in this case are approximately equal (depending on the football agent being dealt with), which means that the manager may need their services at some stage. As a potential partner stakeholder, the manager has to consider the equal relative power and the stretch of a divergent objective.

The most powerful combination that a stakeholder has is divergent/controller, which combines the stretch of divergent objectives with the relative power relations to impose compliance.

Divergent/partners combine stretch with relative power relations which lead the newcomer manager to negotiate outcomes, whilst a convergent/partner has the same objective but has to be negotiated with, e.g. the fans who the manager wants backing the team. A convergent/passive combination is the easiest combination to manage, in that objectives are convergent (no stretch), and the stakeholder is passive, so the newcomer can enact their job role as they see fit. Players fall into this category. In this study, with limited contracts below level 6 (men's football), the players could be bought and sold under the 7-day rule. On a day-to-day basis, it is the player's job to comply with the manager's requests, generally.

Table 6E. Analysis of Stakeholder Objectives and Power Combination (Objective/Relative Power Relations)

1. Stakeholder Group	2. Interactions with manager	3. Stakeholder objectives	4. Convergent/ Divergent	5. Stakeholder class (relative power relations)	6. COMB - Object/relative power relations
Chair/board	1. Financial and player resources 2. Match performance 3. Team selection	1. Win games of football 2. Improve league position. 3. Build a bigger club	Convergent	Relative controller	No stretch and significant power
Players	1. Football philosophy and tactics 2. Match performance 3. Team selection	1. Win games of football 2. Improve league position	Convergent	Relatively passive	No stretch and limited power
Fans	1. Financial and player resources 2. Match performance 3. Team selection	1. Win games of football 2. Improve league position	Convergent	Relative partner	No stretch and equal power

Journalists	1. Report on unexpected events - promotion or relegation 2. Player performance	1. Report on newsworthy stories 2. Unexpected success/failure	Divergent	Relative partner	Stretch with equal power
Football Agents	1. Earn a commission from their players moving on to another club 2. Getting more players into the manager's club	1. Develop career opportunities for their players 2. Earn a sales commission	Divergent	Relative partner	Stretch with equal power
The English Football Association (Regulator)	1. A player is not registered on time and plays in a game 2. Imposition of disciplinary procedures 3. Ground improvements not carried out in time	1. Regulation of football by developing regulations 2. Application of rules and regulations - hand down sanctions and penalties for club indiscretions	Divergent	Relative regulator	Stretch with significant power

6.5.2 Stakeholder Impact on an Internal Appointee

In this section, the researcher will examine the transition made by the internal appointee.

Figure 6.5, below, shows that the newcomer does have some influence when dealing with players. As stated above, the general expectation is that players, chair and board, and the new manager want to achieve the same objectives. The red controller stakeholder means that the newcomer must be wary when negotiating, as this stakeholder group will generally expect compliance. In Table 6B, the results showed that only after a period of success did the new manager have the ability to access further financial funding based on previous results. Managers normally agreed to compromise and concede in interactions.

However, Figure 6.6, also below, shows that the most difficult level for the new manager is the extra-organisational level. There are two groups: divergent/partner stakeholders with stretch and equal power e.g. journalist and football agent, and one divergent/controller with stretch and significant power – the EFA. The fans are the only convergent stakeholder at the extra-organisational level, and they have equal power with the manager. This means that an assistant manager at level 6 and above has to be much more careful with developing social professional relationships. When engaging in this level of socialisation, the manager is faced with divergence, pulling them to satisfy other key objectives outside their own. Furthermore, these stakeholders have the ability to negotiate or compel compliance, potentially impinging on the newcomer.

In **Figures 6.5 and 6.6** – the thickness of the arrows is in relation to the power relation. For example, the English Football Association is a regulatory stakeholder with significant power (thick blue line). The dotted blue line shows that in some instances there may be a chance to appeal.

Figure 6.5. The Multi-Level Stakeholder Influencing Model – Organisation and Workgroup Levels Only



Figure 6.6. The Multi-Level Stakeholder Influencing Model – Extra-Organisational Level Only



Mainardes et al.'s (2012) classification modified:

A relative controlling stakeholder – has **significantly more power** than the manager.

A relative partner stakeholder – has **approximately the same power** as a manager.

A relatively passive stakeholder – has **less power** than the manager.

A non-stakeholder – has **no relationship with** the organisation.

6.6 Chapter Summary and Key Points

This chapter contributes to the socialisation literature by providing a new model of socialisation, the Hiplex-D model of socialisation (high complexity dynamic model). **This model highlights that the organisation socialisation process has a dynamic element, represented by the relative power relations that exist between the newcomer and the different stakeholders.** The model also combines the movement through different stages over time (Traeger et al., 2022) and the multi-level element proposed by Saks and Ashforth (1997) and Ashforth et al. (2007).

The study shows that **the transition for a manager who is an internal promotee** is likely to be more difficult than that of an external promotee. This thesis provides evidence that the internal candidate is usually performing the job role of assistant manager, dealing with internal stakeholders (i.e. the workgroup) – the manager, coaches and players. The new manager (in the men's game only) has to deal with extra-organisational stakeholders for the first time – regulators, journalists, football agents, and fans. **This means that the internal candidate has a higher level of contrast from their previous job role, by virtue of newly dealing with both internal and external stakeholders,** whilst the external candidate has already experienced dealing with the extra-organisational stakeholders at their previous club. This prior experience can equip them with socialisation tactics that they can use to increase the likelihood of social acceptability.

Socialisation has been researched since the 1970's, yet Gilmore and Hardy (2021) highlight that it is still proving difficult to highlight how organisations can help newcomers to socialise with less pain, stress and uncertainty. This thesis shows that it is not just factors in the football industry, such as expediency of performance improvement, but the multiplicity of competing agendas and relative power relations in general, that make it necessary to understand the political landscape.

Previous socialisation studies focus on **socialisation tactics used between a newcomer and one stakeholder**, e.g. a school superintendent group and a new principal (Caruso, 2013), or parents and

a new principal (Horvat, 2010; Uitto et al., 2021); or on **newcomers and two stakeholder groups**, e.g. a schoolteacher, the school's senior management and school students (Ramarajan & Reid, 2020). This thesis focuses on a more realistic view of socialisation as a process, namely in a multiple stakeholder scenario. **In particular, it adds to the socialisation literature by showing that multiple extra-organisational stakeholders have a vital role to play in socialising newcomers.**

This chapter shows that newcomers who possess political astuteness have the ability to read the political landscape (Hartley & Manzie, 2020; Yates & Hartley, 2021). The new managers, through their understanding of individual and group objectives and their relative power relations, have the ability to assess the need to act on or display emotions that enable them to promote and maintain social acceptability (Goffman, 1959). Both performance proficiency and social acceptability are key to being successful in socialising into an organisation/new job role in a highly competitive environment.

However, the diversity of the stakeholder objectives during socialisation, and the relative power relations as a configuration, have not been considered fully. The multiplicity of objectives and relative power relations provides more complexity than has been researched to date. Socialisation literature has built up a picture of the internal relative power relations that may exist between insiders and a newcomer (Potrac et al., 2012; Cushion & Jones, 2014, Thompson et al., 2015; Edwards & Jones, 2022), where useful information about the unwritten rules and values of an industry remains unstated. Work by Crow et al. (2017) reinforces that insiders, in this case, line managers, can also exert influence on the newcomer. Newcomers who are beholden to a line manager for a job recommendation adapt their decisions to protect their relationship with their line manager. Previous research has highlighted some external stakeholders, e.g. students' parents (a proxy for customers) (Horvat, 2010; Uitto et al., 2021) and regulatory bodies, e.g. Ofsted and deputy school superintendents, and the relevant socialisation tactics used by newcomers (Thomson & Sparkes, 2020; Johnson et al., 2021). The single or dual stakeholder research has offered a detailed exposure of certain relationships, but it does not model real life situations in which multiple internal and external relationships have to be developed simultaneously (Traeger et al., 2021; Uitto et al., 2021; Cronin et al., 2020). **This thesis shows the sub-processes of prioritisation of stakeholder objectives, and the different political strategies and acts used (see chapter 7).**

This research shows that the extra-organisational stakeholder configurations provide constraints on the decision-making and behaviour of the newcomer. In this particular context, new managers interact with extra-organisational stakeholders weekly, for example with fans, journalists and football agents, and on an ad hoc basis with the regulator. **The extra-organisational stakeholders**

move into the manager's job role space on an ongoing basis – this leads to a constant pressure for the newcomer to be observant and cautious in how they deal with a multitude of differing requests. Consequently, this thesis concentrates on 'the how' of newcomers' dealings with stakeholders, rather than 'the what', e.g. the tasks of socialisation familiarisation with the job role (Traeger et al. 2022). **This thesis highlights how newcomers overcome resistance, poor attitudes and poor emotional displays.** Mornata and Cassar (2018) highlight resistance to newcomers needs, while Thomson and Sparkes (2020) have highlighted that newcomers have to adapt to regulatory pressures. This thesis shows how newcomers adapt their decision-making and actions, while dependent upon the need to be seen as socially acceptable. The quality of professional social relations is very important in socialisation (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002; Kelchtermans, 2019) and having political astuteness is vital.

Chapter 7 – Developing Political Astuteness

7.0 Chapter Introduction

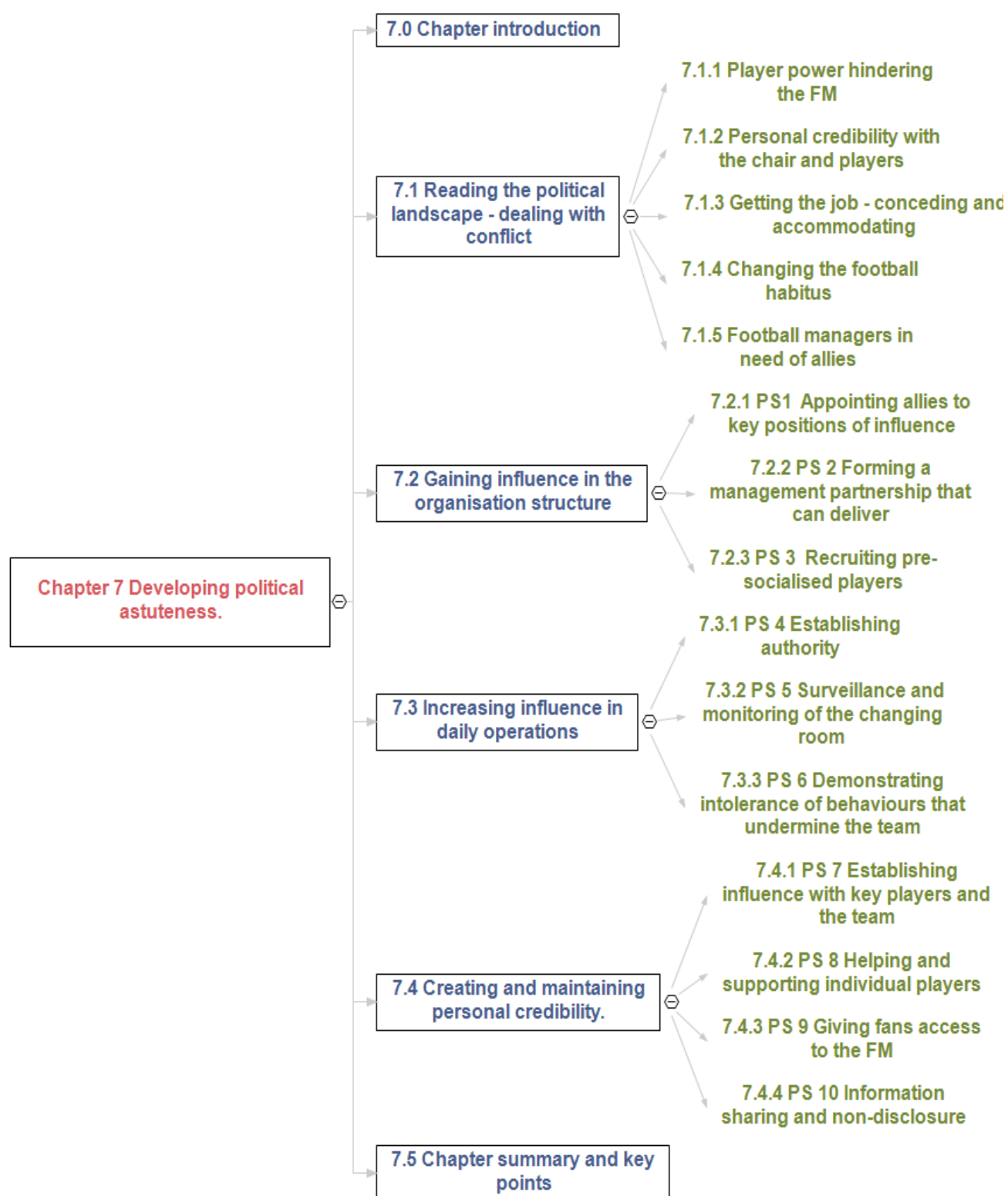
The second part of Chapter 6 focused upon stakeholder management. In particular, the understanding that new managers are faced by a multi-level socialisation process. The managers' semi-structured interviews showed that the newcomers were aware of a wide variety of different stakeholders' objectives, and the relative power relations that existed between their job role and the stakeholders. Understanding of the stakeholder objective/relative power relations configuration was a basis for newcomers to adjust their decision making and the actions with each particular stakeholder group. The newcomer was mindful that it was necessary to gain the support of the internal groups as a priority, to create productive relationships with the chair and board, and the players with whom they worked closely. One of the main contributions from Chapter 6 was the uncovering of the impact that extra-organisational stakeholders had as individual groups.

This chapter further develops the theme of political astuteness using the following definition: "...deploying political skills in situations involving diverse and sometimes competing interests and stakeholders, in order to achieve sufficient alignment of interests and/or consent in order to achieve outcomes" (Hartley et al., 2013, p. 24). In simple terms, this is the ability to read the political landscape – to know who the stakeholders are and their agendas, the ability to align objectives between the stakeholder and the newcomer, and to bring about a successful resolution between the stakeholders and themselves.

This chapter will unfold by considering the highly competitive nature of the footballing context. This research yielded insights into many different types of conflict that different managers could be faced with. For example, in the case of a reserve team manager being unhappy at two of her best players being called up by the first team. The first team manager may argue that this is an ideal opportunity for the reserve players to gain an insight into the first team, even as substitutes. However, the reserve team manager may have her team challenging for the league title, and having two of the team's best players sitting on the bench for the first team may be perceived as a waste of resources.

As shown in figure 7.1 below, the chapter will continue by considering how managers read the political landscape. This ability helps them to deal with a wide range of conflict, both internal and external to the organisation. The chapter will then report on player and chair behaviours that hinder the manager's work role, and will move onto how the managers have learnt from their experiences of political naivety. The chapter then moves to highlight the political strategies and actions that show how managers gain influence within the organisational structure and the football operations culture.

Figure 7.1. Chapter 7 Plan – Developing Political Astuteness



7.1 Reading the Political Landscape – Dealing with Conflict

As described in Chapter 6, one of the key political astuteness skills is to be able to understand the political landscape. The new managers experienced a range of conflicts within and outside the football club. Within the football club, there was conflict between individual players, conflict between old player groups and younger player groups, and conflict between reserve team managers and first team managers. This context, due to its highly competitive yet highly sociable nature, was open with opportunity to many stakeholders to be involved in politics. Chapter 6 stakeholder management gave an overview of the multi-levelness of socialisation and conflict between many stakeholders' objectives. Here, we start to look at the internal political aspects.

The findings of this research showed that within the football context, the potential for conflict was high. The first type of conflict was potentially organisational objectives. With the increase in football participation, some football clubs were set up as an opportunity for exercise, and the priority was to give all players an opportunity to play, whatever their standard. The habitus of these clubs was very different from those clubs who wanted to be professional clubs, and who only selected the best players in order to progress up the football league pyramid.

“The political makeup was that some of the players were more competitive and ambitious than others; and some were there for the social part. It was difficult to find the balance between the serious players and between the social players. There was some falling out. The club folded a couple of years ago -- so I guess they didn't resolve those issues as to whether they were a serious competitive team or a social team”

Francisco (Interview 5)

In this example, Francisco has shown that he is aware of the tension within the club. Some technically talented players wanted to play for a club that could win games and gain promotion. Whilst other less talented players wanted to play for a club that gave everyone a chance to play. In the case above the club had a stalemate. Without an overall club objective the political infighting can lead to a club going out of existence.

There were examples given of where there were decisions taken by the new manager (and the club board) to change the ethos of the women's team. This meant that women/girls that came along to the football team had been used to a certain level of commitment. In order to become an effective

team that provided the next generation of players for the first team, the new under 18's manager explains his thoughts on transitioning the under 18's team into the first team.

"My thoughts were these girls need to know what that feels like – have a snippet of that so they know what to expect (Last eight weeks the season). That is not just technically and tactically, that is psychologically as well. Do they have the discipline to be a first-team player, do they have the professionalism to be a first-team player?"

Wajtullah (Interview 17)

The by-product of this was that the players who had been with the club for several years had to retriail for their places. All of a sudden, there was competition from other players coming in for trials from outside. Politically, the parents and the old players questioned why their loyalty was not being repaid. This had an impact on attitudes in training sessions:

"So I remember actually as well my first training session with these girls – as a group would have been on trial. I wouldn't have worked with them before or had many conversations. In the trial we were just doing a warmup and I remember the new girls were super focused and really sharp, energetic; and our girls laughing, chatting, joking. I don't blame them because that is what they were used to"

Wajtullah (Interview 17)

As a consequence, the manager had difficulty getting the old players to warm up properly and cool down properly. The consequences were that the club had a high level of injuries that season. This quote shows that the new manager was resisted by the older players who remained.

The second type of conflict was between staff at the club, it was noticeable in the women's game that assistant managers appeared to be appointed separately from the manager. This meant that there was potentially no previous relationship between the manager and assistant manager prior to taking up post. In the example below, a team was relegated the previous season and the manager and assistant needed to replace the exodus of players to rival clubs. These players left to protect their own self-interests, i.e. to play football at the highest level possible. Santiago, the new assistant

manager, introduces the objective of the session.

“So the main focus is about building cohesion in the team. So the previous season you have had a lot of downs, with a lot of heavy losses, probably only won three games all season. So morale and cohesion”

Santiago (Interview 4)

Santiago describes the events as they unfolded:

“The senior players were mucking around in training. They weren’t showing respect to the younger players, so I said you can’t do that because you won’t play in the next game. When the manager came back from holiday he played some of those players (the ones who had mucked about); and some of the senior players were on the bench bad mouthing the youngsters.”

Santiago (Interview 4)

In this case, the manager and the assistant had different ideas on recruitment strategy. The manager took a short-term approach, wherein he recruited old players who knew the club well. Meanwhile, the assistant wanted to use a longer-term approach that meant that younger players were given time to develop. In this case, the assistant was unhappy that the older players had too much political capital with the manager. He witnessed first-hand that the older players had the power to undermine the younger players, and that the manager was prepared to tolerate this. In this case, Santiago chose to leave the club, as he could not form a partnership with a manager who let the players influence him to that degree.

Having highlighted the internal conflicts that were experienced inside the football organisation, the chapter will continue by considering the power that players wield, and the unhelpful behaviours, attitudes and emotional displays that the players exhibited. Then, as shown in figure 7.1, the chapter will consider how the previous vocational socialisation assisted the new manager to manoeuvre politically to take control of the football operations organisational structure. This power base was used to create and reinforce the habits that the manager wished to create – using rules, values and working practices that would support a successful, winning team.

7.1.1 Player Power Hindering the Manager

There was a wide range of behaviours that were found to hinder a new manager performing their job role. The majority of managers had experience as professional footballers in academies in the English Premier League, and had experience at high level non-league in the men's game. However, there were others who had managed at lower-level football clubs, that may be called social football. The managers in the professional league were faced with choosing their best side to face an opposition every week, they had too many players for the number of places in the team. On the other side of the coin, a social manager may well have the opposite problem – wherein they have an insufficient number of players to field a full team.

"Rarely will you have all 18 available. Maybe an injury, suspension, a holiday – particularly early in the season. People get married, they're all off on stag dos. We don't pay enough money for people to commit their whole life to us, nobody wants to sit on the bench"

Smudger (Interview 12)

In this case, Smudger is realistic. Losing several players to a stag do is reasonable, as the players are not paid enough money and are not under a contract. In another example, a team had three specialist goalkeepers who only wanted to play in cup ties, as Stefanos explains:

"We've got three goalkeepers signed up. If it's not a big match and none of them want to play, we do have two or three outfield players who can play in goal. So if it is a cup game -- no problem getting a goalkeeper. If it's a league the game and you can't get one (a goalkeeper)"

Stefanos (Interview 2)

In the case above, Stefanos can see that the team are frustrated as the results are so inconsistent. The team are near the bottom of the league, yet they are in three cup semi-finals, it appears that the goalkeepers who were signed prior to the manager's arrival are motivated by cup glory – the chance to win a cup. The mundanity of league matches played week in and week out does not interest

them. In this particular example, the manager has to wait until next season to sign a committed goalkeeper, as the transfer window (when players can be signed) has passed.

Players try to act out their agency as far as they can in a wide range of ways. Managers are aware through their experience that professional players are under pressure to compete for a starting place. The majority of participants in the men's game have been competing to make the cut since the age of 8-10 years old. As a consequence, players act to protect themselves. *"They are only doing that through self-preservation because they are afraid. They're afraid they're going to lose their place in the team"* (Paulo, Interview 18). The managers highlighted that this leads to players indulging in egotistical behaviour, putting themselves before the team. Respect for legitimate authority was a cardinal value, learnt by the new managers as part of the football industry habitus.

Politically, this meant that some players indulged in blaming others for their mistakes. This could take the form of undermining other players (competing as above), scapegoating other players in the team for their poor performance, or the coaches for not being available when needed.

As Agnetha describes the background, *"the season before, one of our best players was wobbling massively. I knew she was a key player for us. So I tried to pair her up with somebody to keep her ticking over"*. However, as Agnetha explains below, the team has an egotistical goalkeeper who is always emotionally unstable in response to conceding a goal.

"We were winning a game 5-0 and the goalkeeper throws the ball out to her. The midfielder didn't want to be there, wasn't paying attention and the opposition scored. Game over, we won 6-1, the midfielder walks past me, then the goalkeeper goes flying past me. She won't be able to keep her mouth shut."

Agnetha (Interview 1)

In this case, Agnetha is aware that one of her key players is preoccupied about something, she is not herself. However, she is also aware that the team's goalkeeper has emotional outbursts when she concedes a goal. In order to protect the team (and retain the services of the midfield player), Agnetha starts a quarrel between herself and the goalkeeper, which protects the key player from the goalkeeper's outburst. In another incident in the same team, Agnetha highlights:

“Over the Christmas the goalkeeping coach has experienced some family issues and needs time away from the game. The goalkeeper then puts a message on WhatsApp about the coach letting her down. How dare he leave me when I need him the most, it was really nasty as she can be like that as it is all about her. It is all about having confidence that they will both come through.”

Agnetha (Interview 1)

In this case, Agnetha was aware of the WhatsApp message – she was a member of this small group. The player was unaware of the issues that the coach was dealing with, just as the player was unaware of what challenges the key player was dealing with. The manager was happy for the goalkeeper to have a space to voice her opinions. The impact politically was that the manager could observe what was being said without letting the goalkeeper undermine the team unity, other players, or the coach.

Agnetha here shows political astuteness by helping both the midfielder player and a fellow coach to deal with their life challenges. In the first instance, she is aware that she has to act immediately, otherwise the key player will leave the club. In the other instance, she uses her judgement to keep a watching brief and let the coach come back after a break away from football. Politically, she has minimised the damage to the team as a whole, the goalkeeper does not have an audience to share her personal grievances with. As a consequence, her emotional outbursts are not able to act as a negative emotional contagion through which unhappiness starts permeating throughout the team.

7.1.2 Personal Credibility with the Chair and Players

Personal credibility was a key concept in organisation socialisation. Personal credibility here is taken to mean performing proficiently in the job role and being socially acceptable. Socially acceptable here means that the manager is accepted stakeholders within (and beyond the organisation) Ramarajan and Reid (2020). Having positive working relationships – collegial rather than conflictive (Achinstein, 2006; Smeed et al, 2009). The most salient stakeholders to the manager were the chair and the players. However, some managers shared observations and personal experiences which revealed instances where the political landscape was not understood, or the gravity of the consequences of an action or series of actions not realised. There appeared to be certain rules that

they had learnt when progressing through the ranks (i.e. when transitioning from senior player or captain to assistant manager and onto manager), that were not applied in practice.

As a general rule in this context, if the manager has a team that is consistently producing results, the chair and board tend to let the manager have unfettered autonomy to make decisions. Some managers highlighted that it gave them political power, as their personal credibility increased when they were performing the job role proficiently.

“I would say if you get results on the pitch usually more ammunition to go to the board. So whether that is a bit of training equipment, we want to arrange a friendly game here -- can you support us? Can we do a team bonding evening, can you, will help us with that -- things like that. It is hard to go to the board and ask them for extra money if you are not doing well on the football pitch.”

Rhodri (Interview 8)

“Ultimately, if you are not winning games you are not going to be happy, it’s a simple as that. It’s a very cutthroat business unfortunately because you are always judged on those results. It’s a results game if you know what I mean.”

Davison (Interview 8)

The relationship with the chairperson was the most important relationship managers put forward. However, there was awareness of the ability for any relationships to improve or to deteriorate. Politically, the chair and board would support the new manager’s decisions as long as they achieved results. When a team was not achieving the expected league position, some chairs would start asking questions about team selection.

“There is a lot of political stuff in football – if the chairman likes a player and constantly tells you this player needs to be playing. You have got to be really strong as a manager to say: “actually he doesn’t fit what I want to do.”

Paulo (Interview 18)

“I’ve sat with the chairman in the stand, we’ve had a laugh, we’ve had a drink in the bar, a cup of tea in the boardroom as a player. Then it got to a point (as a manager) where he would phone me on a Friday night, what’s the squad? Name the squad – he shouldn’t be in there, he shouldn’t be in there.”

“Why have we brought in that youngster in – I’ve got no time for youngsters. We need to win the league – we need seasoned professionals. Then that little bit of pressure started creeping up on me. Then I was taking it out on the players.”

Japp (Interview 11)

“If a player bypasses a manager – that for me is not a nice person. They should be talking to the manager – so those type of people you really don’t want at the club. They will be talking behind your back, disrupting any unity you are putting in place.”

Paulo (Interview 18)

The quotes above show that one of the main conundrums for a manager is that everyone in football is a football fan. This means that in a social environment at the lower professional level (e.g. English Football League 2 and high-level non-league), there are opportunities for informal discussion about football in general, and about the team specifically. The last quote shows that some players may try to nurture a social relationship with a chair or board member. The knock-on effect is that the chair will have their favourite players, as chairs, fans, players and others may think they can do a better job than the manager. The chair, as outlined in Chapter 6, is in a politically powerful position – the manager is accountable for the results of the team.

The quotes by Japp above show that he has not adapted from his promotion as captain to manager. He has failed to consider the need of the chair to win promotion at all costs this year. Historically, the club has just missed promotion through the play-offs at the end of the season. For this chair politically, anything less than promotion will be seen as a failure. Moreover, the position of captain has no reporting responsibility, so when enacting the role of captain, an individual can be more relaxed. The transition to management means that the political landscape has changed – the chair

has voiced his opinion that he wants a short-term solution with seasoned professionals who know how to win the league. He does not have time to wait for young players to mature.

In the interviews, some managers gave accounts of when events could undermine the personal credibility of the manager. The following managers give their insights into poor pedagogical practice, not being able to deal with “what if” scenarios, and keeping your promises.

“The club had just stepped out of the national league. The training method was too static, more like a lecture and a bit patronising. The manager wasn’t very smiley, so the players didn’t know whether he was happy, unhappy. Even the older ones couldn’t read him.”

Agnetha (Interview 1)

Continuing the story of a particular training session, Agnetha reports information she receives from the captain of the team:

“The captain phoned and said I am not sure what just happened but he’s gone. It was a girl I had in the club since she was 12 years old, she had never fallen out with anyone before. She had stood with her hands on her hips and gave him a stare, she’s not that sort of player.”

Agnetha (Interview 1)

Agnetha highlights the reserve team manager has not adopted their style of delivering training. Emotionally, the players do not know if the first team manager is angry, frustrated, happy or disappointed with their performances. The visual cues that players look for are absent, and this makes their job of relating to the manager more difficult. The consequence of this prolonged naivety is that a player has finally had enough.

Another example shows that a new fledgling manager had not had the practical experience to back up the tactical information that he was passing on to players:

“He (Sido) had not come from the changing environment and he didn’t understand players feelings. What they felt in the game and situations that

cannot be helped. As a player you couldn't relate to the bloke, tactics – what happens if (a) happens, what happens if (b) happens? He hadn't even thought of that. It was quite black-and-white."

Maric (Interview 22)

Maric reflected that when he was a player, he was unable to understand one of his former managers. The explanation that Maric came up with was a political one – that although the manager (Sido) could not establish his credibility with his players, he was conversant with the analysis of matches. *"I could only imagine he was good at talking to the directors and the chair and the board (before his appointment). He had an analysis of match reports, he had all the IT"* (Maric, Interview 22). This perception implies that Sido had impressed the chair and board with his use of statistical analysis. A plausible explanation could be that the chair and board were impressed by this knowledge and thus had hired Sido.

A range of managers highlighted that they had made football friends during their career – these were people from within football from whom they could ask a favour. For example, an ex-club colleague who could come and play for them, or who could loan them a player as a fellow manager. As stated previously, players had loyalty to managers once they had established a successful working relationship. Sometimes this could mean convincing a friend to take on a leadership role.

*"I gave him the speech – I want you to stay, I want you to be skipper. I'm 100% with you, I gave him the captain's armband. Then I dug him out (telling off) why did I give you the armband, you f*cking can't talk. You don't organise – I dug him out in the changing room."*

Japp (Interview 11)

Japp reflects on the importance of people skills:

"That sort of side let me down at the start. Looking back it is only 2 years ago – looking back I am thinking what were you doing like?"

Japp (Interview 11)

In this case, Japp had convinced his friend that he was 100% with him. However, when the new captain needed support to boost his confidence, the manager told him off in public.

The findings in this thesis show that managers are involved in many interactions in a week. Contrary to socialisation theory, this thesis shows that feedback comes from different stakeholders – players, the chair and the board interact regularly. However, in the extra-organisational socialisation level, fans (a proxy for customers) give feedback on match performance. On occasion, some managers attempt to involve the fans more in the club, other times, they are social with the fans in response to a request from the chair and board.

“They (the fans) are always going to have an opinion on how the game should be played. They are always going to have their views on certain players. They are going to like a player or not like a player. Fans will have their favourites because they come and watch them every week.”

Davison (Interview 16)

“I went on to Facebook after every game – the club hadn’t been very good at making the fans feel part of it. What I did was give them an honest account of the game – they might not agree with it. When, lose or draw after every game I wrote something. I learnt pretty quick what to feed into the comments. Because that got tasty when we were not winning.”

Darko (Interview 31)

“With fans you are normally managing expectations and you’re not giving away too much -- because they want to look to dip in too much. They want to ask about players, formations and tactics that kind of stuff. You are there to not tell them too much.”

Blare (Interview 7)

The second of these quotes shows that this particular manager was well meaning, i.e. encouraging the fans with his honest account, but he failed to take into account the impact of social media. This platform offers fans anonymity when giving feedback online. When the club is losing, they can vent

their anger, frustration and other negative emotions at the manager without recourse. The third quote, from a more experienced manager, shows an awareness that fan involvement needs to be carefully controlled.

The situation with fans was summarised by one manager in the following quote:

"You get stick from the crowd; you made a mistake! People are very quick to jump on mistakes. You make one mistake, and everyone jumps on it. If you make 10 right decisions no one talks about it. So, as a manager you have a lot of balls to do that. It is not easy to say I made a mistake – but we won the game."

Paulo (Interview 18)

This manager encapsulates the perfect performance that a new manager is looking for – literally zero mistakes, every time. In this context, it is the job role of the opposition to thwart the manager's best efforts. As Paulo states, you make ten right decisions and no one talks about it, one mistake and everyone talks about it.

7.1.3 Getting the Job – Conceding and Accommodating

The managers' experiences showed that, when negotiating their entry into an organisation, it was not always easy to deal with chairs and the board. Generally, the chairs were successful businessmen, and politically, the manager usually had to concede in the negotiation to be appointed. The chairs' advantage included a much more nuanced knowledge of the club. Below are some examples in which managers faced a range of requests in order to become manager.

The majority of managers highlighted that manager job roles are highly competitive, even for job roles where the financial state of the club is bordering on bankruptcy, there is competition. The agendas of the chairs were varied, but tended to revolve around getting value for money for the club, which they had usually invested in personally.

There were several examples in which managers were appointed as player-manager, which meant that the individual took on two roles. The dual role meant that the new manager had to be able to perform at a high level as a player, in order to pick themselves for the team. This meant keeping fit and being able to demonstrate what they wanted from players with the football. Moreover, it meant

that the manager had to be able to detach themselves, to form an objective view of the team performance. This role appeared to be unsustainable in the long run, usually lasting just one or two seasons.

“I had to step away from playing. I had to look at the players objectively, the fitness of the group. I needed objectivity on the pitch. I was 31 and I had slowed up a bit – how can I point the finger at the players? Watching the games, it became clear we were too stretched. It was a crisis for the club.”

Rodrigo (Interview 35)

In the next quote, Jamil reflects on a “smart” move made by the chair, which may have been the reason for his appointment. There is additional pressure caused by having to maintain personal credibility in both roles, as a current squad player scoring goals, and in choosing players as a manager on merit.

“Unfortunately, yes. I say unfortunately because the club were quite smart. At the end of the day I believe it was one of the few reasons I got the job. You've got to use every string to your bow to get coaching/manager's job so I played until 38, and I went back to City FC to help out. I had spoken to a number of players who had been a player managers being a manager is hard enough.”

“The most important part was when I was playing I was performing. I was scoring goals, but if you were not then you are not going to the players are not going to buy into you. So you can imagine telling players to do things and you can't do it yourself.”

Jamil (Interview 6)

It was found that managers were vulnerable when they first came into a management role. Sometimes, promises were made that either turned out to be false or could not subsequently be delivered on. Within women's football, with the growth in the sector, there were several examples wherein information was mis-stated and which led to reality shock. With women's teams applying for licenses to become full-time teams in the Women's Super League (WSL), teams could potentially move up two divisions based on this commitment.

The other side was that teams who lost their license could also drop down by two or more divisions. This was not found in the men's football sample in this thesis.

"The reason they contacted me they wanted an A licence coach for a super league team bid. Everything was going well, we were flying we had managed to win the league we were in, we put the bid together with an external funding partnership."

Tommaso (Interview 27)

Tommaso continues the story from where the team has won the league. As a consequence he has a few months before the team will play competitively in the WSL. He wants to develop the team prior to entry into the new league.

*"I said I don't care about the results I just want us to perform – because we have 4/5/6 months before start the season.....I need to pick the team. I think we need to go back to that. My answer was if it goes to t*ts up (wrong) who gets the sack? Who is responsible? He said well that would have to be you – I said well I don't want to take responsibility for something I might not agree to. We couldn't come to an agreement for a week or two. And all of a sudden I got an email not to turn up to training and that was it."*

Tommaso (Interview 27)

In this case, it would appear that the general manager wanted to be the manager, but needed a coach with a UEFA license A for the WSL application. As stated in Chapter 5, the organisation structure was different with the women's football team sample, as the clubs had adopted a European model of corporate governance, with a director of football in the women's game.

Another example in the women's game shows that there is a bit difference in job role between the general manager and the manager. In this case, Angie describes the situation:

"I had worked with the previous general manager quite closely doing the community engagement stuff. I don't think I knew what the job role fully meant and it was sold to me in a different way so I would take it"

Heals (Interview 14)

In this case, a member of staff who had been assisting with community football coaching was told that the role of the general manager involved some additional administration. Unfortunately, this appears to have been incorrect.

"The old general manager left within 2 weeks of me taking the position and from a bit of admin it became you are in charge of the whole organisation from top to bottom. You have 25 part time staff and WSL coaching team that did not want a woman in charge of them – as they had been there for years and years and they know how football works."

Heals (Interview 14)

This quote shows that information can be misrepresented, with the newcomer only discovering the true nature of the job role when they take up post. This shows that the chair can sometimes manipulate information, in order to get an individual to take on the job role.

7.1.4 Changing the Football Habitus

Whilst the new manager understood the traditional, hierarchical structure of the football club, and how it could be used effectively, the majority of managers highlighted some fundamental changes in the football habitus from when they were players. The main change that the study found was that managers treated players in a different way, departing from harsh, football-focused, self-reliance-based values to a view of players firstly as human beings, who need to be encouraged to perform. Players are given support, with a developmental mindset working in partnership with players. This adaptation of habitus highlights that the current generation of players are different, i.e. more

sensitive in nature emotionally. The consequence is that players may experience less swearing, shouting and dictatorial behaviour on the touchline, but rather encouragement to develop their tricks and skills.

“That’s simple, they come off. I don’t give them a rocket; I do have it in me. But we need to speak to people in the right way. Especially with the current generation the way it is. I’ve had tea/squash thrown at me – I have a 16 year old boy and I know how sensitive he can be. Players pick the team, I don’t.”

Roberto (Interview 15)

“When I was younger playing women’s football – I had a coach that would just shout, scream his head off I tried to create the complete opposite. I like them to have an opportunity to practice a lot of skills, because that is where they can express themselves. Within that we always encourage them to make mistakes and try new things.”

Heals (Interview 14)

*“I try and encourage our players, not a boll*cking every time things go wrong. Getting them to question themselves within the constraints of the structure of the team.”*

Paulo (Interview 18)

The first quote shows that the current generation of players appear to be more sensitive in character, and, in order to engage them and gain their support, a different, less harsh way of leadership is necessary. A pedagogic/coaching philosophy based on taking the fear out of making a mistake is used, lessening the expectation of being shouted at or verbally abused.

In order to provide a more holistic approach to players, managers appear to consider barriers to coaching, i.e. what is preventing the players from performing. As with all human beings, players have lives outside their playing career, whether social or professional. Some managers highlighted that they had a pastoral role within the expended manager job role, compared to 25 years earlier. This

extended to helping players deal with a variety of life events as shown below.

“We’ve got a lad, his mother in hospital. I’m texting the kid – everything ok? Don’t come in if you don’t want to, no I’ll come in get my mind off it. I have another player whose girlfriend has left him for another guy. These are two personal things I am dealing with – do you want a week off – go on holiday, rather than yeah, so what get another girlfriend.”

Roberto (Interview 15)

“Before we had a training session one night. Miss can I see you. Then we sat in my car and she said: Miss I am pregnant. I don’t know what to do, the baby wasn’t planned. Can I train? No you can’t train. The FA advice and guidance mentions that pregnant women in the first trimester can’t train.”

Agnetha (Interview 1)

The two quotes above show that there are many reasons why players’ concentration or application to their football can be disrupted. In these situations, managers consider the human aspects first, then the player as a club resource. Rather than, for example, telling a player to get another girlfriend, the manager empowers the player to make their own decision. Politically, this encouragement to help a player to problem solve may provide a more loyal bond. Many managers highlighted that they sought a manager role so that they could change things for the better.

Some managers focused on when and how they were told they were not playing. In professional football, this was a key decision, one that tended to leave some players disappointed, whilst some were relieved that they had been selected again.

"I thought if there is anything I can take into coaching and management? It is to be honest. And if a player asked a question, I'll give you an answer... I'll tell you plenty of time as opposed to telling you just before kick-off, which is what coaches and managers do. That happened to me as a player, and it's the worst thing you can do to me as a player is to build my hopes up all week but I have a game at the weekend."

Jamil (Interview 6)

"Two weeks ago sent out just a little email to everyone – I want you to reply individually, tell me how you want to be told whether you are in the squad or not ... I want to give you the information how you want to be told. I don't like leaving people out and if it was happening to me, is like the old metaphor would you prefer one to the head or several to the chest"?

Tommaso (Interview 27)

This last quote highlights that the impact of not being selected is appreciated, and dealt with sensitively. The focus is on giving the information privately, in a form that enables the player to process the decision, and allows them time to ask questions. The objective of this measure appears to be to enable players to cheer the team on from a place of understanding, i.e. they have processed the emotion of disappointment, and can now fully engage in supporting their colleagues on match days.

7.1.5 Football Managers in Need of Allies

The findings showed that the role of the manager could be a lonely role, when the managers felt isolated. The two quotes below show that managers are the focal point for stakeholders, the person that everyone wants to talk to. They are indeed at the summit of the football operations pyramid (as shown in Chapter 5) with authority over football operations. However, they need people they can trust in a highly competitive world.

“You may not want to be the focal point; you need to be a special breed to be a manager. You have to take so much abuse; you have to be very insular. Some people's personalities change, you can become paranoid. You need to surround yourself with people you trust I get that; the industry is fraught with danger.”

Jamil (Interview 6)

“I personally don't listen to it. That's my personal opinion. I believe in my own abilities as a manager and the way my teams want to play. I think you have to be realistic you know. 60% of the supporters coming to the game have been on the drink since 12:00 on Saturday – well that's non-league football.”

Roberto (Interview 15)

“It's an extremely tricky place – struggles going on in my mind. No one really understands how you are going through it – don't feel you are doing the right thing. I wouldn't talk to chair or board, if you come across problems, worries. All your fears – very vulnerable times – how results are required. Are you going to get out of this?”

Rambo (Interview 33)

Roberto's quote supports Jamil's point that managers do take abuse from fans, which may undermine their confidence in their ability to do the job role. To overcome this, a manager needs a conviction in their own abilities, and to know when to discount feedback from the terraces. Rambo also highlights that the ability to reach out for advice and guidance inside the organisation is limited, predicting that this may be political suicide (i.e. that if the chair and board feel that they have appointed the wrong manager, such an interaction may well end in dismissal). This is contrary to the socialisation literature, which highlights that organisations play a fundamental role in socialising a newcomer. In this case, the manager has to fend for themselves, as they are the expert in football operations, having experienced an extended vocational socialisation period.

The managers who took on the job role highlighted that they needed allies for several reasons. Firstly, they needed an ally to assist them in the wide-ranging duties that a manager could be expected to perform. A large part of the manager job role is to manage stakeholders – the majority

of assistant managers had graduated from the captain's position to the assistant manager position. This meant that they had recent experience with relationships in the changing room and knew how to lead and motivate fellow players.

"From my playing days I was a leader, a captain -- I always knew I could communicate with my teammates and galvanise the team. That is one thing you need to go into coaching and management... The football changing room is an environment it's like a playground, which sometimes it is survival of the fittest. You have to be strong willed, so I have no problem being in a group and trying to control them."

Roberto manager (Interview 15)

"Yes, I was very friendly with them all -- and they understood my role as well. I was still playing and had a vital role to play on the pitch and of it. I was a big influence with the players. I help Blare with that and was the link with the players."

Rhodri manager (Interview 8)

The second quote, by Rhodri, highlights that both the assistant manager and the manager are in leadership roles. This thesis shows what appears to be a natural progression in job roles within a club. The leadership qualities that had been honed on the pitch were used to help the assistant manager control, motivate and potentially shape player attitude and behaviour.

The second reason for appointing allies was to gather support from the players – gaining respect from players is a political imperative. Some managers showed that they were politically astute when they recruited an assistant who had a different personality and way of working from their own.

“It’s about thinking how can we benefit from the people in our football club to be successful? If I can get respect from all the players – fantastic: if I can get respect from 80% of the players, and my assistant has the other 20% – we succeeded. Carlos at Town FC (different character) Leonardo at United FC (different character). Why because I know my deficiencies”

Christian (Interview 24).

The quote from Christian shows that he understands the political situation in his organisation, in this context the need to influence players, in particular to gain their respect. He is self-aware regarding his personality traits, and how a different character or personality may appeal to some players, which then enables Christian and his assistant to create allies of the players.

7.2 Gaining Influence in the Organisation Structure

This next section in the chapter starts by reviewing the political strategies and acts that managers use to gain influence through others. The managers used their understanding of the football habitus (e.g. the traditional organisation hierarchy and the understanding that certain roles conferred certain responsibilities and relative power relations) to attain this influence.

7.2.1 PS 1 – Appointing Allies to Key Positions of Influence

The main challenge for a new manager was to take control of the organisational structure expediently, and indeed, as stated in Chapter 5, to dis-integrate and re-integrate a squad of players who will learn the new football operations culture within 5-6 weeks.

From their personal experiences, the new managers knew that it was important politically to have allies appointed at key positions within the organisational structure. These allies would enable the new managers to use the assistant manager, captain and other senior players as socialisation agents to help them embed the new football operations culture quickly.

The two key positions in the organisation structure in which managers did appoint allies to bolster their political power (in relative power terms) were the second and third most powerful positions in the football operations hierarchy. The individual who held the captain’s position appeared to be a manifestation of the new manager’s persona, through the demonstration of temperament, people

skills or alignment of personal values. The appointment of an ally to the captain's or assistant manager's position (for more on this, see later in the chapter) helps the manager to build a power base from which they can be relatively sure that these newcomers are trustworthy, have the same values, and will politically support their vision of the team moving forward. In an inherently uncertain, highly competitive, performance-oriented environment, the manager needs to be able to predict some close relationships with relative certainty.

Managers shared that they could predict how the captain would lead the team, and how they would personally display resilience to a setback. They stated that they know whether the captain would be able to get a positive response to their messages of encouragement, and they could deal with defeat and victory with emotional wisdom, i.e. not getting emotionally high from a win, nor depressed by a loss. The football operations hierarchy confers certain rights and responsibilities in positions of leadership. The captain, managers considered, was another pair of eyes and ears in the changing room – this meant the manager could keep an eye on the changing room and how the team (and individual players) responded to wins and losses. Managers highlighted that captains were often used as a key communications conduit:

"I was captain for him three years – he would come to me as I headed the changing room. If one of the players wasn't happy because he had not played for two or three weeks. What's he saying, is he going to be patient? Have a little word with him telling stay patient. He would come to some of the senior boys."

Juan (Interview 39)

Juan reflects on how the captain is used as a socialisation agent, collecting information from the changing room and feeding this back to the manager as a key ally. Moreover, the manager then uses the captain in their leadership role to advise the player to be patient – reassuring them that their chance to play will come.

The managers showed that when they selected a captain, it was not always the most talented player that led the team. In the below example, it is Leo's ability to give confidence to the team that gains him the role. Stefanos is using Leo and his ability to inspire confidence as a positive emotional contagion, i.e. one person possesses confidence and is able to transfer this to their teammates.

“Leo is the skipper; he isn't as outgoing as Franky. He is the captain based on how he talks to the players on the field (conducts himself). He leads that backline like nobody else. Franky is a bit more individual, very good on the ball, whereas Leo is very good positioning off the ball. Traditionally I will always have a defender as captain, I'm not that sure where that comes from? Leo instils confidence in others as a leader.”

Stefanos (Interview 2)

However, what was interesting was that managers were politically astute enough to know that, whilst they could support a player off the pitch, they had their limitations. Sometimes, when a player needed some help to mature, they appointed a teammate as a mentor or playing buddy.

The background to Petr's situation, below, is that a young player has not been able to gain a regular first team starting position. He thinks he has done well, and has texted the manager to talk things through. In the quote below, Petr asks one of the senior players that he is competing with to help him to adjust and give him encouragement. The manager here picks someone who he can trust to befriend the player, even though he is his main competition. Petr aligns the objectives of Gabriel the senior player) and Steve (the academy player) for a team gain.

“But he (Steve) is still learning, while Gabriel is the finished article. I said ‘I know what you are going to give me, but I need you to look after Steve, don't make him feel like it's a competition thing, put your arm around him. Become friends with him’.”

Petr (Interview 10)

One of the other main roles to give support as an ally was identified by participants as the assistant manager role. In the men's game, assistant managers could be appointed at the manager's discretion, however, in the women's game, an assistant manager could only be appointed by the chair. This had the potential to cause conflict (see section above on conflict).

7.2.2 PS 2 – Forming a Management Partnership That Can Deliver

The manager's micropolitical act that underpins this is the act of job crafting, defined here by Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) as task, cognitive, and relational job crafting. This means that the manager and assistant manager align aspects of the manager's job role with their own personal preferences, abilities, and motivations, although another reason may well be to share the work and responsibility, so that the fans have two people who are equally accountable.

Some managers are now becoming joint managers, so that the responsibilities are shared. For example, if one joint manager is not available, the other joint manager can speak to a journalist. However, it was found that with joint managers, one was usually a senior by experience, and the other their junior. The managers discussed how they would play the roles they had observed managers playing during their vocational socialisation as senior players who interacted directly with the first team manager. The findings showed that the manager and assistant manager work very closely together. Job crafting enabled one member of the management partnership to be motivator – the Churchillian orator who stirred up the passion – whilst the other partner could, with emotional calmness, give the tactical input. The emotional management of the players was indeed a key part of the management partnership role.

"I went to the 8-0 defeat on the previous Wednesday. It stuck out like a sore thumb; the players were on at a low, low confidence level. Some that seem like they hate playing and had just given up. It really looked like they need fresh, fresh ideas. The players were struggling in these environments"

"I think in football confidence for players is important, recently having come out of it myself it's a big thing. And the confidence throughout the whole dressing room, when confidence is low you go one -- nil down that really summed it up. One -- nil down and it was game over. We as we tried to install the fact that, it's never over and you always have a chance if you stay in the game. But it just looked like people, you know, had given up"

Rhodri (Interview 8)

The managers shared that they had learnt from previous managers how to get a reaction from players – a threat, a smile, a pat on the back. Often one party would play 'good cop' and the other would play 'bad cop' when sensegiving to the players at half-time. The situation was as follows:

*"The manager grabs me and says -- I'm going to be bad cop and you are going to have to be good cop. I'm going to tell them I'm p*ssed off; I'm going to let all hell break loose. So you're going to have to pick them up. My reply was yep that's fine."*

*"I was listening as hard as I could, so I wasn't getting as emotionally involved. I've got to pick them up but I can't disagree with any of the (the manager's) points. So my focus was on what the manager was saying, so that when I am positive, I don't take away from the focus and the point that she's made. The worst thing I can do is contradict the manager, and it would hurt the team just giving them a b*llocking."*

Justine (Interview 3)

In Chapter 5, managers had shared that they wanted the team in a good emotional state when going back out for the second half. This quote shows that the assistant manager (at the time), Justine, had to listen carefully to counteract the effect of the bad cop intervention. This meant not diluting the manager's messages for improvement, but leaving the players in a positive frame of mind to turn things round. The external promotee usually had an assistant that followed them to the new job role, while the internal appointee had to look for someone that they could trust. Sometimes this meant a football friend or maybe a family member.

"My cousin is my assistant manager – our families played for County FC for generations. We speak daily it's a standing joke now. My little girl when she hears the telephone, she is only two, will say it's Scott. We are forever talking because it is necessary. There is no day when something does not need sorting out."

Smudger (Interview 12)

Manager participants illustrated that they chose people from their football friends' network for several reasons. The first was the shared friendship growing up and experiencing academy footballing together. Typically, they had negotiated their way through the 'old school' managers and their autocratic and abusive style of player management.

“That is where Rhodri comes in. He's a very close friend of mine, we've got the same kind of views, the same sort of morals and ethics around football. Um when H FC said they wanted to offer me the job -- Rhodri didn't have that kind of management experience. I wanted to do the job with him (1) because I know I can trust him and he would do the same kind of job as me, (2) it does take the pressure off in terms of roles and responsibilities of being a nonleague manager.”

Blare (Interview 7)

Blare's quote highlights that there may be a few reasons behind an assistant manager's recruitment. The first mentioned is friendship; the second, that they share the same morals and ethics around football. This means that both are likely to act in accordance with each other as a team, driven by their morals and ethics (values). These relationships already have a depth of trust, in that if the manager shares work with the assistant manager, he knows the assistant manager will do the job to the same standard. The last point made by Blare is that it helps with his role and responsibilities as manager. Being a non-league manager means dovetailing a part-time manager role with a full-time job role e.g. taxi driver, lecturer, recruiter, and with family life.

The managers shared that they tended to be better at certain parts of the management role than others. They highlighted that they had been made aware of these different aspects when academy players. Some managers were more accomplished as football tacticians, i.e. they could work out what was happening on the pitch, then come up with a plan to overcome these tactics. The micropolitical act was to split the job role so that both the manager and assistant manager were able to gain personal credibility from their performance in their roles.

“Blare leads on the more tactical side of things; I'd probably lead or manage player relationships. This is because I haven't come out from the playing side not that long ago.”

"I think this is where they [Blare] and I get on quite well. Blare is very methodical and the way he deals with things -- he's very tactical. I will be the aggressor in the half-time team talk. So if there was any steam to be let off at half time, the majority of times it would come from me, then Blare would say 'this is how we are going to sort it'."

Rhodri (Interview 8)

In this quote, Rhodri shows that he is aware that he has just stopped playing and is better at getting an emotional reaction from the players. By letting off steam – this could be getting angry, showing frustration, maybe kicking a water bottle – the team know that he isn't happy with what is going on. Meanwhile, the more rational mind of Blare is thinking tactically as to how the team changes formation. Sometimes, this is called playing 'good cop, bad cop'. The bad cop creates fight or flight emotions, then the good cop comes in and re-establishes calm, so that the players will listen to the new set of instructions.

7.2.3 PS 3 – Recruiting Pre-Socialised Players

The participants highlighted that, most of the time, a new manager will take charge when a team is underperforming. This means that the squad that is inherited usually must be changed, as they are not getting results. The managers seek to sign players from whom they know what to expect, i.e. a known quantity. Rather than working with a squad of 18-22 players who they did not know, the managers had first-hand experience of how these players would perform under competitive conditions. This means not only that the players are predictable in technical terms, but more importantly in terms of attitudes, emotional resilience and behaviours when experiencing adverse situations in a game. In effect, the managers were recruiting pre-socialised or pre-approved players. Sometimes, managers appointed a captain from their previous team, which helped them by providing them with an ally in the organisational hierarchy. The appointment of an ally, in the form of their ex-captain, has two effects. The first is the recruitment of a leader who can bring new energy and leadership skills, motivate players, instil discipline, or communicate in a direct manner. The second is a captain whose impact on a team has been tried and tested through previous experience.

The example below is from a team who are at the bottom of the league and have low confidence. This is a talented team who have had a very poor start to the season, their league position is puzzling.

“We looked for players at City FC (previous club). The centre half and made him captain straight away. So the guy we brought in was a real leader -- we tried to change the dynamics of the group. He's a great communicator, takes no nonsense, good on discipline. If he is now the leader of that group, the group dynamics is shifting, we're starting to change it/shifting into a real positive environment,”

Blare (Interview 7)

In this particular quotation, Blare knows from his past relationship with the centre half that he is a leader who can galvanise a side that is struggling. His communication skills are strong, so he can get key messages from the manager across to the players. Moreover, this player takes no nonsense – so if players are moaning, maybe feeling sorry for themselves, he will help them to adopt a more positive mindset. Through prior knowledge, the manager is quite certain of this player’s impact. This is always assuming that he continues to act in character, of course. The captain, in particular, has an important role, because they act as a communications conduit between the manager and the players. In the quote below, a manager reflects on the role of a captain.

“We had a bad result last week. I separated from the normal group. I’m asking the senior players ‘how are people feeling?’ I think you need that go-between to keep on top of things. I don’t like to run things like a headmaster.”

Claude (Interview 43)

Whilst transferring in a captain was useful move, managers shared that they were looking for the impact that players could make in a game.

“Gabriel, I used to play with at a few clubs. Again he is one of those kids that I have looked after. He’s a quality boy, and we got the deal over the line to sign

him. I said 'look, I need you to start Tuesday'. In that game we won three – two Gabriel scored one and assisted one on his debut"

Petr (Interview 10)

This quote highlights that Petr knows the sort of impact that Gabriel is likely to have on a game. In the first game, Gabriel makes a large impact by being involved in two goals.

It was found that players are loyal to managers and not football clubs. With managers likely to move up leagues as their career progresses, a player may well be able to move with the manager, gaining a promotion to a higher league.

The MPA that accompanied recruiting pre-socialised players was selling a vision to the players. Participants discussed how they tried to lure some of their best players from previous clubs. This could be selling the vision of future glories, and the idea some players were important or vital to building a successful team.

"We got the players to come over from Athletic FC the same way the chairman and secretary got us (manager and assistant manager) to go to Rovers FC in the first place. Which was that enthusiasm that they wanted the club to go on and be successful to do things. You can see what they had achieved in such a short period"

Christian (Interview 24)

The managers often painted an enthusiastic picture of a club that was going places, i.e. destined to achieve a promotion or win a cup competition. The managers knew from their previous working relationships with players which ones were ambitious and would be keen to be part of the new football team. Sometimes managers shared that they appealed to a player's ego, i.e. their sense of pride in being a good player. In the example below, an ex-professional is playing at level 8 and is approached by a manager trying to convince him to play at level 7 as a striker.

"Roberto, the manager at the time, he said 'look we've been watching you, keeping an eye. We still think you can do a job at a higher level'. When I went

*to United FC (not saying I didn't take it seriously at Town FC) then we won the
xxxx League – you've got to take your football serious again"*

Japp (Interview 11)

The managers shared that the key was to get the players to move as quickly as possible. The participants who were external appointees discussed getting people in who they knew and trusted. The managers knew what they were getting with the players they signed previously at another club. The managers explained that they knew the players' temperaments generally, their technical talents, and their social skills. They knew whether they could rally colleagues when the team needed to fight back in a game. Once again, these were players who had been pre-approved. In a context of high uncertainty and high competition, improving the predictability of their relationships was high on the managers' agendas. More often than not, these players were also football friends from the manager's network, as well as being good players.

7.3 Increasing Influence in Daily Operations

Having built up an increasing influence within the organisation structure, participants discussed how they increased influence in daily operations. The managers highlighted that they were in charge of setting up the football organisation culture (FOC). The FOC, for most managers, was about the values of teamworking, working towards common team objectives, asking for feedback, and reacting to the feedback positively, i.e. working harder, practicing winning second balls and distributing the ball well. Whilst a manager wants a performance from the team, they want a team that works together where the players obey the manager's instructions. The managers are trying to create positive relationships in the team – social acceptance – and also set up an FOC that supports team performance. This means setting performance and behavioural standards that are reasonable, and enforcing them in a way that the players can buy into – the rules are applied to everybody equally. Probably most of all, it is important to be consistent in their treatment, "digging someone out" for a poor performance whether they are the joint manager or any other player.

7.2.1 PS 4 – Establishing Authority

When taking over, the managers highlighted that they wanted to establish authority over the players in the squad. This could be done by getting players to buy into the mission to avoid relegation, or to

push on for promotion. However, gaining authority over the players was sometimes made harder as some managers were actually appointed to dual roles. A player who accepted a player manager role was under pressure to perform in both roles. In order to play, the player-manager had to look after themselves physically and be performing better than the other squad members. The difficult part appeared to be distancing themselves enough from the players to command the players' respect.

"The most important part was when I was playing, I was performing. I was scoring goals, but if you were not then the players are not going to buy into you. So you can imagine telling players to do things and you can't do yourself."

Jamil (Interview 6)

Some managers said that they gave up the player-manager role because keeping themselves fit, building up a network of contacts in their respective leagues, and doing the manager role was not achievable. The role of player-manager adds to the complexity of socialisation – when is the manager just a player, and when is the manager just the manager? The dual role was something that applicants (for the player-manager job role) were usually advised against accepting, due to the heavy workload. Prior to taking up a post, many managers would seek out guidance from their football friends and ex-colleagues.

The majority of participants highlighted that they increased their influence in the organisation structure. Having brought allies into key positions, e.g. as assistant manager and key players, the managers were keen to establish their authority with the players in daily operations. The first opportunity to meet players was within the first week of taking on the new role. The external appointees knew that creating positive first impressions was key to starting successful relationships. However, those who were already embedded had a different perspective – they had seen performances first hand and had a more nuanced view of what needed changing.

"We phoned every player and introduced ourselves -- everyone there for a team meeting at 7 pm - and we'll be training at the club straight after."

"I said to the boys we have 31 games in there we don't have a game to spare. Not one game we can spare here, we need all the points."

Blare (Interview 7)

*"Try and encourage our players, not a b*lllocking every time things go wrong. Getting them to question themselves within the constraints of the structure of the team."*

Paulo (Interview 18)

The manager and assistant manager here are setting the standards of behaviour and professionalism they expect, such as the value of being respectful, demonstrated by shaking everyone's hand. The emphasis is on action, setting the target of avoiding relegation (maintaining league status), and short and sharp explanation. Participants shared that establishing their influence in daily operations related to two main areas. The first was exerting authority over players' behaviour and the second was setting the standards of performance that were expected. This included technical aspects and the attitude and emotions of the players during a game. The managers modelled the behaviours, values and work practices they expected of their players as line manager.

Participants sought to reinforce the football hierarchy by getting the players to show due deference, e.g. listening to them when they had something to say. The majority of managers had players call them 'gaffer' or 'boss' as a mark of formalising their relationship with the players. However, due to the social nature of football, some players could stray into informal language, for example calling a manager 'mate'. Some managers who wanted to preserve their authority used humour to get their point across that this was an inappropriate title. In this instance, a player is told that he is important to the manager but that he sometimes slips into being too familiar.

"I want to build a team around you – I was 'OK that's fabulous, cheers mate, that's what I want to hear'. And I went to get up...and he said 'Sit down. Would I come round your house for a cup of tea?' And I went 'no'. 'Would I invite you round my house for a cup of tea?' I said 'no'.

‘So are we mates?’ I went ‘no’. He said, ‘never call me mate again’. He stamps his authority down there and then. I knew”

Japp (Interview 11)

The manager in this instance uses the activity of having a cup of tea at someone’s house as an indication of informality and friendship i.e. being mates. The player sees the humorous side of this, but understands that there is an etiquette issue that he has transgressed. The ‘never call me mate again’ is a stark warning that being called ‘mate’ is unacceptable, while ‘gaffer’ or ‘boss’ is acceptable. The use of ‘mate’ may signal equality, when there is inequality in the football hierarchy. The player is still learning, whilst the manager has learnt and is now in charge of a team with much weightier responsibilities.

Participants shared that a player’s performance level was a key issue that they had to clearly communicate on. The managers told players off if they were having a bad game – this is called ‘digging someone out’ in football. Each player in the team had to know that the manager would jump on a poor performance by giving a critical evaluation at half-time. The example below shows that managers are keen to show the players that, irrespective of whether you are the captain or, in this case, joint player-manager, you need to produce a performance.

“I think if you are a player manager you lead by example; I always did that in terms of my fitness, this that and the other. I trained hard; I played when I was called on the players knew they could rely on me as a player. I never put myself in the team at the expense of someone else”

Jamil (Interview 6)

The player manager here feels that he can only pick himself when he is playing well. This demonstrates that players are picked on merit. This sets an expectation that all players are treated the same. If the players feel that one player is being treated preferentially, they will want to know why.

7.3.2 PS 5 – Surveillance and Monitoring of the Changing Room

Maintaining a positive emotional environment in the changing room is key for the majority of managers. It is part of the manager's remit to keep a distant, but still watchful, eye on the emotional tenor. In this research, it was acknowledged that, due to the highly competitive environment in football, i.e. only 11 players out of a squad of 18 can start a game each week, there were always some players who were likely to be disappointed, angry, or maybe frustrated. Managers shared that sometimes players need to let off steam when they are disappointed at not playing, or that they may disagree with a decision the manager makes. A small minority of managers mentioned the use of WhatsApp groups by players. Some managers thought it was good for players to have a safe space where they can express themselves. These managers had had a mixture of experiences with this technology. On the one hand, some had very positive experiences, where players had used WhatsApp to engage in banter. Banter here is an exchange of remarks in a good-humoured, teasing way. These jokes were often at other players' expense, but generally aided team bonding and camaraderie.

"A lot of camaraderie was coming out of it; the players would turn up to training already in a good mood because of things they had said"

Justine (Interview 3)

Most managers who mentioned WhatsApp were also aware that players needed a space to let off negative emotions. There were examples where players may have engaged in scapegoating the coach for their poor performance. There were mixed findings on how to deal with negative emotions through messaging apps. The majority favoured having senior players i.e. captains (who were part of the chat group) to moderate what is happening within these groups. The use of peer advice, through the captain and other senior players, appeared to have been effective.

The quote below follows a traumatic time when a team lost their manager as they moved to another club. Moreover, the manager took several key players. The result was that two of the playing squad took over as player-managers. This was a temporary arrangement until a full-time appointment could be made. In order to give the players space, the new player-managers withdrew from the social media group. This gave the players a safe space to express themselves.

“Every team has a WhatsApp group – we as management were in it but we have pulled out of it at the start of the season. It’s there for them to say what they want to. Because we have got good characters, if they are out of order (an individual player) they get shut down. If they don’t want to come to us and explain it – then the group will help explain it.”

Ribeiro (Interview 9)

This approach uses the captain and the other senior players in the changing room as role models. On the one hand, managers are happy for players to have freedom to speak. However, managers realised that this would be placing trust in those senior players in the team to explain things to an individual player if they are discontented. It was recognised by managers that this could work very well, but also it could work poorly if they had recruited the wrong players. The last part also indicates that the player has a choice: a) to come and discuss the situation with the manager directly or b) to discuss the situation through social media if they choose.

7.3.3 PS 6 – Demonstrating Intolerance of Behaviours that Undermine Team Unity

One of the key values managers looked for was teamworking; however, some players struggle with tempering their competitive side, which means they are likely to put themselves first. Managers reported from their experience that players who were ego-driven did not perform well in a team environment. Whilst it was recognised that every player wanted to play, some players were at a club for their own personal glory. The first step for a manager was establishing his/her authority through setting the football organisation culture (values, beliefs, behaviours), monitoring, and then acting by removing players who did not contribute to a team ethos. Players comparing wages (‘I am on £150 a week’, ‘I am on £200 a week’) forced the focus onto monetary reward and not necessarily team performance.

Managers highlighted that a very important part of the manager role was to build team unity. Some participants went to great lengths to highlight that they set all player wages in a small range, for example between £250 - £300 per week. This relative parity, they felt, created a stable environment where players were not competing to get the best deal out of the manager i.e. if a new player was recruited on £400 per week, then a current player tried to get their wage increased to £400 from the £300 they were on.

"It doesn't work well when they are there for the money when you have 16 lads are going into battle together every Saturday, Tuesday, and Thursday. If you have one or two individuals who are involved in that, it doesn't click"

Roberto (Interview 15)

Most participants wanted players who could work for the team first, whilst also competing for a place in the starting line-up. There was a wide range of behaviours that managers linked with putting yourself first. The first example given below is a goalkeeper who is self-absorbed (egotistical). In order to protect herself from looking bad as goalkeeper, she would come off injured when the team looked likely to be beaten badly.

"She manages better during the game; she manages to stay on a lot longer. Before a big game she gets nerves – she didn't stay on when we lost 8-4 at K FC. It's like you can tell in advance. When she thinks we are going to get beaten badly, she comes off with an injury every time"

Agnetha (Interview 1)

In this case, if the goalkeeper came off when the score was 2-0, she could claim that she had only conceded two of the goals, which meant that she was only accountable for a small part of the defeat. However, other examples of players' egotistical behaviour have included petulance, when a player threatened the chairperson with tearing up her contract. Managers shared that not being picked for a side did challenge many players.

"Through not being selected. Feeling you are probably the best player in the club – whether you have been suspended, whether you have lost your place in the team. You're asked to sit on the bench, not warming up properly, sulking in the dugout, whispering behind people's back be it to management or players"

Smudger (Interview 12)

Most participants illustrated that answering back to the manager or talking behind their back showed a lack of respect for their authority. The only answer, once you found out who the players

were who were talking behind your back, was to move them on.

“At times a player was disrespectful, so you need a replacement. They don’t leave the club immediately, but they are going, but I need to get a replacement in first before I get rid of them. Sometimes you need to move players around”

Clinton (Interview 34)

Managers discussed that some players were fearful of losing their place. How much they could trust their colleagues is open to debate. Due to the social aspect of football, it was usual that players would get to know the board, which sometimes meant that players went behind the manager’s back to the board to discuss an issue informally. From the moment information was fed back to the manager, the player’s days were numbered – the managers did not tolerate disrespect.

“If a player bypasses a manager – that for me is not a nice person. They should be talking to the manager – so those type of people you really don’t want at the club. They are what you call a bad egg”

Paulo (Interview 18)

Managers shared that they sometimes dropped a player from the team for ‘back chat’. ‘Bad eggs’ were players who were playing just for themselves; sometimes they had big personalities and held court in the changing room. Generally, their attitudes were ‘me first’; they could easily drive a wedge between teammates in the changing room and displayed poor behaviour away from the football club. ‘Good apples’ were the antithesis of bad eggs – these players would show an esprit de corps, a camaraderie, to back up their teammates as they went into battle together each week.

7.4 Creating and Maintaining Personal Credibility

In order to work productively with the wide variety of stakeholder groups and individuals, the manager had to gain social acceptance or social acceptability in their social professional working relationships. The managers highlighted that one of the key tasks was to create, maintain or improve personal credibility in the job role. This meant being able to influence the players with their

technical, tactical knowledge, or their ability to make motivational speeches, or to wheel and deal to bring the best players to the club. Moreover, managers shared that they used a range of micro-politics to get the best out of players and the team. This sometimes included setting a self-fulfilling prophecy in motion:

“We were 3-1 down away from home. At half-time I said to the team ‘this lot have drawn 3-3 three times already this season. They will be expecting us to come back hard at them and get a 3-3’. At the bar after my assistant said to his opposite number – ‘I hear you have drawn 3-3 three times already this season’. He said, ‘no we haven’t’. Oops - I had forgotten to tell my assistant what I had done – it wasn’t true but he saw the funny side”

Japp (Interview 11)

Managers were always looking to get players to work hard for them – it may be some praise, recognising some good work on the training pitch, or knowing the player’s birthday and children’s names. All of these acts helped create a bond between the player and a manager. Encouraging a senior player to act as a role models or mentors for a young player gave the senior player a boost of confidence: *“the manager trusts me to help this young player mature by sharing my experiences as a professional”* (Petr, Interview 10).

Participants discussed that having personal credibility was essential, as they tried to influence the various stakeholders. Moreover, personal credibility can be damaged and may lead to a manager being moved on. There were many sources of credibility – for the majority of managers, their football education was their credibility, alongside their experience in football management. managers were proud to tell the researcher who they had played for and what status the club had. Many had been educated at Premier League clubs as academy players and had played in professional teams at levels 1 – 4 before moving into football management. The name of a Premier League club gave an idea of the professionalism, the ethics and the level of technical knowledge these managers had. Who they were trained by was another guide to their credibility – some had trained under former leading international players. As a consequence, they had learnt about training drills and the rationale behind the drills, e.g. five players versus two in a small box – two players try and get the ball. This was aimed at passing accurately, pressing to get the ball back, and long and short passing over 15 yards.

However, credibility was no guarantee of success as a manager. Credibility had to be maintained or improved and could easily be damaged, which could lead to the dissolution of a key relationship.

7.4.1 PS 7 – Establishing Influence with Key Players and the Team

The managers pointed out that, at the team level, they controlled the values, work norms and required behaviours that formed the football operations culture. Politically, they would sell a player a vision of their future at the club – this could be by accentuating the belief that they felt players could continue to make an impact at the level at which the club was playing. Moreover, they showed the players the new facilities – the new clubhouse or the new football ground - which gave an assurance that the new club was a club capable of winning cups and promotions. Massaging a player's ego was usually based around the central role they could play, or the fact that they had been tracking the player over a period of time as a player to watch.

“He said ‘look, we’ve been watching you, keeping an eye. We still think you can do a job at a higher level. When I went to United FC (not saying I didn’t take it seriously at Town FC) then we won the XXXX League – you’ve got to take your football serious again”

Jaap (Interview 11)

The manager here boosts the player's ego by saying that he has been headhunted. The fact that he has been watched shows that he is a desirable product (player). However, the player has to take their football more seriously, i.e. keep their weight down and train properly every week. Sometimes managers would have a conversation that would develop along the following lines *“I want to build a team around you....”* (Jaap, Interview 11). The player in this case is delighted that he features as a central part of the manager's plans.

Participants shared that their relationship with players is very important – they were keen to act in ways that protected talented players. There were examples in which players were having a wobble, i.e. they were thinking about leaving football. Managers sometimes appointed a buddy to keep them ticking over – until they could find out what was wrong. The best players in the team sometimes supported them at the managers discretion – other times it could be professional coaching support to improve emotional resilience. Sometimes, life events could impact performance. However, performance standards are set for a reason, and participants pointed to the fact that players were very vigilant to see if anyone was getting preferential treatment.

“...my co-manager was having a stinker. But I knew the players needed to hear this, so I dug him out and I was ‘you’ve got to produce, or you’ll have to come off’. He went out and performed better, and we got a result”

Jamil (manager)

Managers shared that it was vital that players thought they were all being treated the same. For example, when telling a player off for having a bad game – even if this person is the co-manager and has a position of authority on the football side (assistant manager level), as a player they have to play well. Otherwise, they need to make way for another player who is playing well. Managers who were player-managers were under a lot of pressure in this respect.

Participants shared that the manager’s job was to get a positive reaction from a player when things were not going well. This ostensibly meant that the manager had to know the habits of the individual players – this meant not only their technical skills, but their emotional resilience, their mentality (attitudes) and their personality. For example, was a particular player likely to be affected by a confidence issue like low self-esteem, or did they have experience of coming through difficult times in football? Managers highlighted a range of examples. One of the key interventions a manager could make was the half-time team talk. Emotional management for the majority of managers is a key factor:

“There are situations when you are doing well when you want the managers to keep telling you that. You want them to keep building you up, you are doing this well, you are doing that well. This gives players confidence – and you think he believes in me.”

Andrea (Interview 23)

Managers discussed how they knew which player would need an arm round the shoulder, and some considered feedback to be keeping the player’s emotional energy topped up. However, the managers disclosed that, while confidence was where they wanted a player operating from emotionally, with too much confidence the player’s ego may take over.

“There are players you think if you give them too much (confidence) that’s when they relax. That’s when they think I am here, I’ve made it. That’s the worst thing, you can see it a mile off. You are being cruel to be kind, you don’t want to give them too much, and then you need to give some kick up the backside – you are not at it today!”

Andrea (Interview 23)

This quote is in stark contrast to the one above. If a player goes onto the pitch thinking all they have to do is turn up to beat the opposition, they may be in for a rude awakening. Then, as stated by the manager above, you have to pull the player out of the relaxed emotional state and engender a state of mild anxiety (one in which they are ready to compete). Influencing key players, whether they are technically gifted or mentally strong, or trying to maximise a player, comes down to the manager respecting senior professionals. These players were often players who had dropped down the league pyramid as they had become older and their bodies less capable of running. However, these players never lost their football awareness, visual spatial awareness, or kinaesthetic intelligence (muscle memory) – and they have ingrained in their mental map the ways in which patterns of play develop.

*“Royston – people used to say, ‘Royston Klein, where did you play him?’
Wherever he wanted to flipping well play. Literally Royston was such a talent,
if you wanted to be in the back four and play out from there – fine by me”*

Christian (Interview 24)

Managers discussed that, from time to time, they had a player around whom they would change their tactics to fit them into the team, because their impact on a team’s performance was so marked. These are what are called marquee players; they are the Wayne Rooney or Cristiano Ronaldo of the non-league world. Managers shared that they used their expertise when considering what games they played – coming to the end of a career, as mentioned earlier, these ex-professionals (who had played in the EPL down to level 4) would know their body condition and what they were capable of. Some players may well be considered more of a partner, e.g. captain and vice-captain, as stated earlier, and certain elder football professionals had lots of experience. The

MPAs that managers used with players were to develop possible relationships; however, this was not always possible – see figure 7.1 (Group 4 – proactive and reactive MPAs, internal stakeholders).

7.4.2 PS 8 – Helping and Supporting Individual Players

Managers shared, as mentioned in Chapter 5, that there had been a sea change in the approach to football management during their careers. During their progression through their football socialisation, usually the manager formalised their professional socialisation by attending coaching courses. The focus here was on developing a high quality social professional relationship. A high quality social professional relationship here is a relationship built on trust and on being able to predict the habits of the other person, one where disagreements can be accepted.

In order to gain the respect of players, managers discussed how they would encourage players to develop. This development aspect ran across the footballing aspects and involved giving the players feedback that encouraged and did not dishearten. The managers discussed how their job role remit had extended, and that footballers are considered almost like thoroughbred horses. Their psychological health and physiological health are now both part of the manager's mandate, primarily because the individuals could be affected by what was going on in their lives. Footballers are no different from all other human beings who do job roles – relationship breakdowns, family illness and pregnancy were experienced as life events. The stance that the majority of managers took was to offer emotional support and understanding. For example, they would ask the player if they wanted time off to visit a sick relative in hospital or if they wanted to take a vacation to help them move on from the end of a relationship. Managers did use some MPAs to give players support through asking teammates to buddy up and make sure their colleague was coping with the life event. With life events, sometimes managers can help players without knowing it.

“There is a whole other social aspect that you have to take on board now. As a manager I get surprised when people appreciate what you do for them. A player had concert tickets for a concert, and I kicked up a bit of a fuss about it. I said ‘look, you know the day when training is – you could have got a ticket for another day’. In the end he said ‘fine, I won’t go’. That night 2/3 of his mates ended up getting stabbed. He said if it wasn’t for you, I might have been stabbed.”

Davison (Interview 16)

This was a rather fortuitous incident, in that it inadvertently helped a player to avoid an armed conflict. The manager seemed surprised to find out that one of his players was a gang member, and had been for some time. Managers were keen to know about their players – what they were like, how they reacted to being substituted, what their personal circumstances were – and the majority of managers wanted to know if the player was likely to go out and consume alcohol the night before a game.

“Yeah, we don’t mind social, but the social is on a Saturday night. The time to be social is after a five – nil away win, a couple of beers on the way home on the coach”

Paulo (Interview 18)

Managers generally have no issue celebrating a win, but the win comes first and the celebration next. They expect a certain level of commitment from level 8 up to level 5. When it comes to providing support, the managers can either intervene themselves or help to coach a player who is struggling with an attitudinal issue.

On occasion, when a manager could see a player’s potential, they were prepared to take a risk and hire a specialist coach.

"My first point was to give her some coaching strategies. Spoke to a friend of mine at Wanderers FC, then I got a goalkeeping coach in. We had never had one at the club before. They could have clashed quite easily. He is a quiet reserved guy, and she is hot headed and could have eaten him alive. She has become a different player this year."

Agnetha (Interview 1)

What is interesting here is that the manager has taken a risk – this MPA is unseen, in that the keeper does not really understand why they have suddenly given a specialist coach. The manager has had a conversation with a football friend she trusts. The match-up with a reserved person, who will not show their emotions, seems to have calmed the keeper down emotionally, and possibly changed her attitude. The outcome is that the keeper doesn't feign injury when the team are losing – this appeared to be an ego-protection measure. *"When she came off it was 2-0 although we lost 8-0 by the end of the game. So she is owning the part of the game that saw the team 2-0 behind"* (Agnetha, Interview 1).

Managers appear to weigh up the costs and benefits of their intervention with a player on a case-by-case basis. What does the player offer to the team now and in the future? Managers supported players by trying to understand their challenges, as a player (developmental) and as a human being (life events). This could mean putting the player first, e.g. asking if they needed a break or time off, or it could be a departure from club policy by getting a specialist coach in.

7.4.3 PS 9 – Giving Fans Access to the Manager

The managers highlighted, as stated in Chapter 6, that the relationship with the fans was very important. The managers wanted the fans supporting the team and could not afford for the fans to turn against them personally. Thus, managers look to set the expectations for the fans very early in their tenure.

Managers highlighted that being a manager meant, for some, that they still kicked every ball in their heads when a game was played. It was almost as if they could not extinguish their muscle memory, their legs twitched or they went up for an imaginary header. Managers discussed the passion that fans had for their team, and how they dealt with getting involved with fans. The managers

highlighted that the fans were given access to information through direct contact and indirect contact. The managers' experiences were with smaller clubs at levels 4 – 8 (level 4 is the last level of professional football in England, and 5 – 8 are the first three levels of non-league football). At these levels of football, it is quite normal for the manager to give access to supporters to discuss the game face-to-face. However, there is also information being fed through to the fans through the national media and social media. One of the hardest things a manager dealt with was to try to reflect on the game only minutes after the final whistle. The emotions could be quite raw after a late defeat or, at the other end of the scale, ecstatic if the team had just won.

"You get stick from the crowd; you made a mistake! People are very quick to jump on mistakes. If you make 10 right decisions no one talks about it. So, as a manager you have a lot of balls to do that. It is not easy to say I made a mistake – but we won the game."

Paulo (Interview 18)

Managers were acutely aware that almost every football fan thought they could be a manager. Psychologically, being a manager is almost a thankless task – you are expected to win games, make the right decisions and not make mistakes, all whilst the opposition is playing their hardest to upset your plans during the 90 minutes. Only the manager truly knows the total picture of the team at any one time.

"I think fans only see what goes on a football field. They read what the press is like they don't know the whole picture. But you have some fans who don't know the game of football and they are there to let off steam."

Davison (Interview 18)

Participants highlighted that it was a difficult balance to maintain – giving the fans some inside information and making them feel involved with the club. This micropolitical act could fail spectacularly, as shown below, when the fans communicated their unhappiness at the team performances:

“I went on to Facebook after every game – the club hadn’t been very good at making the fans feel part of it. What I did was give them an honest account of the game – they might not agree with it. Win, lose or draw, after every game I wrote something. I learnt pretty quick not to look at the comments. Because that got nasty as we weren’t winning”

Darko (Interview 31)

Fans, managers discussed, felt psychologically as though they were the owners of the club – it was their community; they had been a fan for many years. This may mean, to most fans, that managers were temporarily in charge, and didn’t feel the emotional losses as much as they did. Some managers felt they needed to come away from the heat of battle just after a game, and would need 24 hours to work out what had gone on. They wanted to step away from their emotions, which were impeding their ability to make sense of the match performance.

For this reason, some waited 24 hours, and others used an experienced ex-professional footballer as an intermediary to talk to the fans.

“You are coming out the dressing room. You know what fans are like, they pay their money, they can say what they want. But I think you need someone to be a little articulate, and Davie was very passionate. He’s Welsh, there will be a lot of expletives going on.”

Andrea (Interview 23)

This micropolitical act shows that some managers were emotionally intelligent in understanding their own reactions post-match and that maintaining positive relationships with the club’s fans was vital. Quite simply, they needed the fans to cheer on the team, and themselves as leaders of the team. The advantage of this micropolitical act was that it removed the manager when they were likely to get into a heated and potentially hostile debate with fans. This meant that the manager could take their time to think about what they wanted to say. The liaison person, who knew football from their days as the ex-professional, knew what could be discussed and what could not be discussed. However, other managers in smaller clubs did have conversations with fans. Since all people involved in the game are fans, including the chairperson, this means that roles can become

confused, particularly as the chairperson was likely to be playing at least several roles at any one time or more, for example: football fan, owner of the club, chief executive, and businessperson.

The other route for information to get out into the public domain was through the national media. Managers shared that getting the journalist(s) on your side was a key activity. Matches at level 10 men's football and above are covered in the non-league newspaper (NLN), which reports each week on the non-league football scene. It was appreciated that the press could not be trusted, generally, but if the relationship between the press and manager was managed carefully, then both could come out of the relationship with some benefits.

"Win, lose or draw I was being as positive as possible – positive with the media (journalists) and positive with local press. That's the only way you can deal with it – if you are negative, you get flak, if you are positive and do your job (you stand a chance). We used to get interviewed two or three times a week after games as well. Pre-match, post-match, you have to be as positive as you can and tell them as much as you wanted to tell them. There are certain things you couldn't disclose."

Alessandro (Interview 26)

Managers discussed how they were constantly under public scrutiny by many publics, both internal and external. However, in order to generate competitive advantage, there were certain types of information that a manager should not be disclosing. All managers agreed that contractual information, particularly players' wages, were not discussed in an open forum. That was the prerogative of the board and the manager only.

"Little things like discipline when a player used to step out of line. He used to get dropped from the team and he used to be the fans' favourite. You couldn't say what you disciplined about or what the problem is. Obviously, pre-season and during the season – supporter groups and press wanted to know about the players we were looking to sign. You had to protect yourself a bit with information like that in general stuff."

Alessandro (Interview 26)

However, at the start of a season, fans were looking to see which new players a manager would bring in. This was a difficult area again, as the manager did not want to alert other teams to their potential targets. Moreover, until the ink had dried on the contract, the club and manager were not sure that they had acquired the services of a player. Thus, the manager above says that they have to be careful. Other information that managers tended to keep out of the public limelight related to disciplinary issues and injuries. Disciplinary information would give other managers an insight that a player may be unsettled, and they could steal them away. The injury information may let an opposing manager predict his opponent's line up for a game.

"I enjoyed radio media and TV. Not everyone is media friendly, I get that. Again, you try and be as honest as possible, you can't be 100% honest with the press. You can't, and they are not going to be with you."

"I had some really good people in the game. Well, coaches, managers to draw on I could speak to them. Their advice was always to be honest as possible, there is always an agenda. If you build a relationship with one or two who write about the club regularly that makes sense. That person you would get a better response from them. They could call me at any time, and I will talk about this that and the other. You keep back from them transfers and confidential things, you could talk to them about what you are trying to achieve on the field."

Jamil (Interview 6)

Managers shared that, whilst the national media had a job to do, for most of them it was better to have them on your side than against you. This meant using the press to get positive information out into the national and local journalists about what they were trying to establish at the club. Participants noted that information-sharing and disclosure was a key part of their role, although it was not really acknowledged. This meant being aware of their boundaries i.e. what they could say and to whom.

7.4.4 PS 10 – Information Sharing and Non-Disclosure

Managers highlighted that they had to be careful in a very public arena to keep certain information away from the public domain. Their environment, as mentioned earlier in the chapter, is highly

competitive, so protecting football operations information was vital to success. The managers were also aware that they were situated in a very social sporting environment where, in the high levels of non-league, there was a large social aspect. This means that the board, players, and fans could be mixing over a drink and discussing their favourite topic – football in general, and today's game. This meant that, potentially, information could move from the formal organisation world into the informal organisation world.

Participants highlighted that information management was key in their job role, and that being at the centre of football operations meant that they were custodians of many pieces of information. This meant that, on the football side of the business, they were aware of the football philosophy and tactics the team used, the recruitment targets they had in mind moving forward and the current level of players' performance. Managers were the strategic operations managers in the club; moreover, they also were likely to know the quality of the players' relationships with each other in the team, those players that had 'team first' and 'me first' attitudes. From the business side, they were likely to know the player wage budget for the year and the contract details or agreed wages for each player. Moreover, should the club be in breach of any regulations, then the managers were informed as a matter of course, as any sanction would generally impact on the manager and the team, e.g. disciplinary issues and registration issues. managers appeared to be an information hub within the football club.

Table 7A. PS10 Managers Sharing Information and Non-Disclosure

1. Stakeholder Group	2. Internal or External	3. Interactions Daily/Week/Ad hoc	4. Interactions with FM (sharing)	5. Would not share information about (Non-disclosure)
Board	Internal	Daily	1. Financial and player resources 2. Match performance 3. Team selection	1. Game tactics 2. Players disciplinary issues 3. Team selection
Players	Internal	Weekly	1. Football philosophy and tactics 2. Match performance 3. Team selection	1. Other player wages 2. Player recruitment 3. Club budget for year
Fans	External	Weekly	1. Financial and player resources 2. Match performance 3. Team selection	1. Player wages 2. Player recruitment and injuries 3. Club budget for year 4. Player disciplinary
Journalists	External	Weekly	1. Report on unexpected stories 2. Player performance	1. Player wages 2. Player recruitment and injuries 3. Club budget for year 4. Player disciplinary
Football Agents	External	Weekly	1. Earn a commission from their players moving on to another club 2. Getting more players into the FMs club	1. Player wages 2. Player recruitment and injuries 3. Club budget for year 4. Player disciplinary
The English Football Association (Regulator)	External	Ad hoc	1. A player is not registered on time and plays in a game 2. Imposition of disciplinary procedures 3. Ground improvements not carried out in time	** Normally the English Football Association would notify the club if there was breach of a regulation.

The subject of the information varies according to the role of the stakeholder and the relationship to the manager job role. For example, it is reasonable to expect that the manager discusses the financial resources available to fund new players with the board. Moreover, as part of their job role of improving playing success i.e. winning matches, the manager discusses match performances.

However, there appeared to be lines of demarcation. Managers shared that there is certain information that they would expect to be between the manager and players. The managers expected the board to finance the team, but as the board had no experience of playing at a professional level, the managers saw themselves as specialists in their area. Managers generally felt that it was appropriate within their job role, to develop a competitive team, that the football operations information e.g. game tactics, disciplinary issues, and team selection were shared with the players (and assistant manager). Moreover, whilst the manager was legitimately authorised to discuss intelligence gathered on other teams in terms of match tactics, football philosophy and team selection, this was information that conferred a competitive advantage. Consequently, when fans

asked about football operations and about match performance, they were given a very broad general overview. Whether the manager was pleased with the performance, what was their personal reaction, and had the team performed better or worse than expected. The impact that the fans may have, but no sensitive information is divulged face to face. However, the managers were as one voice that player wages were the prerogative of the club and of the individual player, the club budget for the year was between them and the club, and player recruitment was the manager's personal information.

However, a minority of managers mentioned instances where board members started to encroach on their job role. The trigger appeared to be the team performing below expectations, and disagreements invariably appeared to emanate from differences in footballing strategy. As results worsened, pressure was applied by board members phoning up and asking, for example, what the team was for tomorrow's game. This tended to lead to scenarios like the following:

"He wasn't the person that I thought he was. In terms of stories that I had heard that he tries to pick the team. I've never seen that with Nemanja, I don't know what you are talking about. I've sat with the chairman in the stand, we've had a laugh, we've had a drink in the bar, a cup of tea in the boardroom as a player. Then it got to a point where he would phone me on a Friday night, 'what's the squad? Name the squad – he shouldn't be in there; he shouldn't be in there'."

Japp (Interview 11)

Managers highlighted that this sort of encroachment could be solved one of two ways. The manager could explain to the board member that a particular player did not fit in with what they were trying to do (meaning their football style). Alternatively, they could modify their strategy to appease the board member. In this particular quote, perhaps the new manager has misjudged the board member, or perhaps the encroachment was prompted by the urgency to gain promotion, having come very close the previous season. Sometimes managers pointed out that this was a situation where they had to be brave, knowing that the board member had the power to hire another manager.

Managers also highlighted that there was considerable information they could share with players – football philosophy, intelligence collected on opponents, and tactics for matches. However,

managers felt that they were entrusted by the board to not disclose the wage budget for the year or other players' wages and potential recruitment targets. The wage budget was felt to be between the board and manager and disclosing the potential targets may well start players thinking about their position in the team.

"There's one thing I would never discuss with fans and that is the money. The money stays between me and the player and me and the club. Money unfortunately is the one thing that gets bandied around at these levels. Nine times out of 10 if a player tells you he is on £50 per week, he's probably on £20 per week."

Davison (Interview 16)

However, sometimes managers had to move a player on for other reasons that the board member would be unaware of, e.g. poor attitude or behaviour that erodes the team ethos. Managers highlighted that sometimes a player was deemed a rotten egg, as covered earlier in the chapter (PS6 above – Demonstrating intolerance of behaviours that undermine team unity).

"Sometimes players can be disrespectful to me – backchats about me to other players. You hear things that they have said from another player. You don't want players in teams going behind your back, so you need a replacement. They don't leave the club immediately, but they are going, but I need to get a replacement in first before I get rid of them. Sometimes you need to move players around."

Clinton (Interview 34)

Managers did highlight that their position meant that fans were very keen to know what was going on with their club. Here, fan means a vested fan – a fan who has been associated with the club through successes and losses over several years and who is emotionally involved with the club.

“So, your interaction with the board and chairman is different to when you interact with fans. With fans you are normally managing expectations and you're not giving away too much -- because they want to look to dip in too much. They want to ask about players, formations and tactics that kind of stuff.”

Blare (Interview 7)

Managers expressed the view above in unison, as they had often been involved in football for 20-25 years before becoming a manager. However, fans always thought they could do better. Fans often only saw what was on view in the last match performance and, accordingly, managers pointed out that they did not have a full picture of what was going on.

However, sometimes managers were not given a choice – they were instructed to not disclose some information that may put the board in a poor light. These situations were rare but did occur occasionally. For example, the administration of a transfer was not processed on time, or work for the upgrade of a stadium was not finished in time. In the first instance, a manager was asked not to tell the team that they were likely to receive a penalty deduction of three points. It was felt by the board that the players who were in a tight race for promotion may be affected psychologically. This did put the manager in a difficult situation:

“We got promoted in second place on 91 points and we were deducted three points three quarters of the way through the season. Now I actually knew about that before Christmas; the board came up to me and said ‘I think the FA are going to deduct us 3 points’. They charged the club with fielding an ineligible player. So, from then until March, I knew it.”

Blare (Interview 7)

Managers pointed out that having control over information flow was vital. However, a minority of managers shared experiences in which they had been misled (lied to) by the board, or given assurances that financial resources would be invested. This lured some managers into deciding to take up the manager job role that was offered by the club. Also, they were aware that engaging with journalists was important, as this was an important source of fan information. The fans, as such, only

had a fraction of the information when deciding if a manager was doing a good job.

"I enjoyed radio media and TV. Not everyone is media friendly, I get that. Again, you try and be as honest as possible, you can't be 100% honest with the press. You can't, and they are not going to be with you."

Jamil (Interview 6)

This quote shows that managers are mindful that generally journalists have an agenda to sell news stories. They are looking for a headline that may make the mundane more exciting; thus, managers try to manage the narrative that is covered in the press. If they find that one source in the media (a particular journalist) gives a better version of what they are saying, then the manager may decide to reward that individual with greater access.

7.5 Chapter Summary and Key Points

This chapter builds on the work of Goffman (1959; 1961) who analysed dramatologically how stakeholders act out their parts in order to satisfy social expectations of others. Bourdieu (2004) also put forward that the social norms of a sector dictate how a newcomer may behave in a job role. **This chapter adds to the socialisation literature by showing that the newcomer's understanding of the industry habitus may help to explain the motivation behind the political strategies and actions managers use. Goffman (1959; 1961) did not appear to consider the relative power relations between stakeholders,** i.e. how the need to be seen as socially acceptable influences the strategies and actions taken – the newcomer is not unfettered by the social network they enter. In this study it was found that socialisation is a competitive process wherein the newcomer and stakeholder vie to socialise each other.

This chapter underlines that new managers have learnt to be politically astute during an extended vocational socialisation, through personal experience and/or observation. The chapter shows how new managers understand their environment through reading the political landscape, e.g. conflict through the support of different ideals – short-term versus long-term recruitment. **A key issue for the newcomer is to increase and maintain personal credibility with stakeholders - in particular, those with whom they work most closely i.e. the players, the chair and the board.** Personal credibility is an amalgam of performance proficiency and social acceptability, as stated earlier. The

politically astute manager is aware that credibility can increase but also decrease, dependent upon interactions with stakeholder groups. The initial negotiation with the chair shows that some managers will make a relatively poor negotiations in order to win the job role (Roderick, 2006). Through conceding or accommodating, the new manager may become stretched, by taking on a dual role simultaneously. **Alternatively, skilled businesspeople who negotiate in the course of business are more aware of the financial situation of the club. Consequently they may manipulate an applicant into accepting the job role, for example misstating information and making promises that subsequently are not kept, e.g. a new stadium or financial budget commitment.** Mornata and Cassar (2018) found that insiders can give false information to newcomers, and Potrac et al. (2012) and Thompson et al. (2015) highlight that newcomers are not always privy to all the information that informs an appointment, or the central tenets of how to operate in a highly competitive habitus.

The two main objectives in a time-pressured environment are **gaining influence in the organisation structure and increasing influence in daily operations.** This chapter contributes to the socialisation literature and sports coaching literature by demonstrating how new managers are able to read the political landscape, using a variety of political strategies to effect command and control. **The politically astute manager has learnt to negotiate with stakeholders who have the relative power to be considered partner stakeholders.** In order to come to a win-win situation, the manager compromises as far as possible, e.g. providing access to information and narratives with one or two preferred journalists (Yates & Hartley, 2021; Hartley & Manzie, 2020).

The new manager's political astuteness is demonstrated by recruiting allies to key positions of influence in the football operations hierarchy Cushion and Jones (2014). Moreover, recruiting an assistant manager with whom the manager has a long-established relationship, (family member or ex-football colleague) enables the manager to reduce uncertainty whilst increasing the level of trust in the relationship. This also enables the manager and assistant to job scope between them so that both individuals use their knowledge and skills wisely. **Recruiting pre-socialised players (pre-approved) by the manager means that the manager knows these players can adhere to the manager's values, norms and working practices in the new football operations culture.** Daily operations are influenced through engaging with the assistant manager, captain and senior players to help younger players develop, i.e. informal mentoring.

This chapter illustrates a range of political behaviour that underpin **political astuteness, as highlighted by Yates and Hartley (2021), Hartley and Manzie (2020) and Hartley et al. (2015).** These include **building alignment and alliances (collaborative political strategies); reading people and situations (understanding agendas and relative power relations); interpersonal skills (soft skills to**

gain buy-in, and hard skills to handle conflict constructively); and personal skills (self-awareness, ability to listen and empathise, being proactive) (Hartley et al., 2013). To date, the coaching literature has shown examples of hidden education objectives (Cushion and Jones, 2014), showing false collaboration (Potrac et al., 2012) and adopting a collegial approach in a cutthroat environment (Thompson et al., 2015), but it is in need of a framework that shows just how coaches show their political astuteness. The key factor that underpins political astuteness is political judgement – the ability to initiate political moves that deliver certain positive outcomes. This can mean engaging in collaborative-collegial political moves, e.g. empowering allies, or it can mean weakening opponents through conflictive-adversarial political moves, e.g. marginalising a disruptive player.

Chapter 8 – Discussion Chapter

8.0 Chapter Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings of this study in the light of the existing socialisation literature. The chapter will begin by considering the aim and objectives of the research. It will then develop by summarising the key findings to give an overall picture of the experiences that football managers had when transitioning into a new football management role. From this base, the chapter will take each key finding in turn, producing an interpretation by the researcher of the meaning of these findings for socialisation theory and football management practice.

There was one overall research question that guided this study. The aim was to **explore the experiences of football managers socialising into a new football management job role.**

The objectives are to:

1. Critically review and evaluate the existing literature on organisation socialisation, identifying the relevance of this literature to the context of English football management.
2. Explore, using the FMs' experiences, the transition into a new football management job role;
3. Present, in narrative form, a detailed understanding of the development of social relations during the socialisation period;
4. Contribute to the socialisation literature, developing a socialisation model which helps explain the relative power relations within stakeholder management during socialisation.

As stated in Chapter 1 (Introduction), the research questions that were derived from the above research aim and objectives are:

- a. What is the job role of a football manager?
- b. How do football managers transition into the new role?
- c. What socialisation challenges do new football managers experience during transition?
- d. How does the football manager show political astuteness while socialising?

Each question will now be considered in turn. The objective is to highlight how this thesis answers these questions, and how the results compare to existing literature. This is then followed by an interpretation of the results and a description of how this thesis contributes to the literature.

8.1 What is the Job Role of a Football Manager?

The role of a manager centres around training and selecting a team to beat an opposing team. The two main areas of responsibility were found to be preparation for match day (training and development) and talent management (scouting, recruitment, developing and selling players). The key differentiator between men's and women's football managers is the agency to effect organisation change. Socialisation is a process that involves the learning of established values, norms and working practices when an individual is recruited to a job role. In this thesis, it was found that the men's football manager has control over the creation of a new football operations culture and expedient recruitment of players who align with this culture, whilst the women's manager role was limited to talent need identification and, predominantly, focusing on performance evaluation. Culturally, the women's manager had to adopt a custodial set of tactics that remained in alignment with the professional club.

The football management role has expanded in the last 25 years to include budgetary management and stakeholder management. The men's manager held a strategic position in the organisational structure (the UK model of governance), whilst the women's manager held an operational position and was less involved in stakeholder management. This had an impact on the type and number of stakeholders each manager was involved with.

8.1.1 A Comparison with the Existing Football Management Literature

The football management literature shows that the job role is still very much grounded in the ability of a manager to win matches, promotions, titles, and cups (Morrow & Howieson, 2014; 2018; 2022). On the one hand, the manager's role has been augmented by budgetary management and stakeholder management. The role of the manager has also been the subject of significant change in the last 25 years. Kelly (2008; 2017) highlights that the role of the football manager has a basic core - to scout and recruit a squad of players, and to select a team for a match against a particular opponent in a formation. Before the game, they instruct players on tactics to win the game and make appropriate changes during the game, e.g. team talk and changing players. Molan et al. (2016) show that managers have many leadership roles away from the pitch, e.g. co-operation with the board, leading through support staff and influencing through the media, whilst Morrow and Howieson (2014; 2018; 2022) highlight that managers now have to create symbolic capital, by improving performance and winning leagues and cups, as well as economic capital, through developing and selling players or prudent financial management.

This thesis showed that there are four core areas of responsibility: talent management (including recruiting, developing and dismissing players); performance management (training preparation and match day activities); business management (including financial management); and stakeholder management (including political skills to influence and negotiate). From a socialisation perspective, the sectoral differences had an impact on the agency that an individual had to manifest organisational change expediently, e.g. taking charge and changing the football operations culture. In other words, this affected their ability to re-write the values, norms and working practices that the players worked towards, and the ability to recruit players who had already proven they could work productively in this culture.

The sample showed a split between the men's and women's manager experiences. This appeared to be due to the women's managers working at professional clubs which had adopted a more modern European governance model, e.g. a Premier League women's team such as Chelsea or Manchester United, or a Championship women's team such as Nottingham Forest or Blackburn Rovers. The lower-level professional teams and high-level non-league men's teams adopted the traditional UK governance model. This had an impact on the position of the job role within the organisation structure (relative power relations), and the stakeholders the new manager would engage with.

It was found that the men's managers were employed by clubs that have adopted the traditional UK governance model, which means that the manager reports directly into the chair and board. The majority of these clubs were small in comparison to the large city clubs in the Premier League and

Championship. As a consequence did not have the financial resources or need for a sporting director. The women's managers were employed by clubs who had men's teams in the higher echelons, e.g. the Premier League and Championship, who had adopted the newer European model of governance. The impact was that the general manager (sporting director) reported directly to the chair and board on strategic recruitment and was the custodian of the organisation culture (Parnell et al., 2018; 2022; 2023).

This thesis showed that the manager's position within the organisation structure had a direct impact on the job role responsibilities and the relative power relations with different stakeholders. For example, the general manager was in charge of the budgetary management and had an input into the strategic recruitment of players. Strategic recruitment, here, means management with a long-term view to building a healthy squad for the club, over several seasons into the future. There are different perceptions on why a European model might be introduced. Kelly and Harris (2010) highlight long-standing tensions between managers and directors/owners of football clubs, including frustrations from the managers' side that directors/owners do not let the managers do what they do best, i.e. help the team win matches, and sometimes directors/owners get overly involved in the management of a team, encroaching on the manager's role. Symbolic capital in football tends to be manifested by being an ex-player and winning leagues and cups (Morrow & Howieson, 2014; 2018; 2022). The socialisation literature highlights the need for newcomers to be aware of potential encroachment, even if it is under the guise of helping the manager, e.g. parents volunteering (Horvat 2010; Uitto et al., 2021).

LMA Reports (2018-19; 2019-20) highlight a continuing trend of a high number of manager dismissals each season. A manager leaving a club triggers a sequence of events, e.g. the manager's coaches leaving, and players potentially moving to new clubs. This quantity of change does not always guarantee success for the new manager and, in many cases, leads to the relegation of the club (loss of status and income). Parnell et al. (2018; 2022; 2023) highlight that clubs are keen to remain sustainable organisations, with managers being dismissed during a season having the potential to cause instability within the organisation. To counteract this, sports directors tend to be given a remit over strategic player recruitment and the negotiation of contracts with players. However, there appears to have been an unintended consequence, with job role ambiguity in some clubs over who does what (Parnell et al., 2018; 2022; 2023). This then manifests itself when clubs come to negotiate a sale or purchase of a player – who does the buying club talk to, the manager or the sporting director?

8.1.2 Contribution to the Literature

This thesis shows that the governance model adopted impacts on the agency of the manager to influence the creation of a new football operations culture. Moreover, the position within the organisation structure will confer relative power relations, which the newcomer has to be aware of when socialising. The researcher showed that developing a political astuteness and making appropriate political decisions were key to socialisation success. First, the newcomer had to be able to understand the political landscape (Potrac et al., 2012; Hartley & Manzie, 2020; Yates & Hartley, 2021). There have been studies where not understanding the political landscape has led to dismissal or redundancy (Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008; Potrac et al., 2012; Thompson et al., 2015; Thomson & Sparkes, 2020).

Stakeholder management was also a key differentiator between the two sectors (men's and women's football). The women's FM ostensibly dealt with a dual level of socialisation - the workgroup level (Moreland & Levine, 2002; Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008; Traeger et al., 2022), and the organisation level (e.g. the sports director and the chair and board). The men's manager had to deal with a tri-level socialisation (Saks & Ashforth, 1997; Ashforth et al., 2007; Ramarajan & Reid, 2020). This consisted of the workgroup level (as above) and the chairperson and board (organisational level), on a regular basis, and also fans, journalists, regulators, and, potentially, football agents (extra-organisational level). This thesis shows that interaction with the extra-organisational level requires an ability to become a social chameleon, i.e. to adapt political strategies and actions in order to align personal and stakeholder objectives. Leaders (managers) are expected to show political astuteness when dealing with a range of stakeholders (Hartley & Manzie, 2020; Yates & Hartley, 2021).

In this context, performance proficiency is judged on the ability of a manager to uplift team performance within 5-6 weeks. The contribution of this thesis to the socialisation literature shows that the amount of agency a manager has to **effect organisational change was contingent upon three factors**: the **position the job role occupied** within the organisation structure; the **responsibilities of the job role**; and, in addition, the **autonomy** to change the organisation sub-culture i.e. values, norms and working practices, where it was important to be able to recruit and dismiss players almost immediately. This enables the manager to recruit assistant managers and players who are pre-socialised (pre-approved), which truncates the socialisation process. It is assumed that all newcomers work their way up to full membership (Moreland & Levine, 2002); in the case of recruiting pre-approved allies, they start at full membership. This increases the predictability of relationship interactions, thus reducing uncertainty during early socialisation e.g. the encounter stage (Feldman, 1976; Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008; Traeger et al., 2022).

8.2 How do Football Managers Transition into the New Role?

This thesis shows that there are two main routes into a new manager's role - internal promotion and external promotion. An internal promotee usually rises from assistant manager, and the external appointee is usually an experienced manager from another club. **The internal appointee appears to have a more challenging transition. The main issues are the lack of time to consider the opportunity, i.e. little or no anticipatory socialisation stage, and the transition from dealing mainly with workgroup level stakeholders to dealing with organisation and extra-organisational level stakeholders regularly.** The external appointee, as an experienced ex-manager, brings with them experience of dealing with a very powerful set of extra-organisational stakeholders.

Although managers predominantly had experienced an extended period of vocational socialisation (usually over 20 years), this thesis found that they could be ill-prepared for the attention from a wide variety of stakeholders. The socialisation process appears to be simultaneous once the new manager enters the job role, rather than the linear lock-step stage model that has been proposed to date (Buchanan, 1974; Feldman, 1976; Schein, 1978; Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008; Traeger et al., 2022). The newcomer has a very nuanced view of how to deal with the workgroup level as they have many years' experience of the football habitus, i.e. the values, customs and organisational dynamics of a football club. Meanwhile, the internal candidate appears adept at dealing with players and coaches, but they may be ill-prepared to deal with business professionals who negotiate deals for a living, or fans who may have a strong psychological affinity to the club. Understanding the political landscape is very important to a manager's survival.

8.2.1 Comparison with the Socialisation Literature

Socialisation stage models put forward that socialisation is a linear, sequential, lock-step process (Buchanan, 1974; Feldman, 1976; Schein, 1978; Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008; Traeger et al., 2022). This study shows that as well as relatively little or no anticipatory socialisation, the role management stage occurs simultaneously with the accommodation stage. The researcher chose to use Feldman's (1976) socialisation stage model, as this model highlights the key main processes that a newcomer transitions through. What is particularly interesting is the anticipatory socialisation stage, wherein a realistic job preview and an assessment of the congruence of need take place. Both of these processes involve the would-be manager and the club exchanging information. Saks and Gruman

(2018) put forward the proposition that new managers have a high level of expectation. The level is adjusted when they enter the accommodation stage and experience the organisation first hand (Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008; Saks & Gruman, 2018). This may be due to insiders trying to protect their personal interests (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002; Kelchtermans, 2019).

The next stage has a process labelled 'congruence of evaluation', where the line manager and new manager agree on the level of performance attained. However, in socialisation, there are multiple levels of stakeholders interested in influencing the manager's role. This can lead to multiple individual agreements between the new manager and each individual stakeholder group. Feldman's model appears limited to stakeholders internal to the organisation, whereas this thesis also considers the consideration of congruence of evaluation in a very public context, where fans, journalists, and agents also form their assessment of the new manager's performance. To date, socialisation literature has identified what processes take place (Feldman, 1976; Traeger et al., 2022). There is now a move towards investigating **how** socialisation is experienced, with focus on how new managers work out how to behave (Manley et al., 2016; Hartley & Manzie, 2020; Yates & Hartley, 2021).

The external appointee shows a progression built on the traditional socialisation stage models (see figure 8.1, below). This study showed that recruitment was a more formal process, usually over two stages, i.e. a phone sifting process followed by a formal interview with the chair/board. Anticipatory socialisation is where the potential appointee can research the new club, organisational objectives, culture and history prior to interview. At interview, the external candidate tries to establish a realistic job preview through listening to the chair/board's ambitions for the club in the short term. Upon entering the new organisation, the encounter (accommodation) stage is followed by the role management stage. This thesis shows that managers are more likely to experience these stages simultaneously, so the manager's political astuteness may be needed to defuse a range of conflicts.

Figure 8.1. Traditional Stage Model Experienced by External Appointee (Feldman, 1976)

Outside the organisation	B	Inside the organisation	
Anticipatory Socialisation	O	Accommodation	Role Management
Realism	U	Initiation to group(s)	Resolve internal conflict
Congruence	N	Role definition - priorities in role (workgroup and manager)	Resolve external conflict
	D	Initiation to task (s)	
	A	Congruence of evaluation - between line manager and football manager	
	R		
	Y		

Figure 8.2. Socialisation Stages Experienced by External Appointee (Accommodation and Role Management Stages Occur Simultaneously Not Consecutively)

Outside the organisation		Inside the organisation
Anticipatory Socialisation	B	Accommodation
Realism	O	Initiation to group(s)
Congruence	U	Role definition - priorities in role (workgroup and manager)
	N	Initiation to task (s)
	D	Congruence of evaluation - between line manager and football manager
	A	Role Management
	R	Resolve internal conflict
	Y	Resolve external conflict

The impact of the role management stage occurring concurrently is shown by the need to deal with internal conflict from day one. As previously highlighted in Chapter 7, in a highly competitive environment, there are likely to be situations with player selection, with other managers within the club (e.g. for the reserve team), or with players who behave incongruently with the established football habitus (e.g. undermining the manager's authority). Moreover, there may be external conflict; some managers shared that they were offered the job role while they were building a full-time career, e.g. as an engineer. This shows that the manager is attempting to manage some form of work-life balance.

Figure 8.3. Socialisation Stages Experienced by Internal Appointee (Little or No Anticipatory Socialisation Experienced)

Internal promotion - Feldman (1976) Socialisation stages model (adapted)

Inside the organisation - Assistant Manager		Inside the organisation - Manager
Anticipatory socialisation (minimal)	B	Accommodation
A tap on the shoulder	O	Initiation to group(s)
Caretaker position?	U	Role definition - priorities in role (workgroup and manager)
	N	Initiation to task (s)
	D	Congruence of evaluation - between line manager and football manager
	A	Role Management
	R	Resolve internal conflict
	Y	Resolve external conflict

In this study, the internal appointee does not cross an organisation boundary, but an internal job role boundary, via promotion. Effectively, this means that the internal appointee has already proven that

they can bond with the players, coaches and the previous manager (Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008; Traeger et al. 2022).

The internal appointee has already established themselves in the assistant manager's role, which entails a political understanding of the people and personal interests within the team (Hartley & Manzie, 2020; Yates & Hartley, 2021). Politically, the assistant manager already appreciates the relative power relations between the chair and themselves. When the assistant is asked to take charge temporarily for the love of the club (e.g. where the assistant manager may have a strong association as an ex-player, or the club is in their local community), emotionally, it is hard to refuse this opportunity. This may be analogous to the findings of Roderick (2006). Moreover, their appointment is also a chance to enhance their personal credibility by helping an organisation in need (gaining political capital).

Internal appointees have already bonded with the workgroup (players and coaches) and are embedded into the organisation at large, which means that they need to familiarise themselves with the job role (Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008; Traeger et al. 2022). The socialisation literature assumes that there is sufficient time for the FM to become familiar with the FM job role. In the football industry, time pressure is a factor that affects the expected timeframe for an uplift in the team's performance (5-6 weeks generally). This is less time than new British Army recruits take to go through basic orientation training to become a soldier – 8 weeks (Anderson & Cooper, 1996) - and significantly less than the time required to become a volunteer in a charity helping street children – 1 year (Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008). However, what this thesis does reveal is that the new FM may have been the beneficiary of an extended vocational socialisation where they have learnt different aspects of the football habitus (Morrow & Howieson, 2014; 2018; 2022). New managers have been schooled in a habitus that highlights the authority of the manager within the organisation structure. The first team manager's authority has been shown to be very powerful indeed. As Manley et al. (2016) show, developing players, for the most part, learn to be silent and listen to the manager. Edwards and Jones (2022) reinforce this message, highlighting that the coaches (and managers) can use humour to undermine other coaches and players to re-establish the social order. New managers are used to players deferring to their judgements and being drilled intensively in a rigid, regimented environment (Cushion & Jones, 2014).

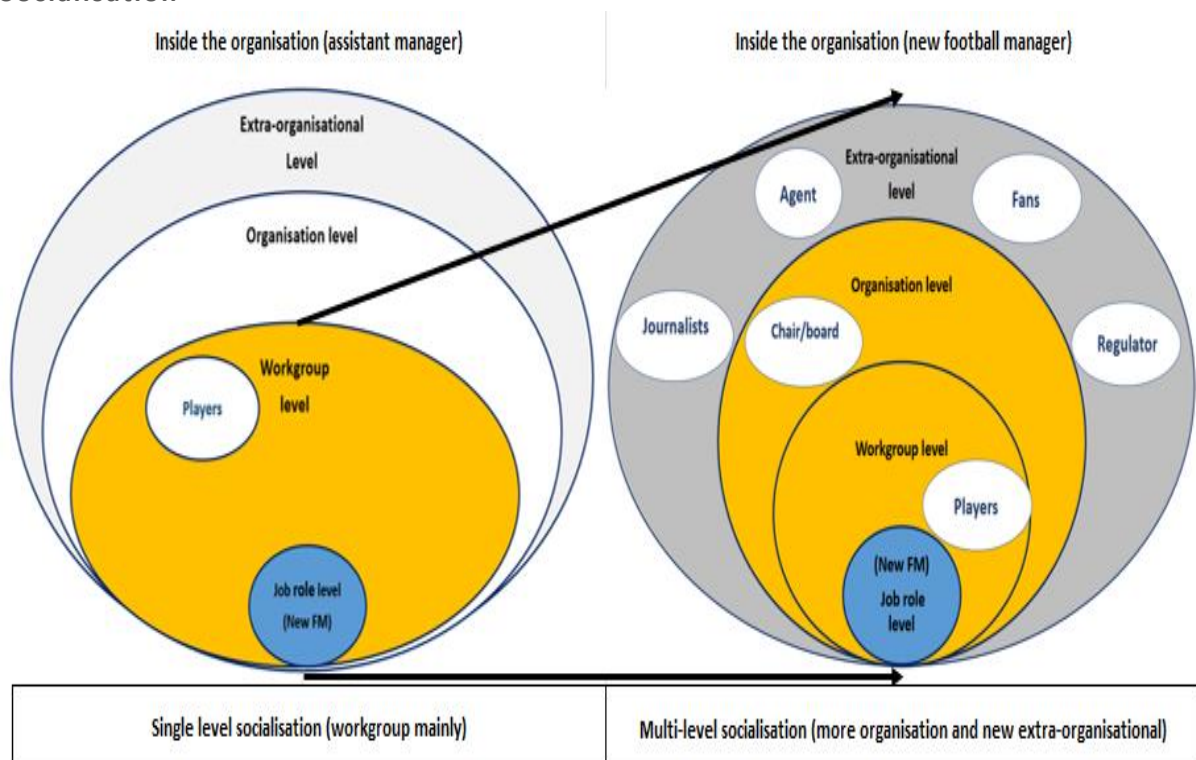
The findings in this thesis showed that the new manager may suddenly encounter stakeholders who have more power over their actions e.g. the chair and board. This required managing upwards, by supporting and aligning oneself with the chair and board. Other relationships showed different degrees of objective congruence and relative power relations, which potentially had an impact on

interactions. This highlighted the need for a politically flexible approach, e.g. learning when to concede on an issue, and when to negotiate with the stakeholder (Hartley & Manzie, 2020; Yates & Hartley 2021). This level of behavioural flexibility was, in some cases, initially unknown to some new managers, whilst other experienced managers showed high levels of emotional intelligence and an ability to understand how their actions may be perceived by other stakeholders (Hartley & Manzie, 2020; Yates & Hartley 2021).

8.2.2 Contribution to the Socialisation Literature

Investigation into the transition into a new manager's role showed that socialisation is a more complex process than has been put forward before. Socialisation is an individual journey, where the new manager may face a movement across a job boundary or organisational boundary. The experience is likely to expose the new manager to multiple levels of stakeholders who attempt to use the stakeholder configuration to their advantage. Whilst managers have traditionally ruled by legitimate authority within football operations, the need to deal with chairs and boards (Kelly & Harris, 2010) and now having their role eroded by sports directors (Parnell et al., 2018, 2022, 2023) and football agents (Kelly & Chatziefstathiou, 2020) shows the need for political dexterity.

Figure 8.4. Internal Appointee Transitioning from Single Level to Multi-Level Socialisation



This study highlights that socialisation is **indeed an individual journey** - in this case, an internal appointment or external appointment. **Both types of appointee usually had extended vocational socialisation over approximately 20 years** (in this context), enabling them to experience first-hand the football habitus. **Internal appointees had little or no anticipatory socialisation**, as they had already bonded with players and coaches (workgroup level) and the organisation at large (organisation level). Whilst the internal appointee has a nuanced view of the people and politics within the organisation, there is a **key part of the socialisation picture missing - the extra-organisational socialisation level. The regulator, customer, talent agent and journalist stakeholders all have an ability to impinge on the newcomer's performance.** In a highly competitive, achievement-oriented, highly visible, time-pressured environment, the extra-organisational stakeholders had the ability to put forward their evaluation of the newcomer's performance. **This feedback was provided weekly and was given face-to-face, anonymously (within a group) or via social media (personally unidentifiable), by fans (proxy for customers) and journalists reporting their findings via narratives.**

Internal candidates had not developed a wide range of socialisation tactics to deal with the constant interaction with multiple levels of stakeholders. Meanwhile, the external appointees, who had limited knowledge of the internal people and politics, had, through experience, developed a range of political strategies and acts that were used to influence the multiple stakeholders engaging with them simultaneously. The external appointees had experience of dealing with how to prioritise, juggle and align, as far as possible, their objectives with different stakeholders. The external appointees had developed political astuteness and made reasonable decisions, ones that would give them an opportunity to remain socially acceptable (personally credible).

8.3 What Socialisation Challenges do New Football Managers Experience During Transition?

The key part of the new Hiplex-D model is the dynamic aspect, which reflects the relative power relations between the newcomer and the wide variety of stakeholders. Moreover, the objective/relative power relations configuration enables the newcomer to identify political strategies and actions that enhance their relationship with each stakeholder. However, as with all relationships, the relationship can improve or potentially come to a breaking point, for example through a difference between team performance and expected performance, or encroachment by the chair and/or others. **A key aspect of survival in post is the ability to read the political landscape and adapt decisions and actions to maintain/improve personal credibility.**

Socialisation as a process was found to be far more complex than had previously been discovered.

“The transition from newcomer to embedded organizational citizen, is an inevitable feature of organizational life. It is often a painful and traumatic experience but why this is so, and how its difficulties can be ameliorated is not well understood.”

(Gilmore and Hardy, 2021, p.1)

Socialisation has been shown by the literature to be a complex process overall, one that is made up of several constituent parts: the socialisation content (Chao et al., 1994; Taormina, 1997; Gunn et al., 2020; McCloughen et al., 2020); socialisation tactics (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979; Jones, 1986; Ortlieb & Ressi, 2022); socialisation stages (Feldman, 1976; Moreland & Levine, 2002; Traeger et al., 2022); and proactive information seeking (Miller & Jablin, 1991; Bauer et al., 2007; Bauer et al., 2021; Jiang et al., 2021). Socialisation as an experience has been represented as a single level of stages, where one follows another sequentially. However, it appears that socialisation is a much more chaotic experience. This thesis shows that, for a manager, it is likely that they will be dealing with both the accommodation and role management stages concurrently. Moreover, they will be under constant pressure from a range of stakeholders. This creates a chaotic, competitive process wherein the new manager socialises the stakeholder and is being socialised. Both Saks and Ashforth (1997) and Ashforth et al. (2007) advocate the position that socialisation is a multi-level process. How many levels of socialisation should be included is open to debate – should only the workgroup and organisation level be included, or should the impact of the extra-organisational stakeholders be included? (Ramarajan & Reid, 2020).

8.3.1 Comparison with the Socialisation Literature

Firstly, this study attests to the model put forward by Saks and Ashforth (1997) - that socialisation is indeed a multi-level process that is likely to include three levels. This study adds to the socialisation and coaching (football management) literature by examining the relationship dynamics between the newcomer and stakeholders. This study has added to the socialisation literature by identifying that it is beneficial to a new manager if he/she is able to read the political landscape (Hartley & Manzie, 2020; Yates & Hartley, 2021). The ability to understand the wide variety of stakeholder objectives, i.e. divergent or convergent, enables the new manager to scope out the job role challenges. This

understanding is foregrounded by the way that new managers adapted their decision-making and consequent actions in response to different stakeholders and their relative power relations. Crow's (2017) research showed that trainee consultants were averse to waking the senior consultant for advice when on an overnight duty. The key fear was that they would incur the displeasure of the senior consultant, which would lead to a relatively poor reference, i.e. one that lacked a firm recommendation to their next employer. Studies by Hanley et al. (2016) and Edwards and Jones (2022) illustrate how players learn to be silent during their academy days, sometimes fearing public ridicule. The habitus of the sector and the hierarchical nature of the professions creates an understanding of relative power relations during socialisation.

The majority of managers showed that they had a keen understanding of the stakeholder objective/relative power relations configurations.

This study predicts that the newcomer will potentially act in certain ways based on the stakeholder objective/relative power relations combination. A new manager is likely to:

- A. **Comply with or concede** when the stakeholder has a **divergent/controller** classification. In this study, the regulator, i.e. the English Football Association, applies the rules and regulations on how a football club operates. If a club has contravened a rule (e.g. fielding a player whose registration has not been completed), the manager may be notified of a penalty. The manager has no choice but to comply with the ruling generally (subject to a case for appeal).
- B. **Negotiate with a stakeholder** who has a **divergent/partner** classification. This study showed that there were potentially several divergent/partners (e.g. journalists wanted to report stories about the club, and football agents wanted to sell players into a club). A new manager could use a particular journalist to strike up a productive relationship in which the journalist may have preferential access to the manager in return for potentially more favourable coverage.
- C. **Decide freely when the stakeholder** has a **divergent/passive** classification. The reasoning is that divergent stakeholder objectives give the newcomer more objectives to think about, thus stretching the newcomer, but the stakeholder has very little influence to gain what they seek. The passive stakeholder has much less influence than the new manager.

- D. **Agree with or concede** to a stakeholder who has a **convergent/controller** classification. A convergent stakeholder has objectives that align with the new manager. This study showed that new managers were aware that they had to support or prove their worth to win the chair's/board's approval.
- E. **Negotiate with a stakeholder** who has a **convergent/partner** classification. The reasoning is that a convergent stakeholder has objectives that align with the newcomer; however, the partner aspect means that they have approximately equal influence. Some senior ex-professional players may be afforded this status by the new manager, as they may serve as an archetype for other players. Accordingly, the manager and senior player (or maybe captain) work together (for example, the senior player may collect information for the manager and pass information back to key individuals).
- F. **Decide freely when** the stakeholder has a **convergent/passive** classification. The reasoning is that a convergent stakeholder has objectives that align with the newcomer, whilst the stakeholder has very little influence to gain what they seek (passive). In particular, young academy players were most likely to be convergent and relatively passive.

This key finding has a twofold implication. A newcomer, by considering the combination of objective and stakeholder classification, is able to assess their ability to negotiate outcomes. This is particularly useful when the newcomer is trying to maintain a social acceptability with as many stakeholder groups as possible. Furthermore, when considering a combination of different stakeholders who inhabit a socialisation level, the newcomer may understand why their decision-making and action choices may be constrained.

The socialisation literature has provided examples of studies where regulatory stakeholders have interacted with new school principals (Caruso, 2013, Thomson & Sparkes, 2020; Johnson et al., 2021). The socialisation tactics used by new principals were supportive of the regulator and new educational policy. Those who had more experience as a principal supplied positive examples of new initiatives providing a successful outcome, whilst those in their first post asked for advice and guidance before approaching the school community (Caruso, 2013). Thomson and Sparkes (2020) highlight colleges adopting Ofsted language to drive the behaviours of heads of department and staff. Political astuteness highlights that managing upwards appears to be the most difficult to execute - in this study, this is represented by the new manager managing the chair/board.

Although there is a perception that new football managers are indeed powerful, this may well only apply to the elite manager, as highlighted in Roderick's (2006) *Labour of love*. As Morrow and Howieson (2014; 2018; 2022) highlight, managers have symbolic capital depending upon how renowned they were as players, and on their history of winning leagues and cups as managers. The non-league manager may well be unknown or less renowned than their Premier League counterparts. However, in lower leagues, the often-part-time appointees, who also have a full-time occupation and limited scientific technology to review match day performances, may still deal with stakeholders who have an interest in the club (Mitchell et al., 1997; Wood et al., 2021).

8.3.2 Contribution to the Literature

In this thesis it is confirmed that some players have more relative power and may be considered partner stakeholders, e.g. the captain and vice-captain. However, in an environment which is highly competitive, managers choose carefully who they empower, through power with strategies. Power with strategies enables a captain to collect and disseminate information on behalf of the manager. The captain or experienced ex-professional can be used as an archetype to inspire other, younger players, to act as a role model. This supports the work of Molan et al. (2016), who highlighted a range of socialisation tactics that managers used when demonstrating leadership off the field. Although a case can be made for accepting Mainardes et al.'s (2012) classification of relative passivity, there could potentially be a case to recognise sub-categories of partnership, e.g. equal partner and junior partner. It is highlighted that the agency of players to show their displeasure with a manager is increased when the results are below expectation. It was noted that players may group together in order to approach the chairperson or board members (individuals who have relatively more power than the manager). This highlights that relationship dynamics are changing in the workplace. If a manager is making poor decisions, and the match results are poor for the quality of the squad or budget spent, stakeholders start asking questions. The stakeholders try to make sense of the events that are happening. If a manager shows poor pedagogic skills, poor emotional intelligence or poor people skills, this may cause players to question the competence of the manager. The understanding of these issues has been highlighted by Hartley and Manzie (2020) and Yates and Hartley (2021) as being part of a politically astute leader's repertoire.

The key contribution here is the introduction of the dynamic aspect of relationships, and empirical evidence that successful new managers do predominantly show good political judgement, adapting their decision-making based on the timing of the interaction as well as recognising the stakeholder configuration.

With players, for example, the new manager does generally have the authority to dismiss a player, discipline them for poor conduct, or marginalise them by demoting them to the substitutes bench (Cushion & Jones, 2014; Edmondson & Cushion, 2022). This authority is analogous to research findings in the education sector, where line managers could overlook someone for a promotion, or indeed give them a poor timetable allocation (Thomson & Sparkes, 2020). What was particularly interesting was that new managers may get things wrong, and, instead of creating personal credibility, actually erode their own personal credibility. Players were keen to find out the pedigree of their manager, which meant looking for coaching sessions that were engaging and enjoyable. Players also looked for experience – without this symbolic capital, managers could indeed struggle to create respect. The football habitus holds symbolic capital based on winning cups and leagues/promotions highly. Morrow and Howieson (2018) provide evidence that managers are often appointed directors on the basis of whether they would be credible in front of players. Being an ex-player and learning by doing, rather than by qualifications, appears to be a base level requirement for credibility. New managers who cannot provide players with clear explanations of what they want in a playing scenario, or those who use a more didactic approach, face the risk of losing the confidence of their players.

Within the multi-level socialisation aspect of the HipleX-D model, politically savvy managers would try to engage players if possible, and to demonstrate competence in management whilst being tough on discipline and team values. In general, team values appeared to be show respect for all club members, the team comes first, listen to the manager, and ask advice and guidance if you need help. Examples showed that some managers lost their temper with a key player in public, which undermined the relationship - in one example, the manager persuaded a friend to accept the captaincy. The manager then gave the volunteer (friend) a dressing down in the changing room – when the person did not want the role in the first place. **This shows that each interaction has the potential to improve the quality of a relationship or decrease the quality of a relationship.**

8.4 How Does the Football Manager Show Political Astuteness While Socialising?

The key findings are that new managers assert their power over the organisation structure in the men's game. Usually it is expected, and indeed ascertained at interview, who the new manager will recruit to help them to turn team performances around. Managers bring in key allies to help to establish a high level of control and authority, appointing them into key positions in the football operations hierarchy. The position of assistant manager is awarded to an individual who usually has a

long-established relationship with the manager, and therefore is someone who is highly likely to have the same values, ethics and work practices, and can be trusted to protect the manager's personal interests.

In the women's game, the manager did not always bring an assistant with them. As a consequence of the chair appointing an assistant separately, there were incidents where the manager and assistant manager had a clash of strategies, e.g. between long-term recruitment strategies to develop a winning team over 2-3 years, or recruiting older players in the short term to make an immediate impact.

The new managers, where possible, would bring in key allies (players) who had worked with them before. This may be a new captain who could lead the team - an individual who was not already enmeshed in the emotional contagion of performance anxiety and depression from a succession of defeats, which caused players, once they had fallen behind, to expect defeat. The captain position can be crucial to motivate, guide, and improve attitudes, behaviours and emotions in the changing room.

The second key strategy was the establishment of the football operations culture, e.g. values, norms and working practices. Once the football operations culture was established, the new manager used their understanding of the football habitus to maintain adherence to the operations culture. The manager used their football network to attract players they knew well – this meant that the individual's habits were predictable, which in turn meant that manager had more predictability when it came to building a team. For example, they knew a player's technical football skills and mental skills, such as their ability to deal with setbacks.

8.4.1 A Comparison to Existing Literature

The socialisation research, particularly within the coaching (manager) area, has shown that managers have traditionally enjoyed a relatively free rein (Cushion & Jones, 2014). Their legitimate authority is recognised in the football habitus, as they are ex-professionals who can potentially bring symbolic capital (Morrow & Howieson, 2014; 2018; 2022). The coaching literature has highlighted that players may be pushed to their limit, and sometimes beyond their limits of endurance, by managers, in order to prove that they have what it takes to be a professional (Cushion & Jones, 2006). Indeed, it would appear that a potential hidden agenda is to maintain the traditional football habitus through symbolic violence (e.g. swearing at players) (Cushion & Jones, 2014) and using humour to re-establish the social order (Edmondson & Cushion, 2022).

Managers shared that, as players, they had indeed experienced the traditional (old school) manager who used swearing, belligerent body language and threats that if a player did not perform then the manager would find someone who could (Cushion & Jones, 2006; 2014; Edmondson & Cushion, 2022). The findings supported the current literature by showing that new managers can marginalise or sell players who threaten their authority (Cushion & Jones, 2006; 2014; Edmondson & Cushion, 2022). Players who talk back to the manager on a regular basis in front of other players seem to break a cardinal rule of silence, as identified by Manley (2018). It was highlighted that players use What's App (a private messaging app) as a place where they can express their opinions, since the manager is usually not a member of the WhatsApp group. Some managers highlighted that players could offload, but trusted senior players to explain how things work. However, managers agreed that they preferred players to come to them in the first instance and ask for feedback on performances rather than circumvent them by talking to the chair. This thesis does highlight that although managers take control of the organisation structure and the football operations culture through appointing key socialisation agents, there have been some changes in pedagogic practice.

These changes may be seen as managers widening their remit, not only bringing cultural capital (previous experience), symbolic capital (winning trophies) and economic capital (managing part of a sustainable business), but also meeting the need to respond to a more sensitive generation of players (Morrow & Howieson, 2014; 2018; 2022). Pedagogically, players expect actionable feedback rather than being told "Who are you to question my authority?" Today's manager is expected to be able to justify their decisions. It does not mean that the manager changes their decision, and the player may still not like what they hear, but they are able to understand some rationale behind what is happening. However, the football habitus – the key social and organisation structures - is still built on total institution, analogous to the military (Cushion & Jones, 2014; Manley, 2018; Edmondson & Cushion, 2022).

Molan et al. (2016) showed that semi-professional managers are involved in wide range of leadership behaviours. This includes setting behavioural goals for players whilst outside the club (e.g. diet, exercise, sleep and rest), co-operation with the board, using support staff and influencing the local and national media. This thesis shows a wide range of political strategies and acts used to engage key stakeholders; in many ways, a new manager must be a social chameleon. Where emotions could be polarised (e.g. euphoria, pleasure, pride, excitement and elation after a win, or shock, denial, disbelief and depression after a loss), managers sometimes used an intermediary to deal with the fans post-game. Emotional intelligence is a key feature of political astuteness (Hartley & Manzie, 2020; Yates & Hartley, 2021), and some managers knew that they were still highly emotional after a game and not thinking rationally. They would appoint an ex-professional who

understood the rules of how to interact with a fan in an objective manner; for example, if a player had a bad game, they would highlight the player's contribution to the season – every player can have an off day.

Another key political strategy was for the manager to align themselves with key stakeholders as far as possible (Hartley & Manzie, 2020; Yates & Hartley, 2021). For example, they could give journalists an insight into the club, guiding them towards the areas they were comfortable to discuss, e.g. a new signing at the beginning of a season. However, the managers were mindful that timing was crucial, as naming a player prior to signing a contract (at levels 6 and above) may alert other clubs to the player's value and availability.

8.4.2 Contribution to the Literature

The findings add to the socialisation literature by highlighting that new managers, in order to survive, need to be able to demonstrate political astuteness. Through an elongated vocational socialisation, new managers had experienced political mistakes made by their own previous football managers. This made them aware that, as new managers, they would set the emotional environment for the team (e.g. supportive, or looking for perfection and showing frustration rather than tolerance of mistakes). They had also experienced how some managers instilled a regime of fear, reinforcing that they had financial backing to bring players in to compete and win promotion. People management is a central skill needed to develop alliances, and if necessary to undermine individuals who are resisting the new manager.

The ability to be a social chameleon enables the new manager to show that they can adapt their political strategies and actions to influence stakeholders positively. The ability to understand (read) the political landscape enables a new manager to act in an emotionally intelligent manner. Strategies to align job role objectives as far as possible show that the newcomer recognises the legitimacy of the stakeholders' interests, the power they have (job role position) and the urgency of their goals (Mitchell et al., 1997; Wood et al., 2021).

The traditional football habitus, based on the authority of the new manager, still gives some managers the ability to place allies in strategic positions within the football operations structure. This underlines the understanding of the role of assistant manager and captain as key conduits that enable reinforcement of the new football operations culture. The enforcement of key values, rules and working norms is done via a nuanced political approach, in which key players are engaged as key parts of the manager's vision (Molan et al., 2016). Stakeholder management is a key activity, wherein

new managers nimbly align job role objectives with stakeholder objectives as far as possible (Handley & Manzie, 2020; Yates & Hartley, 2021). Both performance proficiency and remaining socially acceptable are inextricably linked – the newcomer is competing, juggling and constantly engaged at three levels of socialisation. The political astuteness lens adds to the work of Goffman (1959), which highlights individuals playing different roles for different stakeholders. This study adds to Goffman's work, by identifying the relative power relations that are enabled through the job role position, relative to the accepted industry habitus. Power can be increased through performance proficiency and politically astute decisions that enable stakeholders to benefit; for example, appointing allies to support the reinforcement of key cultural values, and adopting strategies that develop mutually beneficial outcomes.

8.5 Chapter Summary and Key Points

This chapter has highlighted the key findings in answer to the research questions, how the results differ from existing literature and how these findings contribute to the socialisation and coaching literatures.

The key contributions to the literature are that the manager's job role is determined by the level of football club, e.g. social or professional, and the sector differences between men's and women's football. The agency afforded to newcomers to influence their socialisation experiences is dependent upon their position in the organisation structure. This impacts the job role responsibilities and the relative power relations with other stakeholders. The manager job role has expanded to include, in some cases, budgetary management and stakeholder management, in the UK model of governance. However, some chairs and boards are mindful of sustainability issues with managers departing, and have opted for a European governance model. The inclusion of a general manager (director of football) can diminish the agency of a new manager to create organisation change expeditiously.

Socialisation is a personal journey, wherein the new manager is likely to experience multiple levels of socialisation, whilst attempting to deal with both their encounter/accommodation and role management stages simultaneously. Internal appointees appear to have the most traumatic experience, as they have not previously managed stakeholders outside the workgroup level. Suddenly, they are asked to develop political sensitivity to a wide range of stakeholders. Stakeholders at the extra-organisational level are particularly powerful when influencing the manager to meet their expectations. External appointees have developed a range of nuanced, politically sensitive

strategies and actions in order to adapt to the objective/relative power relations configuration of each stakeholder.

The Hiplex-D model shows that relationship dynamics - the ability to read the political landscape and adopt appropriate strategies - are a key part of socialisation. The stakeholder configurations highlight the potential strategies open to a newcomer to maintain or improve their social acceptability with key stakeholders. Whilst some stakeholder groups may be considered relatively passive, within the group, the manager can choose individuals with whom to share power, e.g. a captain and senior professional. It can be argued that the status of these individuals changes from relatively passive to partner. Managers who do not show job role proficiency and political astuteness may cause key stakeholders to disengage, e.g. players may approach the chair and refuse to work under a manager's leadership. Personal credibility with a stakeholder group is likely to change from day to day.

Managers show that they are politically astute by using their extended vocational socialisation, gained over approximately 20 years. The manager, wherever possible, will appoint allies to key strategic positions within the organisation structure, and will aim to weaken individuals who may show resistance to their authority. Managers are able to truncate the socialisation process of individuals as they bring in players who are pre-approved (pre-socialised) (i.e. they have already proven that they can work productively within the football operations culture the manager is creating at the new club). The newcomer adopts a range of strategies to engage stakeholders. In a highly emotional environment, managers show emotional intelligence by arranging for an ex-professional to act as liaison with fans. This enables some managers to avoid conversations with fans whilst they are experiencing high levels of emotion, and whilst the fans may also be experiencing high levels of emotion. The individual who acts as liaison understands what can be said and what cannot be said, giving an objective, rational view of the team performance and individual players' performance. Some managers use mentors for younger players as archetypes to guide the player as they mature. Managers share power with intermediaries (socialisation agents) in order to monitor WhatsApp communication between team members. The senior team members are entrusted with providing guidance and advice when other players may be disappointed or when they do not understand how football works.

Some managers show a high level of political astuteness by supporting the chair and board with their plans for the club. Whilst managers acknowledged that they were likely to push the chair for more investment in the squad, this was balanced with appreciation that this investment was only available when the chair's business was earning sufficient profits. However, stakeholders, including the chair

and board, fans and journalists, were keen to make sense of what was happening to the team when performances were poor i.e. a run of losses.

Chapter 9 – Conclusions and Recommendations

9.0 – Chapter Introduction

This chapter draws on the earlier findings, analysis, and socialisation literature to identify the study's specific contributions to knowledge, and comments upon the implications for organisation socialisation theory in general and the practice of football management specifically. Furthermore, the researcher will outline the development of socialisation process theory, and the understanding of the highly complex, time-constrained, competitive experience that is socialisation. Within the football management context, new managers have to take charge and be single-minded when setting up a football operations culture that is enforced vigorously to protect the team's unity. This study will then make recommendations for further research into the socialisation area academically. Finally, this chapter will consider the limitations and weaknesses associated with the study.

9.1 Contribution to Knowledge – A New Socialisation Model with Relationship Dynamics

The final chapter of this study will focus on a discussion of how the socialisation literature that was cited towards the beginning (Chapter 3) has been developed as a consequence of this research.

The aim of this study is: **exploring the experiences of managers as they socialise into a new football management job role.**

Four objectives emerged from this research aim, with the first three objectives 1) to 3) accomplished through the arguments and evidence of the previous chapters. Fulfilment of the final objective, reproduced below, is a key part of this closing chapter:

4) To contribute to the literature on socialisation theoretically and football management practically.

The four questions that underpinned the thesis as per chapter 1 and chapter 8 are:

- a. What is the job role of a football manager?
- b. How do football managers transition into the new role?

- c. What socialisation challenges do new football managers experience during transition?
- d. How does the football manager show political astuteness while socialising?

The thesis answered these questions and provided the following insights:

- a. A manager's role and associated agency will be determined by several factors. Firstly, the nature of the job role, i.e. strategic or operational, will position the job role within the organisation structure. Secondly, the job role will have core responsibilities which will dictate which stakeholders the manager needs to be aware of at workgroup level and organisation level (internally) and extra-organisational level (outside the organisation). Thirdly, understanding their position within the organisation will enable the newcomer to consider the objectives/relative power relations configuration. The ability to exact agency during socialisation depends upon the factors above and the individual's political awareness and underpinning political astuteness.
- b. Managers may move into their new role as an internal promotee or an external promotee. The organisation may give an opportunity to an internal candidate who already has the trust of workgroup colleagues. However, strategic managers are likely to need to widen their stakeholder management skills and learn a more diverse set of political strategies and actions. The transition, based on two levels of socialisation inside the organisation, is expanded to include extra-organisational stakeholders. These stakeholders may have powerful objectives/relative power relations configurations which need the newcomer to modify their political strategies and actions. The newcomer needs to align themselves, as far as possible, in some stakeholder cases, but may have to stand their ground in other interactions e.g. where they have specialist knowledge. The external candidate may well have experience of multi-level socialisation at three levels, including the extra-organisational level. This means that there is less of a contrast in transition between the old and the new job roles. External candidates have already developed political strategies and actions that they have used. The political astuteness is likely to be higher with an external candidate.
- c. The socialisation process has many different aspects. The newcomer has to prioritise stakeholders, as they are likely to be engaged by three levels of socialisation simultaneously. Each stakeholder has a dynamic relationship with the newcomer, wherein the stakeholder tries to socialise the newcomer and vice-versa. This means that socialisation is indeed competitive, and the decisions and actions taken by the newcomer need to consider the

category of stakeholder they are dealing with. For example, with a relatively controlling stakeholder, the newcomer needs to manage upwards – conceding or supporting the controller's objectives. With a relatively passive stakeholder, the newcomer can act proactively by managing downwards, although ultimately all stakeholders have some agency i.e. to leave the organisation if they wish. Socialisation has a stages aspect, where the new manager experiences simultaneous accommodation and role management stages. This means that the manager has to deal with both internal and external conflict, as well as initiation to group(s) and initiation to task(s). Relationships with stakeholders are likely to ebb and flow depending on the personal credibility of the manager. Personal credibility is effectively performance proficiency e.g. winning games and being socially acceptable.

- d. A manager who has worked in an industry for some time has acquired vocational socialisation, e.g. they understand the habitus of the industry. Managers, wherever possible, will seek to use political strategies and actions in order to form a power base. This may involve recruiting allies with whom they have worked before. The allies are likely to have already demonstrated that they have the same values, beliefs and working norms as the manager. Recruiting allies who have already developed a level of trust with the manager truncates the socialisation stages as, from the manager's perspective, the allies are brought in pre-approved and pre-socialised. If a manager is in charge of a department or section of the organisation, they may be in a position to create an organisation sub-culture. If a manager has the autonomy to recruit and dismiss personnel quickly and recruit those who are already known to them, and can re-write or create a culture, they control the basic building blocks of socialisation. Environments in which there are limited or no contractual obligations, e.g. temporary or project working, allow expeditious change of personnel. The dis-integration and re-integration of the team within a matter of 5-6 weeks is imperative in the context of this thesis, where there are temporal constraints, i.e. each season is 10 months, and each season's performance starts afresh.

9.1.1 Socialisation Agency to Sculpt Own Socialisation Experiences

This thesis showed that an ability to exercise socialisation agency rests on a combination of factors, including: the vocational learning acquired (wherein the individual learns the accepted habitus of the industry); the way that the industry operates (e.g. whether the sector prioritises appointments based on experiential learning or academic learning); and the type of capital that is viewed as key to the job role (e.g. symbolic capital – winning awards and demonstrating success as measured in the

sector, or cultural capital - learning the values, beliefs and working norms with organisations within the industry). Agency resides in the organisation position of the job role, and in the ability of the individual to influence the organisation culture and the adherence of personnel to the organisation culture. The time taken to create organisational change depends upon the types of contracts, e.g. temporary or permanent, and also on the terms and conditions of severance.

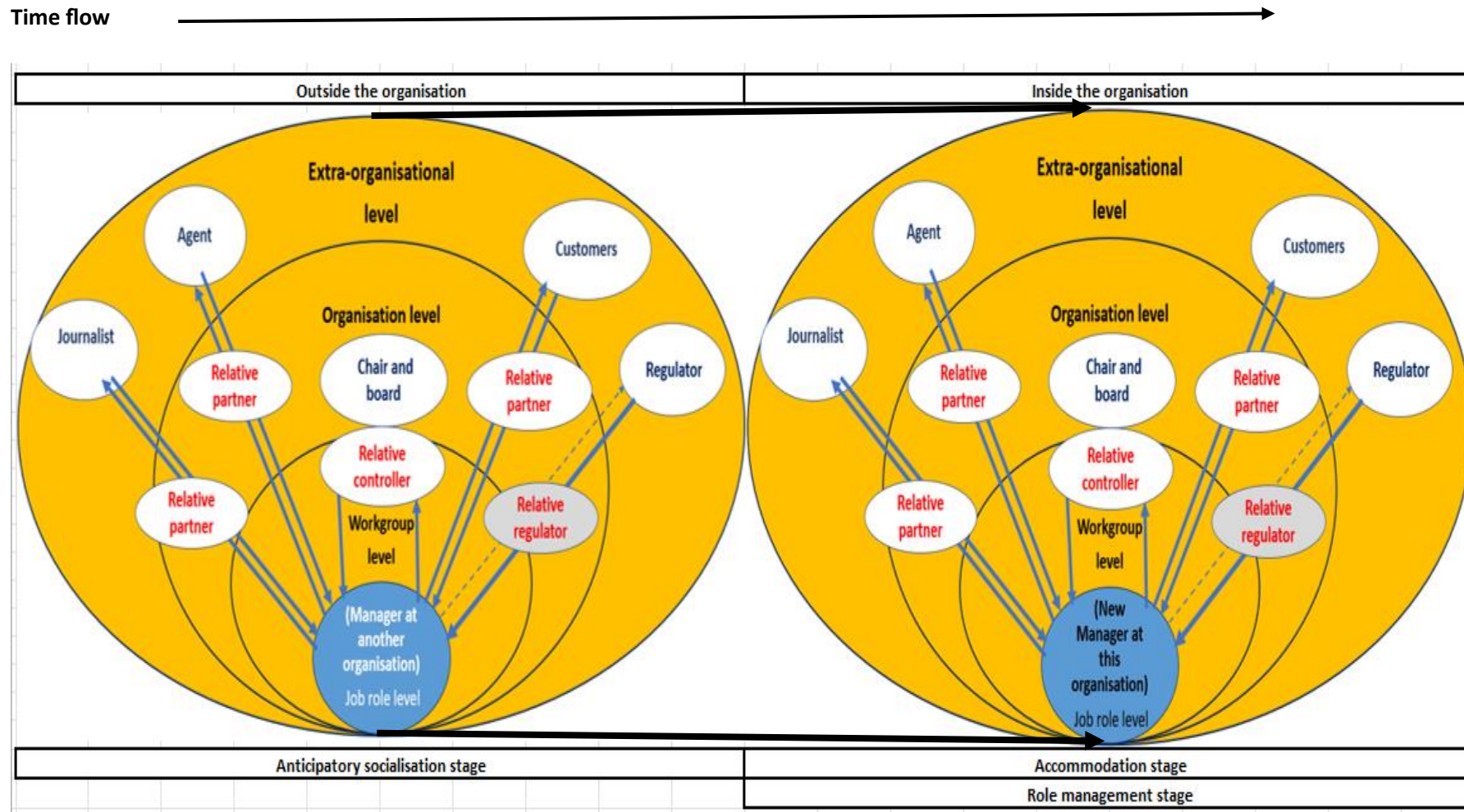
Agency, to some extent, depends on the job role responsibilities and the power position within the organisation. The corporate governance of the organisation is likely to determine whether the position interacts largely with internal stakeholders or with external stakeholders, or a combination of both. The ability to change the organisation's main culture or sub-culture, and the recruitment of personnel who can adhere to the values, beliefs and working practices, will quickly put a manager in a powerful position. However, situations wherein a manager has to work with another manager, or work through the board, before organisation culture can be changed, will lead to a longer period of time to effect change.

. Vocational learning may give an individual opportunities to observe or experience political astuteness or political naivety first-hand.

9.1.2 Socialisation Experiences Depend Upon the Promotion Route and Previous Experience as a Manager

Figure 9.1 below shows the transition for a men's manager who is an external promotee. The socialisation experience includes a progressive stage element, wherein the newcomer goes through a traditional anticipatory socialisation stage. The interview process then leads to an appointment and the experience of accommodation and role management concurrently.

Figure 9.1. The External Promotion Modelled by The Hiplex-D Model



The Hiplex-D model shows that the experienced manager has already dealt with a wide range of stakeholders at multiple levels: workgroup, organisation and extra-organisational. The extra-organisational level of socialisation is particularly powerful, as several stakeholders are relative partners (in red) and one relatively controlling (also in red). This means that the newcomer politically has to align themselves to some degree in order to negotiate with each stakeholder group e.g. recruitment agencies (talent agents), customers (fans), journalists and regulators. The majority of industries have these stakeholder groups e.g. education, utilities and food and agriculture.

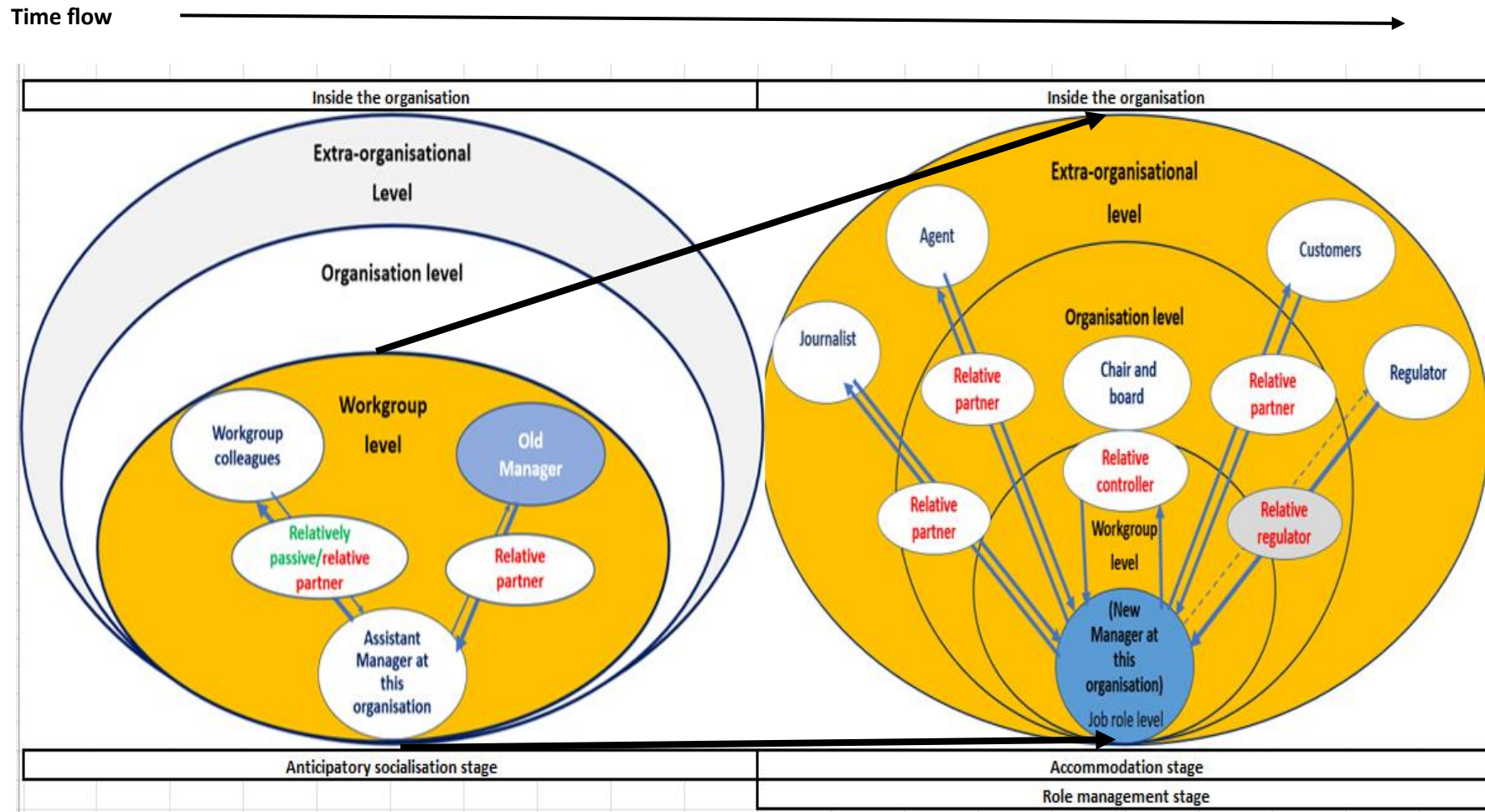
The new knowledge represented is that socialisation is highly complex, with a temporal aspect, multiple levels of stakeholders and simultaneous engagement by stakeholders, with stages occurring concurrently. The socialisation process involves negotiation, prior to appointment during the interview process and in the accommodation process/role management processes. This means that socialisation is competitive, requiring the newcomer to prioritise who they serve first from a wide range of stakeholders. Within this process, newcomers need to show some political awareness i.e. understanding of the political landscape. The political landscape was represented by understanding the objectives/relative power relations configurations, where the newcomer uses political astuteness to select the right political strategy or action.

Different routes into the job role mean that different knowledge domains have been learned. An internal promotee may well have a nuanced view of the internal organisation and workgroup politics. The knowledge gap is how to engage as a manager with the extra-organisational stakeholders.

The internal appointee, as shown in figure 9.2 below, has a more difficult transition during socialisation because they are likely to be inexperienced when it comes to interacting with the chair and board (organisation level) and a range of external stakeholders including regulators, journalists, football agents and fans (extra-organisational level), for example at level 5 and above. The transition exposes the internal appointee to stakeholders who are likely to negotiate for a living – for example, the chair and board are successful business people, with the ability to finance a football club sustainably, whilst some journalists are likely to know far more historically about the club, and to be skilled at getting managers to reveal interesting information.

This means that assistant managers need to develop political awareness and astuteness, e.g. reading the political landscape and aligning the interests of the stakeholder and their job role as far as possible (Hartley et al., 2013; Yates & Hartley, 2021).

Figure 9.2 The Internal Promotion Modelled by The Hiplex-D Model



9.1.3 Relationship Dynamics – Stakeholder Configurations, Decision Making, Politics and Political Astuteness

Figure 9.3 shows that stakeholders with divergent objectives are likely to inhabit the extra-organisational level. Having stakeholders with divergent objectives means that the newcomer has to consider these objectives, which means that these stakeholders add to the job role. Meanwhile, within the organisation and workgroup, the stakeholders hold convergent objectives, e.g. around the performance level required and the desire for the newcomer to become socially acceptable. Convergent objectives are in alignment with the manager's objectives, so can be satisfied whilst achieving the manager's objectives. The extra-organisational level stakeholders can be in a position to stretch the new manager by their agenda (objectives).

Figure 9.3 The Multi-Level Stakeholder Aspect of the Socialisation Hiplex-D Model

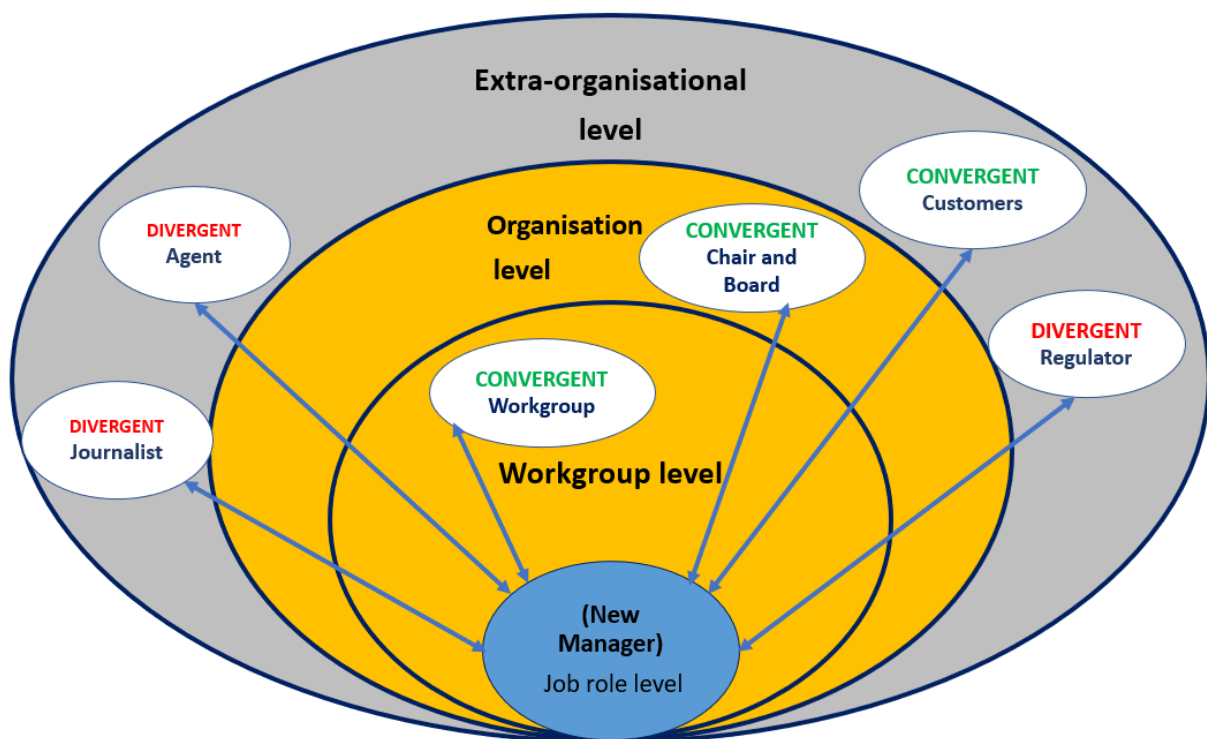


Figure 9.4 (below) adds another dimension to the stakeholder categorisation: the relative power relations aspect of socialisation. Beyond the objective element, this informs the manager of the power of the stakeholder to encourage or indeed force compliance with their particular objectives. The extra-organisational stakeholders were particularly powerful in this study, with three partner stakeholders and a regulatory stakeholder. This means that the manager has to manage upwards

with the regulator (in this case comply, unless there is a small chance of appeal against sanction – e.g. ground renovations not carried out, playing an ineligible player).

Figure 9.4. The Powerful Influence of the Extra-Organisational Stakeholders Outside the Organisation



Consideration of the stakeholder configuration is used by managers to read the political landscape. The manager considers the relative power relations of each stakeholder and the urgency of response needed and tends to prioritise internal stakeholders due to their interaction frequency (Mitchell et al., 1997; Wood et al., 2021) although the more potent stakeholders and divergent stakeholder are outside the organisation. The manager can use this knowledge to select political strategies and actions that maintain and improve social acceptability.

The stakeholder configuration may be used to predict which decisions the manager should use e.g. to accept, reject or clarify in order to remain socially acceptable. The manager, through exercising choice, has the opportunity to reinforce and build on the level of personal credibility they have with a particular stakeholder. However, should the manager show political naivety, their personal credibility may be reduced. For example, if a manager displays a lack of emotional intelligence or shows a lack of confidence in their abilities in the job role, colleagues may

question their suitability. These mistakes show a lack of political astuteness (Hartley et al., 2013; Yates and Hartley, 2021).

9.2 Redressing the Focus of Socialisation to Sensemaking

This study showed that managers assess a job role opportunity based on the challenge of the job role. The job role challenges (discussed in Chapter 5) were constructed from several key pieces of information. These included the opportunity for the applicant to move to a team in a higher league, the current performance of the team, club trajectory over the last three years, financial investment into the player wage budget and the current target for the season. The misinformation that some newcomers receive does mean that some take up post with false ideas; however, the managers' logic for staying in these posts was that manager job roles are hard to come by. If the club is in a poor financial state, it is likely to mean that fewer applicants apply, so the prospective manager's chances of getting the job increase. The use of a sensemaking approach enabled the collection of attitudes, perceptions, behaviours, and emotional displays.

This study highlights the advantages of using a sensemaking approach, as it enables the researcher to question attitudes, behaviours, and emotional displays (Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008; Blenkinsopp and Mateuszewski, 2011). In this context, emotional displays were very important, as managers looked for team players i.e. those who could deal with non-selection and cheer their teammates on. The key tension of competition and collaboration highlights that players may have to indulge in acting to cover their negative emotions (Houghton, 2014; Van Rensburg, 2019). The players who displayed petulance, for example, getting angry, putting something nasty on social media, threatening to tear their contract up or not warming up properly, were often left out in the cold. Newcomer managers looked for players with the right attitudes and responses to non-selection. Managers understood that it was appropriate for the player to feel disappointed, but they wanted a player who would question what they needed to do better. The newcomer managers looked for a mature attitude – after getting some detailed feedback, players should work harder on the parts of performance identified and become consistent performers week in and week out. By becoming reliable and predictable, the player could lessen the manager's uncertainty (Berger & Calabrese, 1975; Bauer et al., 2007).

The other insight delivered was the newcomer's ability to influence others' sensemaking through the sensegiving to stakeholders (Maitlis, 2005). In order to mitigate the encroachment of fans and journalists into the manager's job role (e.g. issues around private financial data and competitive data

such as tactics and team selection), the managers used two tactics. The first was to have a clear definition of what information the stakeholder was legitimately entitled to know, e.g. that the chair/director was entitled to know the player wage budget, while the fans were entitled to know what the general aims of the manager were for the season (Maitlis, 2005). However, the fans were not entitled to ask why specific players had not played or why certain tactics were used, as this was the manager's jurisdiction. In order to maintain control of the narrative that the press were likely to put forward and the information the fans had, managers used a high control, low animation message which gave a unitary, narrow account (Maitlis, 2005; Maitlis & Sonenshein, 2010). This meant that the manager extracted the emotion from the message i.e. they were thinking with the rational mind and not the emotive mind. The narrow account gives limited licence to the recipient to take the sense given and embroider or sensationalise what has been said (Carter, 2007). The second tactic was to use an objective bystander from the club to give feedback to the fans just after the game. This gave the manager a respite during which the emotions of the game could drift away, and they would respond to questions after 24 hours, having given themselves time to make sense of what happened.

9.3 Reflections and Recommendations for HR Professionals and Newcomers

As a consequence of the findings and conclusions of this study, a number of recommendations can be made for HR professionals, managers and newcomers in general. This study has shown that socialisation is far more complex and nuanced than has been suggested to date. When entering an organisation, newcomers are vulnerable, as they are keen to get familiar with the job role, bond with the group and become embedded in the organisation (Traeger et al., 2022) and it can be difficult to discern who to trust and to understand the micropolitical landscape. In a highly competitive, highly visible, achievement-oriented, time-constrained environment, the ability to perform the job role and be socially acceptable is key. The ability to make someone feel highly motivated to give that extra 1% effort is key, and this means that newcomers need to understand how people are motivated and demotivated, when playing football is something you have to earn rather than a job role you can do as a right (Jowett et al., 2017). Only 11 players start each week, but all players must be ready to contribute.

9.3.1 HR Professionals

The socialisation literature has highlighted a range of socialisation tactics, i.e. ways to shape organisation information for a newcomer (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979; Jones, 1986), social resources (Saks & Gruman, 2018), and means by which newcomers actively seek out information (Miller & Jablin, 1991; Bauer et al., 2007). This study portrays three socialisation levels that act on the newcomer. HR professionals should work on job groups within their organisation, in order to provide organisation level information and workgroup/job related information in a coherent programme. They must anticipate setbacks e.g. induction information not being available (Mornata & Cassar, 2018).

From this study's findings, it is also necessary for organisations to consider a wide variety of stakeholders in society. Regulators, the journalists, pressure groups, customers and suppliers have a vital relationship with organisations. Newcomers need to understand the macropolitical and micropolitical aspects of the organisation, as per Achinstein (2006).

Previous socialisation literature shows that socialisation has been considered from many different angles, i.e. socialisation content (Chao et al., 1994; Taormina 1997), socialisation stages (Feldman, 1976; Buchanan, 1974; Moreland & Levine, 2002; Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008), institutional socialisation tactics (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979; Jones, 1986; Saks & Gruman, 2018), and individual information seeking (Jablin & Miller, 1991; Mornata & Cassar, 2018).

This study advocates that HR professionals consider an integrated, three level system of interventions, including activities that highlight the key stakeholders that the organisation interacts with at the extra-organisational level and their potential impact upon the organisation. Ramarajan and Reid (2020) highlighted the potential to examine the relations between the purchasing department of one organisation and the sales department of another organisation, and their impact on each other. Recognition of the impact over the sales processes and socialisation of individuals gives a much deeper understanding of the relative power relations from all levels of the three level socialisation models (Saks & Ashforth, 1997). Furthermore, this aids the identification of where the newcomer fits in – the contribution of the section, department and job role to the success of the organisation. There is a third level of interventions at the workgroup level – where the newcomer and the organisation reflect on their values, attitudes and emotional displays, and work practices (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979; Jones, 1986; Bauer et al., 2007; Ellis et al., 2015). This study showed that the newcomer can be overwhelmed by the number of stakeholders who are seeking them out from the first day.

HR professionals need to understand the agency and constraints that a newcomer may face when dealing with the macropolitical environment and indeed the micropolitical environment. The informal side of the industry/organisation needs to be reviewed by HR, as all organisations have both formal communications and informal communications. It has been identified that often it is the informal conversations that undermine organisational change and can make the organisation psychologically unsafe. For example, where nurses are unable to access their line manager who is their mentor, due to workload, they often resort to socialising within their cohort (Houghton, 2014; De Swardt, 2014). The socialisation literature has identified that newcomers are not always welcomed. They may be given the wrong information (Mornata & Cassar 2018) and sometimes sabotaged, e.g. not told the key values such as 'look out for yourself' (Potrac et al., 2012). They may be prevented from using a socialisation tactic, e.g. attending an induction session, due to work pressures (Mornata & Cassar, 2018).

9.3.2 Newcomers

Understanding the micropolitics of an organisation, the socialisation literature has suggested, is necessary to understand how individuals act. Achinstein (2006) highlighted the need for micropolitical literacy through a mentor within schools. This study has shown that socialisation is a highly complex concept, as Chao et al. (1994) indicated. Getting to know the politics, the people and their agendas, whilst earning social acceptability, can be stressful, due to the uncertainty, ambiguity and equivocality (Wieck, 1997; Wieck & Obstfeld, 2005). Understanding a stakeholder view of objectives and relative power relations, and how these generate options for action, is likely to give a fresh understanding of, even empathy for, the new CEO or strategic manager.

Socialisation is a highly individual experience based on previous learning, the job role applied for, and the gaps in experience and learning. The gaps in experience and learning that need to be filled in order for a manager to demonstrate performance proficiency and social acceptance by a wide range of stakeholders (Bauer et al., 2007; Bauer et al., 2021). Social acceptance here is an ability to work together productively at a basic level. Social acceptance at a friendship level is a far deeper state, based on trust and loyalty and affording a much higher propensity to forgive. This includes an understanding of the different stakeholders and which ones have to be dealt with first, and the implications of not coming back to them in a timely manner. Mitchell et al. (1997) highlight urgency as a key aspect of being an important stakeholder, as well as power. In this context, there are many stakeholders who feel that they have an urgent claim to a response. Journalists have deadlines to meet, fans want information straight after a game, the players want to know if they are in the team.

The socialisation theory now has a way to consider the agency of the newcomer based on a knowledge of a stakeholder's objectives and their relative power relations.

There are several ways that managers can use agency to influence their own socialisation. The first is by appointing allies to positions of influence within the organisation structure. This enables the newcomer to ask loyal allies to help with reinforcing key football operations values, attitudes and working practices within the organisational sub-culture. What was more unusual was that the new manager in the men's game had the ability to introduce their own football operations culture (FOC). This means that the new manager (men's manager) has the authority to take charge of daily operations. The introduction of allies was also accompanied by a weakening of potential enemies (those loyal to the previous manager) (Lumby, 2015). Having ultimate authority means that managers can use all three power strategies identified by Smeed et al. (2009). They can exercise power in order to collaborate with the captain and assistant manager, whilst also using power, through rewards and punishments, to reinforce team working and unity. The last power strategy involves a manager telling a player what to do and cutting through any resistance. Players showed a wide variety of behaviours that challenged managers, and other players will tend to watch how fair the manager is. In order to cut down on socialisation time, an external appointee can appoint pre-socialised, pre-approved players who do not need to be socialised by the manager. This move effectively truncates the Moreland and Levine (2002) model, with the new player jumping straight in as an accepted member. The only approval necessary is that of the manager, in contrast to the workgroup socialisation model, which assumes that the approval of the whole group is needed (Moreland & Levine, 2002; Haski-Leventhal and Bargal, 2008; Traeger et al, 2022).

As the move into football management internally is particularly troublesome, perhaps football clubs can offer the assistant manager the opportunity to manage the team for three games per season. This would give some vital exposure to many different stakeholders and the rigours of being a new manager. Alternatively, managers who have just retired could be used to pass on vital information to assistant managers.

9.4 Suggestions for Further Research

This study has taken some 5 years to get to the submission stage. At this stage, it is now appropriate to consider what has been learned and what directions may have been opened up as possibilities for the future. This study has highlighted several issues, which suggest some useful future directions for research in socialisation. These are the unfolding of simultaneous socialisation, relationship dynamics, micropolitical strategies and micropolitical acts research fields.

9.4.1 The Impact of Extra-Organisational Stakeholders

This study has shown that extra-organisational stakeholders can be impactful individually and as a group. The researcher would add his voice to Ramarajan and Reid's (2020) call to further investigate the extra-organisational level. The interaction between customers and suppliers is a very interesting suggestion, as some large companies may indeed influence the values, attitudes and working practices of the supplying company. Regulators and journalists may also be applicable in other industrial sectors, and these stakeholders can cause concern for newcomers, whether CEOs or other senior newcomers e.g. headmasters.

9.4.2 Extend the Current Research into Women's Football

One intention of this study was to gain approximately equal participants from men's and women's football. However, the final sample of 43 managers included 10 from the women's game and 33 from the men's game. To a degree this is unsurprising, as the women's game is in a high growth period and the men's game is well-established. The men have had approximately 20 years of networking to build a network of football friends. The women's game has women serving, who, due to the newness of women's football relative to men's football, have not had the opportunity to develop networks to the same level. To date there are also male managers in women's football, these may well be displaced in the next 5-10 years.

This study has identified that in this sample, women's managers work for clubs that have branched out to include women's football, such as professional men's clubs. The study shows that a women's manager is an operational role, which will mean that they have different relative power relations with different stakeholders in their environment. A further study into women's football may reveal further applicability of the Hiplex-D model.

In this study context, the newcomer manager has usually had an extended socialisation period in which learnt from observing and experiencing academy football. This has given managers, in particular, an opportunity to review the coaching practices, societal values and norms of the time, and how these have changed over their maturation into managers. Socialisation appears to be a deeply personal experience, wherein newcomers fill in the learning gaps that they have. Chao et al. (1994) highlighted six domains, including performance proficiency, politics, language, people, organisation goals/values and history. This study identified the internal promotee as crossing a job role boundary and the external promotee as crossing an organisation boundary.

Further research is needed into how socialisation unfolds over time, simultaneously, at different levels of the organisation i.e. the organisation at large and workgroup level with colleagues (Ogbanna and Harris, 2015; Parnell et al., 2022; Traeger et al., 2022). Given that socialisation of the strategic manager by the organisation occurs during the same time that the strategic manager socialises their subordinate, it is imperative that socialisation research investigates how socialisation at the organisation level (i.e. providing an overview of the organisation's mission, vision and values, is entwined with the workgroup socialisation). This will give an indication of how HR can design and provide a more integrated socialisation system.

9.4.3 Study of Early Withdrawal During Socialisation

This study revealed players exiting from the football organisation due to the lack of contracts and the 7-day rule within non-league football. The rationale for letting go of a player often appeared to be based on the player's 'me first' attitude, putting the team second, which led to competitive behaviours that could undermine the manager. Players being let go was an event that could occur regularly and happened expeditiously, and in this environment, the manager assessed an individual's socialisability on the first night. Competition was cutthroat, as there was an oversupply of talent. A similar sector of business that may have the same basic tension is sales, which involves collaborative behaviour and competitive behaviour in a group environment. There have been some examples where socialisation has been incomplete, for example in Haski-Leventhal and Bargal's (2008) study, where after a 1 year process, a volunteer was ejected by the organisation.

9.4.4 Relationship Dynamics and Managers During Socialisation

A potential area for further research in socialisation is how different relationships develop, evolve, and sometimes come to an end. This study showed that relationships develop over time but come to a pivotal point when one party or the other has to evaluate whether the relationship is socially acceptable to them as an individual (there is sufficient personal credibility to carry on).

Longitudinally designed research to establish which the key relationships are, and how these pivotal moments are reached in a relationship, could be useful. This would help to identify the events and strategies that are needed to resolve these issues. An ethnographic approach could use a diary to record relationship developments as the manager's tenure unfolds. With the workload a manager has, perhaps this could be done through a mixed collection method – short, sharp entries in the form of social media. This could be followed up periodically to make sense of these trigger entries, which

would give the manager more time to reflect. Ramarajan and Reid (2020) have carried out research into relationship reconciliation within a school environment.

9.4.5 The Interaction Between Psychological Safety and Micropolitics in Football

Newcomers are unlikely to talk freely about their experiences during the socialisation process (Edmondson et al., 2016). Edmondson et al. (2016) have highlighted two industries where those who have low level job roles are not prepared to come forward. Research should be undertaken to investigate whether there is an interplay between newcomers being psychologically safe and the micropolitics that are endemic in any organisation. When will professional footballers feel safe to have their say, and to what sort of issues do they give voice? Moreover, when will professional players subvert this need for expression, and put micropolitical behaviour first in order to gain a first team place? (Manley, 2016; Hickey & Roderick, 2022).

9.4.6 The Development of Political Astuteness

This thesis has highlighted that managers develop political astuteness by observing and experiencing the managers they serve under during their formative career. During this extended vocational socialisation period as academy players, they experienced the political mistakes that manager can make when making selection decisions or being evaluated as lacking managerial competence. The managers when transitioning may make fundamental mistakes, e.g. not demonstrating sufficient emotional intelligence, lacking people skills when giving feedback just after a game. Further study uses Hartley and Manzie (2020) and Yates and Hartley's (2021) concept of political astuteness. Political astuteness appears to be learnt through reflecting on personal interactions and covers 5 macro areas: • Personal skills • Interpersonal skills • Reading people and situations • Building alignment and alliances • Strategic direction and scanning (Hartley et al., 2013). Within this study, the managers showed a deep appreciation for the football habitus they had experienced over a number of years and used this to develop key alliances with colleagues within the organisation. Moreover, being able to read the political landscape, i.e. understand the impact of the stakeholder configuration (objective/relative power relations), meant that the manager was more likely to choose a political strategy that was in alignment with another stakeholder. It should be noted that alignment may well be part satisfaction of objectives by the new manager and other stakeholders (Hartley et al., 2013).

9.5 Research Limitations

All research has inherent weaknesses: in order to understand the results produced, one must know the limitations. This section considers some of the limitations of the study, so that examiners and readers can have a critical perspective when reading.

9.5.1 Using a Snowball Sample

The use of a purposive sample meant that the researcher aimed to interview current managers within the English game. The definition was given in order to attract those with recent football management experience across the women's league hierarchy and the men's league hierarchy. This type of sample means that it is non-probabilistic and, as such, the data cannot be used to make a broad generalisation about the football management population in England. Once a few interviews had been collected, some managers identified football colleagues who they felt would be interested in the study. One or two managers checked with colleagues who had mentioned their name, as they were unsure of the legitimacy of the research study. Sometimes in football, friends can play practical jokes on each other, e.g. sending a bogus text or email.

9.5.2 Learning Curve Effect on Conducting SSI's

The aim of the research was to explore the socialisation experiences of managers moving into a new football management job role. Several research method options were considered, as outlined in Chapter 4 (methodology) earlier in this study. Kallio and colleagues (2016) highlight that there should be a framework to guide the development of a qualitative structured guide. The primary concern is the collection of rigorous data that enables the researcher to produce results that can be defended (Gioia & Corley, 2013).

The researcher considered the phenomenon to be studied, i.e. the socialisation experiences of managers. There were several issues that immediately arose. Firstly, collecting sufficient data sources so that a PhD level study could be conducted. This would need a collection of data with

approximately 30 – 40 interviewees. A manager is characterised in the literature as someone who works in a very cutthroat industry, and thus rejects approaches by people who they feel are likely to waste their time. As Carson (2014) and Calvin (2015) highlight, the football context is full of instantaneous change, where the manager has to manage unexpected changes over a 95-minute game. Full-time managers are not all paid salaries in the £1 million bracket. In this study, the majority of the sample consisted of high-level non-league managers who were doing this job role part-time on top of a full-time (main occupational) role.

The researcher considered using the academic literature on sensemaking, which would have guided the study towards discovering what stimuli surprised managers when they started in their new job role. From a sensemaking approach, key words emerged, such as surprise, ambiguity and unequivocally (Weick, 1995; Weick & Obstfeld, 2005), and key words from organisation socialisation included content, stages and tactics (Chao et al., 1994, Taormina, 1997; Feldman, 1976; Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008). The semi-structured interview was assembled to include an initial question about the manager's career as a player before becoming a manager. The initial two or three interviews were with managers who had a very wide range of experiences in their backgrounds. This tested the researcher, who at that stage was starting to learn what sort of data would be shared.

The first two interviews were in a private office environment, which was at a local association, with managers who worked full-time, developing football through their full-time job role, but also holding the role of manager. Their careers were vastly different. Participant 1 had managed a team for 24 years and had fallen into the position as a matter of luck. Participant 2 was a manager who had worked in the US and Nigeria early in their career as a teacher with Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO). Participant 3 came from a university background and then went into coaching at regional centres of excellence at county level. For the initial three participants, the researcher could not gather much information prior to the interview, which made establishing an initial rapport somewhat more difficult. The third interview was in a café with lots of noise, which meant that the researcher had to listen carefully to the recording of the semi-structured interview.

Semi-structured interview (SSI) guides (Kallio et al., 2016) highlighted the need to consider previous knowledge in order to generate questions that were capable of a single focus, but enabled the participant to develop their stories (Cridland et al., 2009; Baumbusch, 2010). The SSI had three main areas to begin with: having asked the manager about their career, the questions broadened out to consider management positions held, as this gave an overview of whether someone had held many short-term posts, or a few longer tenured posts. The third area was to get the manager to dig deeper

into their experiences – what did the person know about the club they were joining, what attracted them to the club, what did they do when they first took charge? The initial three interviews yielded 4-5 pages of typed transcription. As the researcher became more confident, and grew to know more about the slightly higher-profile non-league clubs and managers, there was an opportunity to gain more detailed experiences. Thus, even though the researcher had prepared by carrying out a trial run with a banking professional to practice their questioning technique, it would have been a better fit to question an ex-manager who had retired.

The warmup questions were designed to make the participant comfortable. It was found that the manager's experiences, both positive and negative, laid the professional foundation for who they had become. This also showed how an elongated professional socialisation affected the development from a young academy player, under old school management, to a more enlightened manager who had moved with recent times; for example, adopting values of inclusivity, respectfulness and dignity when giving feedback to improve performance.

9.5.3 Anonymising Information Sources and Stories in a Very Public Place

Those managers who had been professional players were more guarded with the information they gave. They were very good at giving generalities about the industry. The names of coaches and managers were an issue, unless the manager had sadly passed on. Journalists are always keen to get quotes from someone who has a reputation as a manager or as an ex-player. For example, Brian Clough would have been considered as a highly reputable manager, having won two European Cups and being an ex-England player. Those who had more modest playing careers were more open with what they shared; however, money within football tends to be a taboo subject. The researcher gave the participants an opportunity to benchmark their team's player wage budget – as a comparator to other teams in the league. Any level of openness came following the assurance and demonstration of how the researcher anonymised the managers and their players. No manager wanted to be the subject of a researcher or journalist who had got them to give an interesting quote that they did not want to go public with.

9.6 Thesis Summary and Key Points

This study set about exploring the experiences of managers as they socialise into a new football management job role. In the existing socialisation literature, the process is still not understood, as it is an individual journey, wherein interactions are undertaken in a dynamic way. In particular, the

people and political aspects of socialisation, which are covered by micropolitical strategies and acts, are not well-documented. Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002) highlight personal interests, organisational interests, material interests, social-professional relations interests and cultural ideological interests.

This study has produced the following contribution to socialisation knowledge:

A new socialisation model (called the Hiplex-D model) brings the following socialisation aspects together.

Socialisation is a multi-level stage model where an elongated vocational socialisation (years), can be followed by a relatively short anticipatory socialisation period. The accommodation and role management stages, i.e. dealing with internal and external conflict occur concurrently.

There are multiple stakeholders who engage the newcomer simultaneously and continuously.

The stakeholders at three different levels will compete to socialise the newcomer and vice versa.

The contrast between the manager's old job role and new job role may cause an exposure to new stakeholders, whose configurations make them more difficult to negotiate with. Extra-organisational stakeholders are examples of such stakeholders. A journalist can write a newsworthy story that reflects on the manager's failure at a club.

Newcomers' socialisation agency

Newcomers, the majority of the time, choose to make decisions that maintain their social acceptance with stakeholders i.e. improving their relationships. The manager would prefer to have the stakeholders – fans, journalists, board and players – all supporting them; however, this cannot be achieved, as each week some players will be disappointed. How the managers deal with the board, players and fans is vital to their success.

Newcomers may use their own agency during socialisation to make their position easier to manage. Through the new job role position, they will be faced with a variety of relative power relations. When dealing with a stakeholders, the newcomer manager has to be mindful of the stakeholder's objective and the relative power relations. The extra-organisational stakeholders in this context were particularly powerful, as individuals and as a group.

Newcomers, if their job role permits it, take over control of the organisation structure by appointing allies that will support their initiatives. On the other hand, the newcomer also cuts loose those who

are likely to present resistance through previous loyalty. The increase of power through appointing allies and weakening enemies (Lumby, 2015) is then reinforced by having the authority to set the football operations culture (FOC). The allies are used to help enforce or reinforce the FOC set up, through passing information between the manager and players. The key conduits in this context are the captain, vice-captain and assistant manager.

Political astuteness

New managers who have worked in an industrial sector before are likely to have developed political awareness through the development of vocational socialisation. This means that the habitus of the industry – the values, accepted terms and working conditions, accepted emotional displays and relationships (authority) within an organisation help an individual know how to behave. The new manager is sometimes faced with changing part of the industry habitus e.g. the language used when addressing a colleague, or the level of feedback on a performance. That said, it may well be in the interests of the new manager to reinforce the traditional industry habitus in subtle ways e.g. the use of humour to undermine (and thus reinforce their dominant position in the social order).

Today, new managers are expected to be questioned more and to offer more explanation of their actions. However, they are the managers, and they are paid to make certain decisions as part of their job role – in this thesis' context, to select a team that will beat an opposition. Functionally, each player offers a set of abilities to win the game. Sometimes, a player maybe selected because they have the attributes to unsettle the opposition, e.g. pace, winning tackles or converting chances to score. It is not a reflection on the player not selected but is about choosing the right attributes for the team to win.

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APPENDICES:

- A. Ethical Clearance to Collect Data Received from REC Feb 2019
- B. Sample Participant Information Sheet
- C. Signed Consent Form – Redacted as per Confidentiality Agreement
- D. Research Design Decisions
- E. Example of a Transcript from an Interview

APPENDIX: ETHICAL APPROVAL



Dr Judie Gannon
Director of Studies
Oxford Brookes Business School
Oxford Brookes University
Headington Campus

14 February 2019

Dear Dr Gannon

UREC Registration No: 191265

"Hitting the ground running": an exploration of the challenges and the strategies that football managers use when settling into a new management role

Thank you for your email of 8 February 2019 outlining your response to the points raised in my previous letter about the PhD study of your research student Steve Taylor and attaching the revised documents. I am pleased to inform you that, on this basis, I have given Chair's Approval for the study to begin.

The UREC approval period for the data collection phase of the study is two years from the date of this letter, so 14 February 2021. If you need the approval to be extended please do contact me nearer the time of expiry.

Should the recruitment, methodology or data storage change from your original plans, or should any study participants experience adverse physical, psychological, social, legal or economic effects from the research, please inform me with full details as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "S Quinton", with a long, flowing horizontal line extending to the right.

Dr Sarah Quinton
Chair of the University Research Ethics Committee

cc Sylwia Ciuk, Supervisory Team
Steve Taylor, Research Student
Karen Handley, Research Ethics Officer
Jill Organ, Research Degrees Team
Louise Wood, UREC Administrator

APPENDIX B: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Participant information sheet

Study title

Re: "Hitting the ground running" – An exploration of how Football Managers/Head Coaches experience and deal with the challenges of a new management role.

Invitation paragraph

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide whether or not to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve

What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of this study is to explore the experiences of football managers when they move into a new managerial position with football clubs. The study aims to capture the complex nature of the football business and help understand how football managers use strategies to settle successfully into their new management role.

Why have I been invited to participate?

You have been invited to participate as part of a number of people who have managed football clubs. The aim is to explore the challenges you faced and strategies used as you settled into your new job. The hope is that insights from football managers will help current and the next generation of managers prepare better for new management roles.

I am interested in attracting 40 participants across UK football leagues men's and women's football, Football Association Tier 1-6 Women's and Tiers 1-6 Men's football. The participants will have football management experience i.e. currently in role or have managed at any time since the season beginning August 2013.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part in this research study. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet along with a privacy notice that will explain how your data will be collected and used, and be asked to give your consent. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you decide to take part I will interview you once for 60 minutes. The interview will be recorded by audio with your permission; this is so that an accurate transcript can be word-processed for later analysis.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

Participation in this research will enable you to:

- a. Tell your own personal story of what it is like to be a new manager in a football club/team
- b. You will receive a report based on the key findings of the research which can contribute to your own personal learning and other managers

Data confidentiality?

The information you provide will be kept strictly confidential subject to legal limitations. Your identity and the clubs that you worked for will be given pseudonyms so that they cannot be identified by any third

party. The objective is to learn from your experiences whilst giving you anonymity whilst participating in this research.

Research data will be kept securely at all times, any information recorded on laptops or memory stick devices will be password protected whilst data files must be encrypted. A copy of the data will be stored in Google Drive, for which Oxford Brookes University has a security agreement.

What should I do if I want to take part?

If you would like to take part, please email me at the following address steventaylor@brookes.ac.uk

Enrolment in this research will take place between February 2019 and December 2019:

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The results of the research will be part of my PhD dissertation, a summary of the key findings will be made available to all participants. The results may be part of a conference paper or as published material in relevant business, management, HRM and sports related journals.

Who is organising and funding the research?

I am conducting the research as a PhD student in the Oxford Brookes Business School (OBBS) at Oxford Brookes University. This research is self-funded.

Who has reviewed the study?

This research has been approved by the University Research Ethics Committee, Oxford Brookes University.

Contact for Further Information

Further information in respect of this research can be obtained by emailing me at: steventaylor@brookes.ac.uk (the researcher) or Dr Judie Gannon (Director of studies – First supervisor jmgannon@brookes.ac.uk). If you have any concerns about the way in which the study has been conducted, you should contact the Chair of the University Research Ethics Committee on ethics@brookes.ac.uk.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information, it is appreciated.

Steve Taylor

APPENDIX C: SCAN OF A REDACTED SIGNED CONSENT FORM

**OXFORD
BROOKES
UNIVERSITY**

CONSENT FORM

Full title of Project: "Hitting the ground running" – An exploration of how Football Managers experience and deal with the challenges of a new management role.

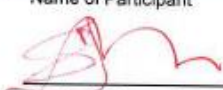
Name: Steve Taylor Lecturer Oxford Brookes Business School
Room 1.17 Clerici, Headington Lane, Oxford OX3 0BP. Tel: 01865 741111

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions. ☒
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason. ☒
3. I agree to take part in the above study. ☒

Please initial box

	Yes	No
4. I agree to the interview consultation being audio recorded	☒	☐
5. I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publications	☒	☐

Name of Participant	31/05/19 Date	Signature
 Name of Researcher STEVEN TAYLOR	31/8/19 Date	 Signature

APPENDIX D: RESEARCH DESIGN DECISIONS

Research design	Phenomena to be studied	Considerations	Why?
Epistemology and ontology	FMs socialisation experiences	Interpretivism and social constructionism	The phenomena studied is the socialisation experiences of FMs when taking on a new football management job role. FMs will have their own socially constructed versions of the truth.
Data	Qualitative or Quantitative	Qualitative data	Qualitative data as it enables the researcher to collect the narrative constructions of the FM experiences via semi-structured interviews.
Variance theory or process theory	Process theory data	Data - events, trajectories, activities	Management theory is coming away from traditional variance theory. Modelling complexity means teasing data apart to see what the components are.
		Contingent interactions	Interactions may flow down different paths dependent upon decisions taken. An FM standing up to a chairperson may lead to dismissal or may lead to a closer relationship.
	Process theory outcomes	Potentialities	
Research type	Choices: Inductive, Deductive or Abductive	Abductive chosen as the researcher is looking to fill in some of the gaps on micro-politics, relationship changes (agency)	Abductive - using data collected inductive from semi-structured interviews, compare to OS models and see what is surprising - put forward a hypothesis why?

Sample	43 currently managing football managers	Definition of what a currently serving football manager is: any football manager who has managed a team between 2014 - 2015 season and the season when the study started.	The study looks to attract those with recent football management experience. There is variability in the sample i.e. how long the FMs have managed. Some have a long career 20 plus years at various clubs, others have just started in 2018/19 season.
Research methods - data collection	Semi-structured interviews	Semi-structured interviews face to face preferred. However, due to long distance from researcher and limited time some on telephone. Follow up into football agents also carried out on telephone.	Face to face enables the researcher to build a rapport based on sensic cues. FMs tend to be time pressed right through out the year. More time out of season. Telephone interviews less pressure but mind may wander. Recording is not always easy.
Data analysis	Thematic analysis - inductive approach	Firstly, collect data and use open coding on first 8 interviews. Then look for links with other themes from other tranches.	Trying to keep the OS literature psychologically distanced from the data collection. However, this cannot be gauranteed as the study progresses.
	Using inspiration from Gioia and Corley (2013) analysis.	Based on thematic codes at first order level - the participants voice, link to second order researchers voice, then seek out aggregate themes.	Identifying the themes that the participants revealed in order to understand the links with second order concepts (themes). Trying to bring some structure to the complex data - events, activities, emotions, behaviours, thinking
	Deductive - look at surprises in the data	Socialisation of a new team within 5-6 weeks.	Who does the new manager bring in with them? Is it different between internal and external appointees?
		The majority of FMs deconstruct the team - by letting players go, and replacing them almost instantaneously.	What is there in this context that enables FMs to change players quickly? Have the chair/board given the FMs carte blanche to do this?
		Some managers receive information that is untruthful yet still continue to stay with the job role	Reality shock can mean that newcomers tend to think about moving away from the organisation.

Data presentation	Process data	Theoretical contribution - how have I looked to use others models?	Using three stage models at organisation level - Feldman (1976), or five stage models at workgroup level - Haski Leventhal and Bargal (2008)
		Relationships and the ability to influence othe stakeholders	Adapt Feldman model - to explain the how. Feldman explains the what needs to be done - activities but not the how.
		Collect data that explains how an individual is socialised over time using the three level process model (Ashforth and Saks 2022).	This would involve parrallel theorising seeing how two relatively well known process and how they develop i.e. co-evolve. (Cloutier and Langley 2020).

APPENDIX E: TRANSCRIPTION EXAMPLE

TRANSCRIPTION: MALE MANAGER

DATE: Weds 15 MAY 2019

INITIAL CODING KEY

TEAM STATUS – PROMOTION/RELEGATION/STABLE

RIVALRIES – HISTORY

TENSIONS/CONFLICTS

MAIN TASKS – ENCOUNTER

TEAM RECRUIT/CONSTRUCT: Freshen, Partial, Major

PERFORMANCE LEVEL – Above, Below, Par

TACTICAL INFO: Positional play/strategy

SENSEMAKING – BIG PICTURE INFO

RESEARCHER: So Jason please introduce the period from when you were at Boston United.

INTERVIEWEE: That would be around 2010, before that I was wearing three hats basically. I was coaching at City FC various age groups, I was also delivering education at City FC -- apprenticeship in the queue. Basically I was going through the transition from full-time playing -- so I played in the league until I was 38, and my last club would be Rovers FC. Then I went straight into coaching, I was playing nonleague from United, City, Town FC, and so I kind of trying to lay my hat on where I wanted to be. That is what most players have to decide, to work out the transition and where they are going to fall. I always had an interest in education. I did my degree and other courses to get myself up to speed, obviously football is my passion and I wanted to coach -- I worked out I had to work with all the age groups. All coaches know where they want to be, and they don't know which age group. You don't really know that until you have immersed yourself in it. I know a number of pros who don't want to work with pros as coaches. They only want to work with young players in development.

RESEARCHER: So what you're saying, there are people who know they want to be coaches. However, they're not sure if it's the players we see on TV or the development side.

INTERVIEWEE: A lot of people know they want to be coaches, but then may not be cut out to be a manager. You won't really know that until you've tried it. You might be a good first team coach, you

might be good at recruitment, talent identification there are so many areas of the game. You may not want to be the focal point, you need to be a special breed to be a manager. You have to take so much abuse; you have to be very insular. Of other people's personalities change, you can become paranoid. You need to surround yourself with people you trust I get that; the industry is fraught with danger.

So, yeah so I went through the transition of trying everything, working everything. So I was coaching at Town FC, so I then became manager, but that was in it that was easy as I was already part of the group. There was an opportunity in Wanderers FC where they were looking for a new manager and I played with them when they were only club, so I felt that would be a good opportunity for me.

RESEARCHER: So were you playing from Wanderers FC at the time?

INTERVIEWEE: I was playing for other clubs the management of Angelo and Gabrielle wanted me to go and play for them at Wanderers FC. I played for them for a short while, then they decided to take on the Town FC job which was good for their development. They were playing in the conference on a bigger budget. So that left a fraction of the playing squad as several high profile players went with them. The Chairman said can you fill in, so Geoff and I were asked to step into the breach for the last 12 to 13 games. It was when we were doing well which I was happy to do. We got to the play-offs, and got beat in the play-offs.

RESEARCHER:

INTERVIEWEE: So basically the chairman asked me to step in as I have more experience than Geoff, who I played with twice at Rangers FC and Town FC when they were in the league. The league had no qualifications and no coaching experience; we decided we would do it together. Going back a year before the chairman of Town FC would have been aware of my interest, at one stage there was a chance of taking over at Rovers FC. So I said to the chairman at Town FC if the Town job becomes available then keep me in mind. So use so you sow the seed. So I was on his radar, and being in their playing for them helped.

RESEARCHER: You mentioned earlier to be a manager you need to be a particular type of animal to be a football manager. How did you make the step up -- what with the changes?

INTERVIEWEE: I think you have different personalities; some people really surprise you when they become a manager because you never really saw it in them as a player. But from my playing days I was a leader, Captain -- I always knew I could communicate with my teammates and galvanise the team. That is one thing you need to go into coaching and management. I am by no means you had to get the coaching qualifications and tick the boxes. I had no fear the best part of my job now is being in a group of players, I was always in the centre of the group: not on the outside. There are some players who are quite shy, this that and the other. The football changing room is an environment it's like a playground, which sometimes it is survival of the fittest. You have to be strong willed, so I have no problem being in a group and trying to control them.

RESEARCHER: Did the relationship between you and the players change, as he was still playing I take it?

INTERVIEWEE: Unfortunately, yes. I say unfortunately because the club were quite smart. At the end of the day I believe it was one of the few reasons I got the job. You've got to use every string to your bow to get coaching/manager's job so I played until 38, and I went back to Town FC to help out. I had spoken to a number of players who had been a player managers being a manager is hard enough.

RESEARCHER: So what were the main attention is being a player manager?

INTERVIEWEE: I think if you are a player manager you lead by example; I always did that in terms of my fitness, this that and the other. I trained hard; I played when I was called on the players knew they could rely on me as a player. I never put myself in the team at the expense of someone else. It wasn't about my ego -- by helping them out on the pitch I played more games than necessary.

So basically the chairman Dave me and Geoff were the joint managers for the rest of the season. The idea was originally Geoff was 10 years younger than me that he would play and I would manage. That was the idea but it worked out that when he got injuries I played more than he did, so I played and he was on the side-lines. The most important part was when I was playing I was performing. I was scoring goals, but if you were not then you are not going to the players are not going to buy into you. So you can imagine telling players to do things and you can't do it yourself. As a player manager you've always got to be able to back up what you were talking about. I know I was able to do that and win the fans over.

The next season I made the decision that I knew the club weren't happy with and decided not to play. I was still registered but in my mind I'm not going to play. Because at the end of the day I want to concentrate on my coaching and management. If I can get the right players in and develop them, bring them on I will succeed.

RESEARCHER: So you've been in the changing room, you've got your camaraderie with your teammates, how do you manage difficult conversations.

INTERVIEWEE: I had the experience of that with younger players already no matter what age you are with the different age-group players it would have been at academies all centres of excellence. I have the responsibility of releasing young players; as all coaches do. Sitting across the table from them and their parents -- blah blah blah you don't meet the requirements; it's never an easy conversation. Also I've been on the end of that at different times in my career.

As a player I just wanted to coach/manager to look me in eye and be completely honest. Don't sugar coat it. If I'm playing at the weekends, tell me I'm not playing at the weekends and tell me the reasons why. Then I can do something about it. A lot of coaches/managers don't like confrontation so they will avoid the conversation if possible. So I would never go into coaching/management and do that.

RESEARCHER: Have you had a player bang on your door and say boss I believe I should be in the first team.

INTERVIEWEE: Of course. That is a good thing 100%. There are managers will/coaches don't like confrontation; being asked why? I learned very early as a player -- don't just accept because the coach tells you to jump off a bridge ask why?

Some coaches/managers don't like the why? I have asked you to do this. Just get on with it. As a player I hated that, and I couldn't and I would say why? How does that benefit me. I thought if there is anything I can take into coaching and management? It is to be honest. And if a player asked a question, I'll give you an answer. He may not like the answer. I know he will get over it, at least I know who will tell me. If you're not good enough that's why you are not getting in, if you're not playing well enough that's why you're not getting it, if you're not working hard enough that's why

you not getting in. I'll tell you plenty of time as opposed to telling you just before kick-off, which is what coaches and managers do. That happened to me as a player, and it's the worst thing you can do to me as a player is to build my hopes up all week but I have a game at the weekend. Or you've got some managers will put the team sheet up on Friday, you read as opposed to them telling you.

RESEARCHER: So it's almost abdicating

INTERVIEWEE: Yeah and some will leave it right until 2 pm in the changing room. Then they name the team and the squad, you're thinking; that negativity seeps out into the changing room. It causes an issue you can deal with days before.

RESEARCHER: You have touched on in their recently, Sean Dyche stated that it was one of the key things and being a manager keeping the whole squad as a family happy, although you have close relatives to play on Saturday and five substitutes.

INTERVIEWEE: I think it is more difficult with clubs with a large squad obviously. You can't keep all of those players happy. When I am part of in team working with a group I would work with 22 first team players in the squad, then you hope your development toward and all your age groups underneath. Ideally a first-team manager should manage that first-team squad, and to manage that group of players. Every player wants to feel like they are in touch with getting a game, working hard and informed doing the business. If you are not getting in you are going to have to wait for an opportunity.

What you are saying to the player is -- if I call on you when you go in, it's now up to you. You can sulk and you would never get that opportunity. You can train hard and work hard and then I know I can always call on you. When I call on you, you do the business then I will stick with you. That is all you want is a player, is to be given an opportunity. If he performs you want the manager to stick with you. Some managers, and it has happened to me, some managers you go in you have done the job, and then they put someone else back in who is their guy. I get that.

RESEARCHER: So a meritocracy, rather than nepotism.

INTERVIEWEE: Yeah I understand it isn't easy when you have some very talented players. Players do look to see if someone is getting special treatment likely not training Monday to Friday. In

INTERVIEWEE: when someone is there all day every day you switch off after a while.

RESEARCHER: Are the messages from a manager less impactful after a while.

INTERVIEWEE: Conte, Mourinho, Graham Taylor -- they have a bit of this, they are intense when they are with you every second of the day. But they burn the players out in my experience. You are working at 100% capacity mentally and physically, and then you hit a brick wall I can't take this guy any more. This is why Marino, PEP moves on it's so intense you can't keep working at that level.

RESEARCHER: It's more almost than as an obsession, it's almost an obsession?

Obsessive/compulsive?

INTERVIEWEE: Yeah pretty much. The other top, top coaches you understand how they get what they get. And, although from a player's perspective you want to shut down you know, but you realise to be successful you have to do that. The best period of my careers are with managers that would do that. So, it's getting the balance; but when I was in and around it I will be intense as a manager but I would also let them keep time to themselves. Allow the players time to themselves and do what they needed to do.

RESEARCHER: Was there anything the job role that surprised you? You thought actually I didn't expect that? I hadn't thought of that before?

INTERVIEWEE: The preparation -- as a player you step on to the training ground. And the majority of players will moan, they just know it doesn't matter what you are doing. They have got that about them -- so training has to be challenging, it has to be variable, otherwise its turn the page syndrome -- because after a while it becomes really boring. So what's I took from managers over the years is keep it fresh. Try if anything to keep the players on their toes but, I understand you can give them a rotor days off for example. But in terms of getting to the training ground when they arrived they shouldn't have a knowledge of what they are doing that day. You've got to surprise them, Graham Taylor would be one of those. We've won the game on Saturday, a lot of clubs now have you in on

Sunday. Graham Taylor would do that intensive work on a Tuesday or Wednesday or Thursday. Usually the style to which its recovery Monday, Tuesday or possibly choose to be a hard day, then you would taper down towards the end of the week. With Graham Taylor it could be intense on any one of these days it can be hard on Monday, hard on Thursday,. You wouldn't know you would think I didn't see that coming, and I would like that. It worked.

RESEARCHER: It almost sounds like the military -- when they start you at basic training they break you down as an individual and then build your backup is the team? And they do that by not letting you have control.

INTERVIEWEE: Football has been described as being in the Army. That is what players struggle with when they leave the game. I am, you're told them to be somewhere -- it's like the work I do now -- I try and get the players to buck the trend really. It goes against everything I thought as a player and manager and coach, but now know how damaging overreliance can be as a player having a club organising your day every day.

RESEARCHER: Has there been a move in the last 10 to 20 years towards more intervention in lifestyle outside of the club,

INTERVIEWEE: I would say it has become more intense, the players there is no excuse with nutrition, they know what they've got to do. The season has finished, every player believing or not will have some fitness testing at the end of the season. They are gauged to see where they are, given the programme 4 to 6 weeks and they come back fit. Back in the day players would rely on preseason to get fit they would drink all summer.

RESEARCHER: Was there anything else that surprised you in the job role?

INTERVIEWEE: Possibly dealing with the owners, chairman and directors there is something that coaches have had to work on. Our courses on applied management, information technology and governance working down and working up to influence people.

RESEARCHER: So a bit of upward influencing

INTERVIEWEE: Yeah, the financial aspects of Boston the chairman was really good he handed me the budget, the spreadsheet, I could see what was going in and what was going out. I thought that was a really good education. However, that isn't the way it works at all clubs, some clubs don't do that, some clubs want the management of the manager to focus as head coach picking the team only. Even at this level I would have to go to the board meetings, explain this and explain that to the Board of Directors where we were spending the money on the player's wages. My players wanted new equipment training kit travel allowance etc.

RESEARCHER: There's probably one set of stakeholders we haven't mentioned yet in the process that is the press. So how did you deal with the press?

INTERVIEWEE: They were good I learnt, I did a sports journalism degree, I enjoyed radio media and TV. Not everyone is media friendly I get that. Again you try and be as honest as possible, you can't be 100% honest with the press. You can't, and they are not going to be with you. You try and be as honest as possible. I don't think I have any issues with the press, you have to enjoy it.

RESEARCHER: The press they win if you are on top of the league, if you go from top to bottom I have a story. When you become a manager what did you draw on from your experience?

INTERVIEWEE: I had some really good people in the game? Well, coaches, managers to draw on I could speak to them. Their advice was always to be honest as possible, there is always an agenda. If you build a relationship with one or two who write about the club regularly that makes sense. That person you would get a better response from them. They could call me at any time and I will talk about this that and the other. You keep back from them transfers and confidential things, you could talk to them about what you are trying to achieve on the field. I always thought fans aren't stupid they know what they have seen, don't sugar coat it. You can roll out all the stats in the world, if your team has not worked hard enough they want to know that you are going to demand more of your players, it's as simple as that. They, the fans, are not going to accept the team that doesn't work hard enough. That should never be on the table, fans will forgive you if it is not worked, a bit of bad luck, all an off day. But if they are not working hard for the manager that is unacceptable.

RESEARCHER: Can I take you back to a game where you feel you count an influential team talk at half-time.

INTERVIEWEE: Believe it or not there is a local derby Town FC versus Rovers FC they will be the biggest games, it was local rivalry and also the county bragging rights. The owner of Rovers FC football club is now the owner of Wanderers FC, they had Roberto as manager at the time. And they had 300 watching them at best with a ridiculous budget at that level. We would have 1500. We would lose players to the club because of what they can pay, so that will cause a few divisions between the clubs. You knew it wasn't about it you knew it was about finances -- some of those games are charged on the field. Some of changes by being constructive -- I remember it was one of these games that my co-manager was having a stinker. But I knew the players needed to hear this, so I dug him out and I was you've got to produce where you'll have to come off. He went out and performed better, and we got a result. But if I allow that to slide; he was shook. The players were watching, if you allow that to slide. You're not addressing what we need to hear really. There was nothing worse for me really when I was a player, if I knew that a guy wasn't playing well and they didn't dig them out. It's an avoidance issue, you have to tell him it is wages; the players respond to that.

RESEARCHER: Sending the half-time team talk how much time do you spend talking to the players.

INTERVIEWEE: You have to do it short and sharp you only have 15 minutes, you don't want to take up the whole 15 minutes; some managers do, some managers do. They use the whole 15 minutes as a flyhalf I hated that. Because there are things you want to do, you wanted to relax for a couple of seconds, he wanted to go to the toilet; kilobit of treatment or some fluids on board. There are things you need to do, some managers it's all about them. I would take up to 5 minutes max maximum that's all you need. They offer tea always want to hear is constructive feedback to help them improve in the next 45 minutes. Yes, you can break them -- it's just to wake them up. As I said before the changing room manages itself, so when the whistle blows I given five minutes; I'll allow them a few minutes to themselves. They know I'll be coming in at some stage, but if they have any issues with each other they would be sorting out. There might be a screaming match, there might be shouting, they do whatever they need to do. Then when I step in as a coach there is calm. I've got something to say boys, give them the message then leave them to it.

RESEARCHER: So it is like the headmaster and the school playground.

INTERVIEWEE: As a player I used to like that, I thought I'm going to tell you what he isn't prepared to tell you. Generally as a player you do lie on one another during the game, in the teams I've played him I was a leader I was promoted at every level in professional football. In all the teams we had strong characters? In all fairness the manager knew what players to put in the changing room. As you rely on other people you do need to dig them out. The manager and I am talking about have the right group would manage the situation.

RESEARCHER: Isolation he is a word associated with football management. What emotions did you feel as a manager.

INTERVIEWEE: The time you feel isolated is when you are on the touchline when things are not going well beyond their and have on the ground behind you, things are not going well you can hear the abuse. You are desperate for your team to perform -- you are relying on other people, I hated that.

Are done everything to prepare the team to produce, and within 40 seconds to minutes you concede a goal. There is nothing you can do about that. Fans attention then comes towards you. That's when you realise this is or isn't funny. You're out they are isolated, taking abuse, it is aimed at one person. When it's going great you have to enjoy the adulation, and when it goes wrong people questioned every decision you make.

RESEARCHER: I suppose the manager's job is incredibly visible. When your goalkeeper goes off with a calf muscle strain because he's not fit enough. Is it reasonable to think that it's the manager's fault for not getting fit enough to last the whole 90 minutes.

INTERVIEWEE: Being at the LMA awards yesterday it's a bit like being at the BAFTAs. Managers mentioned the backroom staff and players because you know you can do nothing without those people. The Mourinho's who can hold court, you can see it they enjoy the adulation. You know these people are behind you and you know you have to give the credit that is due sometimes.

RESEARCHER: Do you believe that manages scapegoated. I know from this project will ever level there is a tremendous amount of hard work in the background.

INTERVIEWEE: When a manager leaves the staff leave with him. Nottingham Forest have had 11 managers in 10 years. I am onto boards and I know there is an incredible amount of staff turnover. But it is easier to replace a manager than a group of players. This is where football has changed the players have got the power in the changing room, they will go to the owner and see the manager off. They can say we're not having it, back in the day Clough, Ferguson got rid of players left right and centre. Managers will say you'll be gone before me. Now the role is reversed.

RESEARCHER: Claudio Ranieri for example -- his dismissal from the outside seems bizarre. Luton gaining promotion, winning the league and Mick Harford stated we have five players fit for the next level.

INTERVIEWEE: Some clubs overachieve, every summer everyone wants to win something. You go in as a player thinking we're going to win something, not we're going to make up the numbers you get a group of players that will carry the club forward and the fans are incredible you've just been promoted, so expect another promotion or you to do really well. Sheffield United in the Premier league and they are going to struggle, and four from bottom that is a result for them next season. But fans then start questioning the style of football, this there and the other. It's hard to get the balance between attractive football and winning football. Not the owner should do is come out and say?, These are the objectives of this season. They hide behind the manager sometimes. They should say our objective is to stay in the league, will play attractive football then everyone is on notice.

RESEARCHER: Chris Wilder mentioned his success rate may take a bit of a hammering on BBC last night.

INTERVIEWEE: Chris has to play that down, he knows. Norwich made a decision to do away with their development group, Huddersfield followed them. They were bringing in new players through, the last player will serve the level of the Huddersfield was Jon Stead. Though not investing in these products. Chelsea their business model is to scoop up all the young players and then sell them for a profit. You can disagree with their business model. If you join Chelsea as a youngster you are unlikely to play for them. You are going to go out on loan at a number of times but you can build a career.

RESEARCHER: Southampton another selling club, the majority of Liverpool at the moment are Southampton players, Ajax selling another selling club -- keep the current first-team squad and they are European champions in the next one or two seasons.

INTERVIEWEE: It is hard to get right financially though -- the majority of clubs who are on not top for selling clubs. They can't take the chance of keeping players together they haven't got the time no one has got the time, the owners, the supporters know one's got time.

APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Aim: To explore the experiences of football managers as they socialise into a new football management job role.

Introduction to the interview:

Thank you for agreeing to take part in my PhD study. Before we start the interview, I need to take you through some paperwork. The paperwork involves gaining consent from you for your participation.

[Give the prospective participant the information sheet. Sometimes participant sheets had been sent in advance for the FM to consider if they were potentially interested i.e. prior to full ethical approval being granted.]

OPENING QUESTION(S):

I have read something about your footballing career prior to management – can you give me, in your own words, a brief introduction to your football career. Where did you start in the game? Academy level at YYY club.

I have done some research on the football club and your results last season. How did you think it went last season. You have come an awful long way since you started at JJJ club. Tell me how you came from your beginnings in football briefly.

PRE-JOINING: OR REJOINING:

What were your expectations of football management before you became a manager?

What sort of information did you consider when making a decision to join yyy club?

What surprised you after you became a manager?

How did you come to manage at xxx club?

What did you know about yyy club before you became their manager?

ENTRY or ENCOUNTER: RE-ENCOUNTER

When you started your new job at aaa club what were your main challenges?

What were your priorities when you joined bbb club?

Which key events during your start at xxx club immediately come to mind?

How do you set about managing the first team squad at a new club?

How did you go about introducing yourself to the staff at your new club?

What were the big differences between being a player and stepping up to be a manager?

How did you manage to keep the squad motivated? What were the key changes from xxx manager?

What was the expectation from the club chairman?

How quickly were you expected to get results? Tell me about your first game in charge please.

What have been the high points for you in management?

What have you found challenging when managing in football?

How did you approach turning things around at AAA club when you were appointed?

Why were things going wrong at BBB club when you arrived?

Did you go for a wholesale change by pushing out players or bringing new players in?

Contact for Further Information:

Further information in respect of this research can be obtained by emailing:

steventaylor@brookes.ac.uk (the researcher) or jmgannon@brookes.ac.uk (Director of Studies – first supervisor). If you have any concerns about the way in which the study has been conducted, you should contact the Chair of the University Research Ethics Committee at ethics@brookes.ac.uk.

Thank you