

**Primary School P.E. Coach Development in a Football Club Community Foundation:
Using Participatory Action Research to Enable Coaches to Embed Life Skills in
Primary School P.E.**

Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of Liverpool Hope University for the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to examine the influences on primary school P.E. coaches' ability to embed life skills in lessons. The research had two aims. The first aim was to examine the ecological influences that impact coach behaviour change, and explain how these influences impacted coaches' ability to change their practice and embed life skills in their lessons. The second aim was to use Participatory Action Research (PAR) as a vehicle to engage coaches in this process of change. PAR is a collaborative, systematic and cyclical qualitative method, whereby the researcher and the participants work together to examine issues affecting and subsequently improve the participants' lives. The approach contends that knowing is based upon experience, and experience can produce knowledge that influences practice, therefore justifying the role of participants as co-researchers.

The research aims, and the development of a theory of practice which guided the study, were addressed through a central study, which was composed of three stages. The Introduction and Planning Stage was the first, during which the researcher reviewed relevant literature and made an introductory presentation to the Premier League Football Club Community Foundation (PLCF) staff. The second stage was the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage, which was split into five phases, where all data collection and analysis took place. The final stage was the Conclusion Stage, during which the last meetings with participants and stakeholders took place.

The Inquiry Action and Reflection Stage is the main study component of the thesis, and comprised five phases. Phase 1 examined the level of understanding of life skills amongst participant coaches. Interview and observation analysis found that prior coach education experiences focused on technical and physical skill development, meaning coaches did not know how to embed life skills in lessons. Additionally, constraints in the primary school context made it difficult for coaches to plan and deliver high quality P.E. lessons. Phase 2 details the iterative, collaborative development of a Life Skills Coaching Resource over 20 months, which increased coach awareness of life skill development and helped them to embed life skills in lessons. Phase 3 assessed coach readiness to engage in a life skills Coach Development Programme. Interview analysis showed that a lack of managerial support and supplementary responsibilities within schools thwarted readiness. Phase 4 assessed the project partnership between PLCF and St. Mary's. Interview analysis identified a need for more comprehensive planning on behalf of PLCF, and greater support for coaches from school staff to support engagement. Finally, Phase 5 assessed the fidelity of the Coach Development Programme. Interview, observation and reflective diary analysis revealed that coaches embedded life skills in lessons more consistently, and had a greater understanding of life skill development, following programme participation. Collectively the findings illustrate how prior coach education, partnership planning, the primary school P.E. context, and intra-organisational communication had a negative impact on coaches' understanding of life skills and behaviour change. However, findings also show how utilising PAR to develop a context-specific Coach Development Programme facilitated coach engagement in the partnership, enhanced coach understanding of life skills, and facilitated behaviour change in coaches.

Applied implications show that researchers can use PAR to develop coaching knowledge, facilitate coach behaviour change, and develop applied coaching resources. For community football organisations and universities, the findings illustrate the need to plan with secondary stakeholders to empower coaches to actively participate in children's learning as well as their own professional development. Based on the findings, National Governing Bodies should advocate coach development over coach certification. Collectively, the findings illustrate the contested nature of P.E. provision in primary schools and the need for dialogue amongst stakeholders.

Candidate declaration

St Mary's
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Twickenham
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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction and research context

This chapter will introduce the Premier League Football Club Community Foundation (henceforth known as 'PLCF') who match-funded this research, and the context in which PLCF deliver their primary school P.E. programme. A brief introduction to the life skills development research in sport and physical education (P.E.) is then presented, along with clarification of the aims of the research project. Finally, a brief summary of the thesis chapters and associated objectives is provided.

This research project was co-funded by the PhD Studentship Scheme at St. Mary's University, Twickenham (henceforth known as St. Mary's) and PLCF. PLCF have been working in disadvantaged South London communities for over 25 years, using both football and the club brand as a vehicle for positive change. Within areas of economic deprivation such as that in which PLCF operate, a range of environmental factors increase the likelihood of children being subject to poverty, family discord, violence, substance abuse, whilst simultaneously increasing their rate of illness (Rak & Patterson, 1996). Therefore, the benefits of developing a range of skills to mitigate these potential outcomes is self-evident. Whilst all PLCF programmes aim to negate or reduce the influence of such factors upon participants, PLCF's primary school P.E. programme, and specifically the coaches who deliver it, are the focus of this project. The rationale for focusing on these coaches is to ensure the positive outcomes associated with this project impact as many children as possible, given these coaches deliver P.E. to hundreds of children throughout South London. From a general perspective, this research project will examine life skill development amongst primary school P.E. coaches in this context. In the context of this research project, primary school P.E. coaches are classified as coaches who are employed by external P.E. providers (such as PLCF), to whom schools pay a fee to deliver curriculum P.E. They are not primary school teachers. As will be explored further in the literature review, research suggests that the sporting and P.E. contexts are

conducive to life skill development, and that transfer of life skills from such contexts to additional life contexts can allow at-risk individuals to make informed, adaptable decisions in everyday life (Danish & Nellen, 1997; Gould & Carson, 2008a). By investing in this life skills development research, PLCF are fulfilling their commitment to improving the lives of young South Londoners through P.E. and sport, by enhancing their physical and psychological well-being.

1.2 Defining life skills and life skills transfer

According to Danish, Petitpas and Hale (1990), the idea that sport provides training for life can be traced back to ancient Greek and Mayan cultures. Personal development is the attainment of new skills and/or knowledge acquired during experiences in real-world contexts, and sporting contexts are identified as those in which personal development can occur. However, personal development amongst youth does not occur automatically (Danish, Petitpas, & Hale, 1992; Papacharisis, Goudas, Danish, & Theodorakis, 2005; Smoll & Smith, 2002). Whilst youth sport in particular provides rich opportunities for personal development, nothing about sport itself is ‘magical’ (Papacharisis et al., 2005), meaning participation does not guarantee personal development. To ensure that desirable personal development takes place during youth sport participation, coaches and practitioners must place a deliberate emphasis on how the skills and attitudes learned during sport participation can be applied in additional life contexts (Bean, Kendellen, & Forneris, 2016b; Danish, 2002; Kendellen, Camiré, Bean, Forneris, & Thompson, 2017). These skills and attitudes are known as *life skills* (Danish & Donohue, 1995). The World Health Organisation (1994, 1999) highlighted that the development of life skills such as interpersonal relationship skills, decision-making and self-awareness, can aid in combatting stress and can also play a pivotal role in the promotion of health and well-being in children and adolescents. Life skills are also essential for healthy childhood and adolescent development and prepares young people with the skills to function

more effectively in their rapidly changing social circumstances (Gould & Carson, 2008a; Lee, Park, Jang, & Park, 2017; Trottier & Robitaille, 2014). As such, the focus of this research is orientated towards primary school P.E. coaches who are in a position to develop these life skills in children.

As the research area has developed, the definition of life skills has evolved and changed. According to the WHO (1994), life skills are abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour which enable individuals to effectively deal with the challenges and demands of everyday life. Life skills have also been described as the physical, behavioural or cognitive skills which enable us to succeed in the environments in which we live (Danish & Donohue, 1995). In a sporting context, Hodge and Danish (1999) defined life skills as the skills that are required to deal with the demands and challenges of everyday life. Subsequently, following an overview of sport-based life skill programmes (Danish, Forneris, Hodge, & Heke, 2004) and sports-based life skill programming in schools (Danish, Forneris, & Wallace, 2005), Danish and colleagues defined life skill as skills which enable individuals to succeed in the different environments in which they live, including school, home, and in their neighbourhoods. These researchers suggested such skills are behavioural, cognitive, interpersonal, or intrapersonal. A more widely accepted definition is that from Gould and Carson (2008b), who described life skills in sport as “those internal personal assets, characteristics and skills such as goal setting, emotional control, self-esteem, and hard work ethic that can be facilitated or developed in sport and are transferred for use in non-sport settings.” It has been suggested that this lack of a clear life skills definition has decreased the effectiveness of life skill development programmes historically (Danish et al., 2004). It also contributes to a lack of depth in life skills research, particularly in relation to how life skills are learned in one context and applied in another (otherwise known as ‘transfer’) (Pierce, Gould, & Camiré, 2017). Given the historical lack of

clarity, this research project has adopted the most contemporary and arguably most coherent definition of life skills:

functional skills that individuals develop and use effectively in one context to manage demands (such as the home, school, sport, community, workplace) and that are also used effectively in other contexts beyond that in which they were learnt (Williams, Neil, Cropley, Woodman, & Roberts, 2020, p.9).

It is notable that this definition was unavailable at the outset of the research project, and its adoption is a representation of the researcher's enhanced understanding of life skill development as a result of the project.

An inherent assumption of this definition is that to be considered a life skill, sport participants must transfer and apply the skill outside the context in which it was learned (Kendellen et al., 2017). As with life skills, there is no universally accepted definition of transfer (Hager & Hodkinson, 2009; Leberman, McDonald, & Doyle, 2006). Leberman et al. (2006) conceptualised transfer of learning as how the application of prior-learned knowledge and skills impacts the way in which new knowledge and skills are learned and performed. Expanding upon this, Hager and Hodkinson (2009) argued the purpose of transfer is a contribution to facilitating ongoing learning, not replication. In a sporting context, Kendellen and Camiré, (2017, p.395) defined transfer as “the process by which sport participants internalise the skills they have developed in sport and subsequently apply them in life”. However, based on its depth of description and to ensure uniformity of understanding for the reader, this research has adopted Pierce et al.'s (2017, p.194) definition of transfer:

The ongoing process by which an individual further develops or learns and internalises a personal asset (i.e., psychosocial skill, knowledge, disposition, identity construction, or transformation) in sport and then experiences personal change through the application of the asset in one or more life domains beyond the context where it was originally learned.

Whilst for the purposes of this research life skills and transfer have been clearly defined, it is essential that additional, potentially confusing concepts that are often used interchangeably

with life skills are also explained. ‘Positive youth development’ (PYD), and ‘personal and social responsibility’ are often not explicitly defined and are used interchangeably with life skills, much to the confusion of the reader (Gould & Carson, 2008a). PYD has been defined as “the deliberate processes of providing youth with the support, relationships, experience, resources, and opportunities needed to become successful and competent adults” (Bernat & Resnick, 2006, p.10). Weiss and Wiese-Bjornstal (2009) expanded further, concluding that PYD concerns the development of personal skills and assets, including cognitive, social, emotional and intellectual qualities which are necessary for youth to become contributing members of society. Within sport, PYD is concerned with the development of positive health habits and becoming physically fit. It also includes the development of psychological attributes and dispositions (for example a sense of hope or optimism), and specific skills (for example goal setting, or stress management). Petitpas et al.'s (2005) seminal work stated that PYD is most likely to occur when children are: (a) engaged in a desired activity within an appropriate environment (context), (b) are surrounded by caring adult mentors and a positive group or community (external assets), (c) learn or acquire skills (internal assets) that are important for managing life situations, and (d) benefit from the findings of a comprehensive system of evaluation and research. Within Petitpas et al.'s (2005) PYD framework, life skills fall within the remit ‘internal assets’, as they are skills which are applicable in a variety of contexts. The discernible difference between PYD and life skills is that PYD is a broader concept which includes the development of life skills. Not all PYD efforts develop life skills, but all life skills development is considered PYD (Gould & Carson, 2008a). In effect, life skills falls within the remit of PYD. It is noted that whilst PYD and life skills are two distinct concepts, there is significant crossover between these research areas. As such, evidence from PYD and similar research areas will be referred to throughout this thesis.

1.2.1 Developing life skills through sport and P.E. participation

Sport can be a highly effective setting for youth life skill development, yet this is not always the case. In their review of the negative physical and psychological effects of organised sport on youth, Bean, Fortier, Post and Chima (2014) highlighted negative outcomes of participation including injury, increased anxiety, stress and burnout, alcohol and drug use. Upon examining the appropriateness of sporting contexts to develop moral behaviours, Choi, Johnson and Kim (2014) stated that the context allows for the development of positive and negative behaviours, ranging from empathy to aggression and from fairness to depolarisation of others. The structure of the context therefore, is a determining factor in whether or not participation leads to positive outcomes (Mahoney, Eccles, & Larson, 2004; Mahoney & Stattin, 2000). Early research conducted by Wankel and Mummery (1990) highlighted that youth often feel excessive pressure to win, perceive themselves as having low ability, feel unattached to their teams and have subsequent feelings of vulnerability in the presence of teammates. These experiences can lead to adverse outcomes of sport participation, such as low self-esteem and low self-confidence (Martens, 1993; Wankel & Kreisel, 1985). Youth sport settings have also been associated with acts of violence and aggression (Colburn, 1986), poor sportsmanship, and decreases in within-context morality reasoning with age (Bredemeier, 1995; Lemyre, Roberts, & Ommundsen, 2002). This disputes the assumption held by many that sport participation is associated with positive developmental outcomes for children. Therefore a research focus on those who play a central role in the creation of a sport-related developmental context in primary schools, namely primary school P.E. coaches, is merited.

Considering the suitability of the P.E. context to foster positive developmental outcomes for children, it has been argued that a central mandate of schools is to facilitate the social and moral development of children so that they can make a positive societal contribution (Bailey, 2006; Bailey et al., 2009). Yet it must be acknowledged that there is a difference between P.E.

and sports training. P.E. requires teaching, whilst training requires coaching. The National Primary School P.E. curriculum aims to develop physical competence and engage pupils in competitive sports and activities. There is also a focus on ensuring pupils are physically active for sustained periods of time and lead active, healthy lives (Department of Education, 2013b). Within sport, coaches focus mostly on physical and technical skills, rather than holistic development (Gould, Chung, Smith, & White, 2006; Trottier & Robitaille, 2014). Yet, given the fundamental similarities between both activities, research from both contexts is considered throughout this thesis. Akin to the sporting context, the P.E. environment can suitably nurture the moral development of children (Shields & Bredemeier, 1995), minimising the potentially negative outcomes of participation. However, the structure of youth sport contexts is largely dependent on the actions of and the climate created by the coach (Fraser-Thomas, Côté, & Deakin, 2005; Holt, Tamminen, Tink, & Black, 2009), reiterating the need to conduct research in which coaches are the central focus. With regard to life skill development, deliberately structuring such contexts to teach life skills explicitly is desirable (Bean & Forneris, 2016; Bean, Kramers, Forneris, & Camiré, 2018; Danish, 2002; Kendellen et al., 2017). Therefore, the education and development of coaches who can intentionally embed life skills in their lessons is essential for the avoidance of negative outcomes associated with P.E. and sport participation. However, within the primary school P.E. context, the factors that influence coaches' ability to embed life skills in lessons is unclear, and therefore requires examination.

Researchers suggest that sport is an ideal context for promoting life skills because it offers participants a sense of meaningful change, but requires a significant level of commitment to ensure that change occurs (Danish et al., 1990; Larson, 2000). The opportunities to practice life skills within the sporting environment renders it an ideal environment in which to develop life skills (Collins, Gould, Lauer, & Chung, 2009; Gould, Collins, Lauer, & Chung, 2007). The P.E. environment has also been identified as an ideal context for life skill development

(Goudas, 2010), given the interactive, social and emotional opportunities for development it provides (Danish et al., 2004; Fraser-Thomas et al., 2005; Hellison, Martinek, & Walsh, 2008). However, the official Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 P.E. curriculum document (Department of Education, 2013b) does not explicitly address life skill development. References to life skill development is vague, suggesting pupils “should enjoy communicating, collaborating, and competing with each other” (p.2) and partake in activities that are challenging for individuals and groups. This point highlights the necessity of this project, to enable primary school P.E. coaches to embed life skills in lessons. There is nothing extraordinary about sport or P.E. in terms of life skill development. Whilst there is some evidence to suggest that some life skills (for example discipline, leadership, communication) are learned automatically during sporting activities (Jones & Lavalley, 2009a; Turnnidge, Côté, & Hancock, 2014), there is a common misconception that participating in sport and P.E. automatically teaches children a wide range of social and psychological skills. On the contrary, the idea that sport and P.E. automatically teach children life skills is false (Bailey, 2006; Bailey et al., 2009; Forneris, Camiré, & Trudel, 2012; Gould & Carson, 2008a; Vidoni & Ulman, 2012; Vidoni & Ward, 2006), with evidence suggesting that sport does not necessarily promote healthy youth development (Brunelle, Danish, & Forneris, 2007; McCallister, Blinde, & Weiss, 2000). As such, an understanding of the factors that impact coaches’ ability to elicit positive developmental outcomes and promote life skill development in primary school P.E. lessons, is needed.

Life skills are developed either implicitly or explicitly. The implicit approach contends that life skills are developed automatically, whereby coaches focus on sport-specific outcomes without framing the skills as transferable. The explicit approach is deliberate, whereby coaches intentionally frame the skills they are teaching in sessions as transferable to other contexts (Bean et al., 2016b; Turnnidge et al., 2014). A relatively low level of implicit life skill development results from sport participation. However, research indicates that if life skill

development in sport and P.E. is to be effective, the teaching of these life skills should be deliberate or explicit. Because life skill development is complex and influenced by a multitude of interdependent factors (Fraser-Thomas et al., 2005; Gould & Carson, 2008a), simply playing sport will not result in positive outcomes such as life skill development (Bean & Forneris, 2016, 2017; Bean et al., 2018; Fraser-Thomas et al., 2005; Gould et al., 2007; Larson, 2006). These interdependent factors include coach influence, programme structure, programme delivery environment and social interaction (Chinkov & Holt, 2015), all of which are highly relevant in the primary school P.E. context.

1.2.2 Teaching life skills in the primary school P.E. context

In England, the National primary curriculum states that state-funded schools must promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school, and must prepare pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life (Department of Education, 2014). Given that children in England are obliged to attend school until age 16 (Gov.uk, 2019c), primary school P.E. lessons serve as an opportunity to positively impact the lives of all children, not only those who may participate in sport outside of school. Evidence suggests that by developing life skills during childhood, they will be maintained through adolescence and on into adulthood (Anderson Taylor, 2014; Botvin & Griffin, 2004; Holt et al., 2009; Theokas et al., 2005), and the more life skills they develop, the better (Benson, 2006).

Benson's (2006) 'pile-up effect' suggests that the more strengths a young person possesses, the better off they will be on a variety of outcomes. Support was found for the pile-up effect by Scales et al. (2016), who when reviewing youth development research found a positive association between the number of strengths a young person possesses and academic, behavioural and psychological outcomes. One such way of developing these strengths is by

developing life skills, ensuring young people have the capabilities to survive and thrive during adolescence and adulthood, and that they ultimately lead happy, moral and fully engaged lives (Jones & Lavalley, 2009b). However, for coaches to successfully teach life skills to pupils, it is necessary to understand the factors that influence coaches' capacity to teach life skills. Although the latest statistics show a general increase in the amount of physical activity and sport children are engaged in (see Sport England, 2019a), there remains a requirement to provide children with life skill development opportunities within schools to ensure healthy development (Bailey, 2006; Choi, Park, Jo, & Lee, 2015). Therefore, the primary school P.E. context serves as a logical and appropriate setting for this research, given primary school P.E. coaches are in a position to positively impact the pupils over a sustained period of time. Focus on this context is noteworthy because, as will be highlighted throughout this literature review, there is a dearth of research examining both coach development and life skill development within primary schools.

1.2.3 External delivery of P.E.

To support the delivery of P.E. and improve the quality of P.E. delivery overall, primary schools often use their funding to employ specialist P.E. coaches via external providers such as PLCF to deliver P.E. (Sloan, 2010). From 2005 onwards, all teachers in England were entitled to be released from 10% of their timetable for planning, preparation and assessment, or 'PPA' (Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group, 2003), which opened the door for external providers, including small businesses, charities (such as PLCF), social entrepreneurs and professional sporting organisations to aid in P.E. delivery (Parnell et al., 2016; Sport England, 2005). Further research has highlighted additional challenges in implementing high quality P.E. programmes, including inadequate facilities, a lack of curriculum time, inadequate funding, lack of interest and over reliance on external agencies, and lack of quality marks available to differentiate between external providers (Curtner-Smith, 1999; Mandigo et al., 2004). Yet the

quality of P.E. delivery is also dependant on the individual delivering the lesson. A role which has changed in recent years.

From 2012/13 – 2014/15, the percentage of class teachers delivering P.E. in England dropped from 94% to 83%, whilst the percentage of external sports coaches delivering P.E., such as those employed by PLCF, rose from 38% to 78%, following the P.E. and sport premium introduction (Callanan, Fry, Plunkett, Chanfreau, & Tanner, 2015)*. In their examination of the challenges faced by primary school Head Teachers in providing high quality P.E., researchers noted an increasing demand on external providers to deliver P.E. (Rainer, Copley, Jarvis, & Griffiths, 2012), but a lack of available quality marks differentiating external providers (Parnell et al., 2016). Rainer et al. (2012) noted the increased reliance on external providers was intended to alleviate pressure on teaching staff. Yet this increased reliance on external providers is an inevitable consequence of the 2013 introduction of the P.E. and sport premium, which stated that the primary P.E. workforce did not need to be comprised of qualified teachers (All Party Parliamentary Group on a Fit and Healthy Childhood, 2018). Highly relevant to this research project, Parnell et al. (2016) noted that there is little research on the role of external P.E. providers, especially professional football clubs, and thus they investigated the role professional football clubs play in the delivery of P.E. and school sport in England. The current project aimed to add to knowledge in this area by partnering with a community football organisation to examine how their primary school P.E. coaches teach life skills during P.E. lessons.

Akin to the sentiments expressed by Sport England (2005), Parnell et al. (2016) noted that given government cuts, the emergence of community football organisations as external P.E. providers warranted critical examination to determine the quality of provision. The researchers

* Most recent publication available at time of submission.

found that both the football clubs and schools in question felt that the partnership resulted in professional development on behalf of the teachers and community coaches involved. However, the partnerships were by no means perfect, with teachers highlighting a lack of preparation amongst some community coaches. It was noted that efficiency, predictability and dependability in how resources are shared, how the partnership is managed and how the goals are delivered are the hallmarks of a successful partnership (Babiak, 2007). Ultimately, Parnell et al. (2016) concluded that quality coaching is the key component in the perceived effectiveness of a partnership of this nature. This effectiveness, it was posited, can be achieved through the development of CPD opportunities and quality assurance measures. Within this research project, PLCF represent the community arm of a football club as presented in Parnell et al.'s (2016) work, providing primary schools with full-time P.E. coach at a subsidised rate. The success of P.E. delivery in such arrangements, is not solely determined by the incoming P.E. coach or school P.E. co-ordinator, but it is also dependent on partnership development and good-will (Rainer et al., 2012). Given that there is a dearth of research on community football organisations, and the partnerships in which they are involved, a central focus of the present research project is to explore the mechanisms which underpin the effectiveness of the partnership between PLCF and St. Mary's, as this partnership ultimately mediates the effectiveness of the proposed life skills Coach Development Programme and supporting life skills coaching resource.

The increasing reliance on external sports coaches and organisations to deliver P.E. is associated with a range of challenges. Following the introduction of the P.E. and Sport Strategy for Young People in 2008 (Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, 2008), there has been a continued blurring of the boundaries between P.E. and sports coaching. Kirk (2012) argued this was because the 'five-hour offer' proposed in the strategy, which intended to use P.E. classes as part of a strategy to increase involvement in sport for 5-16 year-olds, was largely

unrealistic, especially for primary schools. Worryingly in secondary schools between 2013-2018, there was a 30% and 40% drop in time spent delivering P.E. in Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 respectively (Youth Sport Trust, 2018). Based the findings presented later in this thesis, it is evident that a similar trend is present in primary schools, therefore placing increased pressure on external providers to deliver high quality P.E. under ever-increasing time constraints. The increased reliance on external coaches may also be because during their entire teacher training, primary school teachers receive a maximum of 12 hours of P.E. subject knowledge, and thus may not have the knowledge or confidence to deliver high quality P.E. (Blair & Capel, 2008). In contrast, prospective football coaches are required to attend a course which is 43 hours in duration (The Football Association, 2017), which may help to explain their emergence and viability as external P.E. providers.

Whilst sports coaching and P.E. teaching are two distinct professions, Cassidy, Jones and Potrac (2008) contend that they are becoming symbiotic, particularly in a school context. Lavin, Swindlehurst and Foster (2008) suggested that the issue of who is delivering P.E. in schools is a concern within teaching, and claimed sports coaches are often used to deliver within curriculum time. This is despite government instruction that the P.E. and sport premium should not be used to employ external coaches to cover planning preparation and assessment arrangement, or to teach minimum requirements of the National Curriculum (Foster, 2018; Gov.uk, 2019b). However, Callanan et al.'s (2015) Department of Education report found that one of the most common uses of the premium was to employ external sports coaches. Therefore the responsibilities and duties thrust upon PLCF primary school P.E. coaches in the primary school context, and the impact these responsibilities and duties have upon the coaches capacity to embed life skills in their lessons, requires investigation.

External coaches employed using the P.E. and sport premium must hold a Level 1 or Level 2 sport specific qualification, alongside a P.E. coaching award (for example UK

Coaching, or Association for Physical Education) (Gov.uk, 2018a). However, these coaches may not be familiar with the life skill aims of the national P.E. curriculum, or life skill development as a concept. Therefore, these coaches will almost certainly rely on implicit life skill development, which does not facilitate sustained life skill development amongst children (Bean & Forneris, 2016, 2017; Forneris et al., 2012; Fraser-Thomas et al., 2005; Gould & Carson, 2008a). Therefore, the current national curriculum approach to life skill development cannot be considered a reliable and/or proactive strategy for creating contributing members of society, or promoting child well-being. The development and implementation of a contextually-grounded life skills development programme, which explicitly embeds life skills teachings in P.E. lessons, is recommended to aid all children in overcoming barriers in their environment, not just those considered at risk (Jacobs & Wright, 2018).

1.2.3.1 PLCF P.E. delivery

In recent decades, there has been an increase in the demand for external primary school P.E. providers (Rainer et al., 2012). Reasons for this increase include a desire for Head Teachers to alleviate pressure on teaching staff (Rainer et al., 2012), the increased funding available as part of the P.E. and Sport Premium for primary schools, and a desire to use external coaches to help class teachers develop professionally (Parnell et al., 2016). This increased reliance has resulted in community football organisations delivering P.E. in primary schools (Parnell et al., 2016; Parnell, Stratton, Drust, & Richardson, 2013). PLCF are one such organisation, who as part of their philanthropic mission, provide heavily subsidised P.E. delivery to primary schools. This offer includes support for the delivery of P.E., full- and part-time coaches to plan and deliver lessons, and assistance with feedback and assessment on pupils, to ensure that pupils are developing physically, socially and emotionally. The focus of this research project are the full-time coaches, who deliver P.E. lessons in schools five days per week. A central focus of the PLCF primary school P.E. programmes is to increase the

physical activity levels and enhance mental well-being amongst pupils. PLCF aims to give pupils the opportunity to lead a happy and healthy life, by enabling the pupils to take the skills they have learned in P.E. and apply them in other contexts. To a large degree, these objectives align with those of the national curriculum, which aims to ensure that pupils develop competence in a broad range of physical activities, are physically active for sustained time periods, engage in competitive sport and activities, and lead active and healthy lives (Department of Education, 2013a). To ensure that PLCF coaches did not leave the development of transferable skills learned during P.E. up to chance (Bean et al., 2018), at the outset of planning for this project, PLCF management identified life skills as a deliberate and targeted approach to developing transferable skills within P.E. By funding a project to develop P.E. coaches' capacity to embed life skills in lessons, PLCF are illustrating their commitment to enhance the physical and psychological well-being of young people within South London (see Section 2.5.2 & Section 2.5.3).

1.2.3.2 The F.A. four corner player development model

At this juncture, it is appropriate to introduce The F.A. four corner player development model (henceforth known as the 'four corner model') given its relative prominence in this research project. Launched in 2014, The F.A.'s England DNA outlined a now five-pronged playing and coaching philosophy for England teams, and a vision of the future England senior international player (The Football Association, 2014). F.A. qualified coaches, from grassroots to elite level, have been tasked with using the four corner model to develop the skills and attributes of this future England player, with the model being applied at all levels of the game. The skills and attributes which make up the four corner model include technical, physical, social and psychological skills (The Football Association, 2015; see Appendix 1). Given this research is exploring life skill development amongst primary school P.E. coaches employed by a community football organisation, the social and psychological components of the four corner

model are acutely relevant. Therefore, the model serves as a soft introduction for coaches from a footballing background to the area life skill development. According to The F.A., social skills are concerned with the following areas; behaviour, reflection, teamwork, relationships, accountability, responsibility and independence. Regarding psychological skills, The F.A. intend to develop reflective, resourceful and resilient players who display these skills and attributes; confidence, creativity, concentration, communication, control and commitment (The Football Association, 2015). The psychosocial aims of the four corner model are closely aligned with life skill development, given that life skills promote psychosocial development (Côté & Fraser-Thomas, 2007; Gould & Carson, 2008a).

There social and psychological corners of the model has further relevance in the context of this research project, especially given the dearth of research on the role of professional football club community programmes delivering P.E. (Parnell et al., 2016, 2013). As PLCF are affiliated with a Premier League football club, their coaching staff are mandated to hold at least an F.A. Level 1 in coaching football qualification, and are expected to be working towards their Level 2 qualification. As is outlined in Section 3.1.6.3, the PLCF coaches participating in this research study all possess F.A. qualifications, and are thus familiar with the four corner model, its contents, and its purpose. Based on the above-described link between the social and psychological components of the four corner model and life skill development, it was deemed appropriate to frame life skill development within the context of four corner player development, given the participants' familiarity with it. Furthermore, Parnell et al. (2016) found that primary school Head Teachers do not simply employ community coaches to fill gaps in P.E. provision, but wish to draw in football-specific expertise. It could be argued that although the footballing and primary school P.E. contexts are different, Head Teachers recognise the positive aspects of football coaching and thus are open to coaches transposing coaching behaviours from a football to a P.E. context, making adjustments where necessary.

As such, it was deemed appropriate to incorporate the four corner model into this research project when deemed a useful heuristic to support coach understanding.

1.2.4 Research question, aims and chapter contents

The purpose and research question associated with this research project is an examination of the influences on primary school P.E. coaches' ability to embed life skills in lessons. To answer this question, and develop an understanding of these influences, a detailed account of a coach development Participatory Action Research (PAR) project in a primary school P.E context will be provided. Additionally, the development of a living theory of practice (McNiff & Whitehead, 2011) is detailed across a three-stage research study. Two project aims will allow the research question to be answered. The first aim is to examine the ecological influences that impact P.E. coach behaviour change, and explain how these influences impacted coaches' ability to change their practice and embed life skills in their lessons. Pursuit of this aim will help to explain the various contextual factors that impact a primary school P.E. coach's ability to change their coaching behaviours whilst working in schools. The second aim is to use PAR to enable primary school P.E. coaches to change their practice and embed life skills in their lessons, for the benefit of the pupils' physical and psychological well-being. The achievement of these aims, and the development of a theory of practice which guided the investigation, was in a three-stage PAR study, the contents of which will now be detailed.

This thesis is composed of five chapters. This chapter has introduced the research project, its stakeholders, and life skills development, Chapter 2 is a literature review, whilst Chapter 3 outlines the methodological approach taken for this research project. Chapter 4 is the main study chapter, and is divided into three stages; the Introduction and Planning Stage, the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage, and the Conclusion Stage. The Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage is the main study stage, and is further divided into five phases. Phase 1 aimed

to assess participant knowledge of life skill development. Phase 2 aimed to detail the development of a Life Skills Coaching Resource using PAR, and to produce the finalised resource as a tangible outcome to help coaches change their practice. Phase 3 aimed to assess participant readiness to engage in a Coach Development Programme. Phase 4 aimed to assess the partnership between the university and PLCF using Parent and Harvey's (2009) Management Model for Sport and Physical Activity Community-based Partnerships. This assessment detailed how aspects of the partnership impacts coaches' capacity to change their behaviours. This phase also aimed to provide guidance for those involved in establishing similar research partnerships in future. Phase 5 aimed to assess the fidelity of a Coach Development Programme using the Kirkpatrick (1959, 1976, 1996) training evaluation model. All phases combine to represent a living theory of practice within the research context. Chapter 5 includes a discussion of the main findings from the research project, a reflective epilogue, and details the project limitations and avenues for future research and practice based on the research findings. A concluding section is then presented.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction to literature review

The forthcoming literature review is comprised of five main sections. Section 2.1.1 will provide some examples of existing life skill development programmes outside sport and P.E. contexts. Following this, Section 2.2 will differentiate between sport, P.E., and physical activity, explain the similarities between each of these domains, and illustrate how life skills have been integrated into each of these domains. An overview of life skill development programmes, interventions, and evaluations is then presented in tabular format. The key implications for this thesis, based on the review of these sources, are then stated. The application of life skill development programmes in a primary school P.E. context is then addressed in Section 2.3. Section 2.4 introduces the implicit and explicit approaches to life skill development, whilst the merits of both approaches are critically examined in the ensuing sub-sections. Bean et al.'s (2018) implicit/explicit continuum, which plays a central role in this research project, is then introduced. Moreover, a comprehensive explanation of the implicit and explicit approaches to developing life skills is provided, detailing how both approaches can be combined to optimally develop life skills in children (Bean et al., 2018). Section 2.5 provides an overview of primary school P.E. delivery nationwide, and rationalises the suitability of the primary school P.E. context for life skills development. The section serves to detail the current state of P.E. provision in schools nationwide, before rationalising life skill development as a way of addressing the risk factors associated with physical and mental ill-health in primary school-aged children. The final section, Section 2.6, provides a brief summary of the literature review and highlights avenues for future research.

As will be discussed, research shows that possessing a comprehensive set of life skills is advantageous to any person, at any age, in any walk of life. For the purposes of clarity and to effectively contextualise this literature review, the age ranges of the different global population categories which have been studied (See Table 2.1) are defined. These categories align with

previously accepted global guidelines (World Health Organisation, 2013a). This research is most concerned with those who fall within the ‘child’ category, given that those aged 5-11 are obliged to attend primary school (Gov.uk, 2019d), and therefore represents the age-range to which participant coaches deliver. Within this range, children aged 5-7 enrol in Key Stage 1 (KS1) and those aged 7-11 enrol in Key Stage 2 (KS2). (Department of Education, 2014).

Table 2.1 Global population categories

Category	Age Range (years)
Infant	<1
Child (<i>Early Years</i>) (<i>Key Stage 1</i>) (<i>Key Stage 2</i>)	1-11 (4-5) (5-7) (7-11)
Adolescent (<i>Key Stage 3</i>) (<i>Key Stage 4</i>)	12-17 (11-14) (14-16)
Adult	18+

2.1.1 Life skills development outside sport and P.E.

Whilst this research concerns life skill development in sport and P.E, it is important to recognise that sport is not the only context in which life skill development research exists. There is ample life skills research outside the sport and P.E. domains. However, it is beyond the scope and remit of this review to address it all. Therefore, this section will provide a succinct overview of some the more prominent sources in primary school, secondary school, and community-based contexts. An early example is Botvin and Kantor's (2000) review of the theory, methods and empirical findings on life skills and alcohol, tobacco and other drug (ATOD) use amongst high school students. These researchers found that a combination of teaching social resistance skills alongside general life skills was effective in reducing ATOD use. Botvin, Griffin, Paul and Macaulay's (2003) investigation of a life skills-based substance use prevention programme saw a 61% and 25% reduction in smoking and alcohol use respectively amongst primary school students, suggesting life skills can be used as a tool to combat substance abuse. Similarly, Wenzel, Weichold and Silbereisen (2009) concluded that

life skills can reduce long-term alcohol consumption amongst 10-13 year-olds. Life skill development programmes have also been implemented in other areas, such as suicide prevention. One such programme is the Zuni Life Skills Development Programme for Native American high-school students. Lafromboise and Lewis (2008) found this seven-step intervention programme positively impacted feelings of hopelessness, suicidal ideation and peer support ability following the implementation of the culturally-adapted programme. Yankah and Aggleton (2008) reviewed the effectiveness of life skills education for HIV protection amongst young people, concluding life skills increased knowledge of and changed attitudes towards high-risk sexual behaviours. However, the researchers also acknowledged that behaviour change was modest.

Whilst these examples provide only a brief insight into life skill development research outside sport and P.E. context, it is evident that the life skill development is beneficial across a range of contexts. However, as will be presented in this literature review, a large proportion of contemporary research surrounding life skill development is based in the Sport and P.E. contexts, therefore having particular relevance for this research project.

2.2 Sport, physical activity and physical education-based life skill development programmes

Although there is considerable life skills research in sport, physical activity and physical education, it must be acknowledged that these are three separate research domains. The term ‘sport’ is a generic descriptor (Bailey & Dismore, 2004), and is typically organised according to age, sex, level of ambition, weight, or other classifications (Swedish Research Council for Sport Science (CIF), 2016). It is defined as a subset of individual or team exercises where participants have a predetermined goal (Khan et al., 2012). Sport has been noted as a context in which life skills can be developed (Choi et al., 2014; Turnnidge et al., 2014).

Moreover it has been concluded that the sporting context can be highly conducive to life skill development if sport skills and life skills are taught simultaneously (Bean, Forneris, & Halsall, 2014; Bowley, Cropley, Neil, Hanton, & Mitchell, 2018; Koh, Ong, & Camiré, 2014). Yet sport is a voluntary endeavour. It is not compulsory for children to participate in sport, and only those who actively engage can hope to develop life skills as a result of participation. Those who choose not to participate simply cannot benefit from the life skill development opportunities that sport provides. Physical activity, is defined as any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that requires energy expenditure (World Health Organisation, 2019). Physical activity is often used interchangeably with the term ‘exercise’, and in the context of this research project it is represented by planned, structured and repetitive conditioning activities (Caspersen, Powell, & Christenson, 1985), such as running or exercise classes. Within the life skill development research there is evidence of female-only physical activity programmes, such as Strong Girls (Brown & Fry, 2011), Girls Just Wanna Have Fun (Bean et al., 2014) and Girls on the Move (Anderson Taylor, 2014), which have successfully developed life skills amongst participants. However, outside of targeted programmes, physical activity is often an individual endeavour, and often no coach is present to develop life skills amongst participants. Additionally, as with life skills gained through sport, only those who actively engage in physical activity classes can hope to develop life skills.

The integration of life skill development strategies across sport and physical activity domains has become both popular and critical, given that these contexts can serve as dually productive, developing both physical and psychosocial skills of participants (Gould & Carson, 2008b, 2008a; Petitpas et al., 2005). Sport and physical activity contexts also provide a great opportunity for life skill integration, as they are interactive and emotional, and can provide pro-social opportunities for teamwork, goal setting, conflict resolution and leadership (Fraser-Thomas et al., 2005; Hellison et al., 2008). However, given that children are in no way

guaranteed to engage in either context, the capacity of these environments to facilitate widespread life skill development is relatively limited. However, the P.E. context can address this limitation.

P.E. is the planned, progressive application of physical movement that takes place in a school curriculum. It includes learning how to run, jump, throw and catch, develop flexibility, strength, technique and balance, and learning a range of non-physical skills through movement (Association for Physical Education, 2015; Department of Education, 2013b). Goudas (2010) argued that the P.E. context is an ideal setting in which young people can develop their life skills because it is an activity that almost all children participate in. Another positive aspect of the P.E. context that has particular relevance to this research, is the idea that primary school P.E. coaches are effectively guaranteed consistent time with the pupils over the course of the term or school year. This prolonged exposure gives the coaches the consistency that is needed to effectively facilitate life skill development in children. Given all children are mandated to participate in P.E. in school (Gov.uk, 2018b), the P.E. context serves as the most effective context in which to develop life skills amongst children, when compared to sport or physical activity. Whilst the core similarity between all three contexts is physical movement, the applicability of life skills across all three contexts, given their similarities, is clearly evidenced in the literature. This section will provide a critical examination of life skill development programmes across these research areas, and present a contemporary overview life skill development research.

Another notable similarity across the three aforementioned contexts is the presence of peer relationships, which play a salient role in motivation and participation (Smith & McDonough, 2008; Ullrich-French & Smith, 2009), and can facilitate life skill development. When examining the strengths and limitations of implicit and explicit life skill transfer, which will be elaborated upon in Section 2.4, Turnnidge et al. (2014) reasoned that P.E. may be the

most appropriate context for life skill development, as those delivering may be able to integrate teaching explicit transfer strategies into the curriculum. Turnnidge's claim stands to reason, as the National Primary School P.E. curriculum states that P.E. should integrate communication, collaboration, competition, and challenges for individuals and groups (Department of Education, 2013b). There is also precedent for investigating life skill development across more than one context, with Koh, Ong and Camiré (2014) investigating the perspectives of P.E. teachers and sport coaches (as well as participants from both contexts) from a Singaporean school partaking in a programme designed to teach values through sport and P.E. These researchers concluded that P.E. and sport contexts are conducive to the learning of values, but adult leaders must be trained appropriately to promote learning. Within England, teaching life skills through P.E. may align with the government's mandate to promote British values in schools (Department of Education & Lord Nash, 2014). Similarly, Hellison's Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility framework (Hellison, 1995, 2003, 2011; Hellison et al., 2008; Martinek, Schilling, & Hellison, 2006) has been applied in both sport and physical activity contexts, and advocates the teaching of life skills alongside athletic skills. Given this considerable crossover in the life skills literature in sport, P.E. and physical activity, evidence from all three contexts is included in this literature review.

Table 2.2 presents an overview of key life skill development programmes, interventions, and evaluations. Although not all of the programmes presented are strictly life skill development programmes, the skills, dispositions and/or values which they aim to teach are themselves considered life skills, and therefore justify review. The table includes the specific life skills associated with each programme, and provides critical analysis points for each initiative based on the empirical evidence cited and associated life skill development research. Drawing on Table 2.2, the key implications for this thesis are that the context in which

such programmes are delivered must be accounted for, and that an explicit focus on life skill development is desirable.

Table 2.2 Life skill development programmes, interventions, and evaluations (in chronological order of publication)

Intervention & authors	Targeted demographic	Purpose	Delivery	Empirical examinations	Life skills taught	Critiques
GOAL (Danish, 1997; Danish et al., 1992b, 1992a)	Adolescent school children	Teach adolescents a sense of personal control and confidence to make improved decisions and become better citizens.	Peer mentors are trained to deliver the programme. Peer-led programme that uses sport as a metaphor to teach life skills.	(Brunelle et al., 2007; Danish, 1997; Forneris, Danish, & Scott, 2007; Goudas, Dermitzaki, Aggeliki, & Danish, 2006; O'Hearn & Gatz, 1999)	Goal setting Problem-solving Positive thinking Seeking social support	Only suitable for adolescent school children. Life skills and sports skills taught separately.
Play it Smart (Danish, Petitpas, & Hale, 1993)	Adolescent American Football players in disadvantaged communities	Improve academic grades and graduation rates, increase involvement in community service activities, and increase knowledge and use of health enhancing behaviours.	Academic-coach leads context-specific programme at each site to mobilise existing resources to achieve programme aims. The academic-coach designs ongoing team-building activities, such as trips to sporting events and community service projects. Academic-coach engages parents, school personnel, and community leaders, to ensure skills are reinforced elsewhere.	(Petitpas, Van Raalte, Cornelius, & Presbury, 2004)	Different for each one of 88 delivery sites. Variety of life skills related to improving academic grades and graduation rates (such as goal setting), increasing involvement in community service (such as social responsibility), and health enhancing behaviours (such as discipline)	Only suitable for aspiring adolescent American Footballers. Grants autonomy to academic-coaches. Focuses on the optimisation of existing skills, rather than the remediation of pathological, health compromising or illegal behaviours.
Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (Hellison, 1995, 2003, 2011; Hellison et al., 2008)	Primary school children Secondary school children At-risk youth	Teach individual responsibility through physical activity, sport and P.E. Idea that for young people to be efficient, contributing individuals in their own context, they must first learn how to be responsible for themselves and others.	Five levels of personal responsibility and control, effort, self-coaching, leadership, and transference, are delivered by trained mentors in sport, physical activity, and P.E.-based sessions, over short- or long-term period.	(Caballero-Blanco, Delgado-Noguera, & Escartí-Carbonell, 2013; Cushion, Armour, & Jones, 2003; Escartí, Gutiérrez, Pascual, & Llopis, 2010; Hellison & Walsh, 2002; Martinek et al., 2006; Martinek, Shilling, & Johnson, 2001)	Personal responsibility Social responsibility Personal control Effort Self-coaching Leadership Respect Participation Communication Goal setting Independence Improved behaviour Self-efficacy Self-regulated learning Conflict resolution	Promotes life skill transfer. Daily format is similar to P.E. lesson, which allows teacher to set concrete goals for children. Facilitates teacher reflection. TPSR programmes are designed and implemented by universities, and trained mentors are often university students.

Table 2.2 (Continued)

Intervention & authors	Targeted demographic	Purpose	Delivery	Empirical examinations	Life skills taught	Critiques
SUPER (Danish, Fazio, Nellen, & Owens, 2002; Danish et al., 2004)	Adolescent sport participants	Using sport as a foundation to teach goal setting and overcoming adversity.	Adaptation of GOAL programme. 18-module course which involves three activities; learning sport-specific physical skills; learning life skills related to sport; and playing the chosen sport. 18 modules delivered by trained leaders or peers.	(Brunelle et al., 2007; Danish et al., 2004; Papacharisis et al., 2005)	Goal setting Problem solving Positive thinking Personal responsibility Social responsibility Prosocial values	Life skills teaching are not always integrated with sports skills. Sometimes life skills and sports skills are taught separately.
The First Tee (Weiss, 2006)	Child golfers Adolescent golfers	Enhance the life skills of youth participants by combining the influence of the golfing context and programme-trained golf coaches to develop children's behavioural and psychosocial skills.	Trained and certified First Tee golf coaches teach a standardised curriculum, and integrate life skills into golf lessons.	(Weiss, 2006; Weiss, Bolter, & Kipp, 2016; Weiss, Stunz, Bhalla, Bolter, & Price, 2013)	Honesty Integrity Sportsmanship Respect Confidence Responsibility Perseverance Courtesy Judgement Self-management Goal setting Meeting and greeting appropriately Dealing with negative thoughts	Programme delivered solely in United States. Programme coaches may only attend two-day workshop, during which they are trained in deliberate teaching methods. Golf is a highly repetitive, individual, and largely predictable sport.
ELITE (Jones, Lavalley, & Tod, 2011)	Adolescent hockey and tennis players	Increase participants' self-awareness of perceived use of life skills through reflective practice.	Two-phase programme. Participants met with first author on four occasions for one hour in each phase. Phase one focused on communication. Phase two focused on organisation. Sessions teach participants how to reflect.	(Jones et al., 2011)	Communication Organisation	Programme designed specifically for British adolescent athletes. Life skills and sports skills taught separately. Reliance on self-report measure to assess perceived life skill use.

Table 2.2 (Continued)

Intervention & authors	Targeted demographic	Purpose	Delivery	Empirical examinations	Life skills taught	Critiques
Strong Girls (Brown & Fry, 2011)	Female primary school children	Enhance life skills such as confidence, positive thinking and social skills, alongside physical fitness in primary schools girls.	University graduates/ students with a background or interest in sports psychology are trained to deliver the programme. Activities include physical activities, team-building activities, life skill discussions, and reflection activities.	(Brown & Fry, 2011, 2014)	Confidence Positive thinking Social skills Task-orientated goal setting	Reliance on self-report measures to assess programme fidelity.
Singaporean primary school (Koh et al., 2014)	P.E. teachers Sports coaches Primary school P.E. students Child athletes	Develop values through a P.E. and sport programme.	First author served as programme leader, and implemented the four-phase value-based programme. These phases were introduction, planning, practical, and review.	(Koh et al., 2014)	Integrity Respect Commitment Resilience	Values that underpinned programme were that of the school programme was taught in. Perceived development of life skills based on participant interview only.
Girls Just Wanna Have Fun (Bean et al., 2014)	Adolescent females	Aim to provide female youth with opportunities to be physically active, to facilitate life skill development, and to enable opportunities for youth voice.	Based on TPSR, the programme integrates life skill activities from SUPER. Trained programme instructors deliver sessions consisting of four main components; relational time, awareness talk, physical activity/sport, and group discussion.	(Bean, Forneris, et al., 2014; Bean et al., 2016b)	Emotional regulation Focus Goal setting Respect Responsibility Communication	Designed for female adolescents only.
Girls on the Move (Anderson Taylor, 2014)	Adolescent females	Increase opportunities for girls to partake in physical activities by training new leaders to deliver physical activities in their local communities. Targeted at low-income individuals in Scotland.	Main component of the course is a dance leadership qualification. Participants attend a 33-hour course, and have to complete a one hour demonstration of newly learned leadership skills.	(Anderson Taylor, 2014)	Global self-esteem Leadership	Designed for female adolescents only. Life skills and sports skills taught separately.

Table 2.2 (Continued)

Intervention & authors	Targeted demographic	Purpose	Delivery	Empirical examinations	Life skills taught	Critiques
Brazilian jiu-jitsu (Chinkov & Holt, 2015)	Brazilian jiu-jitsu instructors Adult Brazilian jiu-jitsu participants	Teach and examine implicit life skill transfer in Brazilian jiu-jitsu.	Brazilian jiu-jitsu identified as a sport with underlying philosophy that is suited to life skill development. Instructors conducted lessons as usual, complemented by peer support.	(Chinkov & Holt, 2015)	Respect for others Perseverance Self-confidence Healthy habits	Reliance on implicit life skill development. No targeted life skills intervention.
South African youth (Whitley, Wright, & Gould, 2016)	Youth football, netball, rugby, athletics, and cricket coaches.	Examined if and under what conditions life skills are learned in youth sport in South Africa.	A variety of sports, including football, netball, rugby, athletics, and cricket, were delivered. Effective strategies for teaching life skills included discussions and modelling, but was not standardised intervention/ curriculum.	(Whitley et al., 2016)	Self-regulation Work ethic Social interaction Emotional control Leadership Prevention of drug and alcohol abuse	Employing methodological triangulation may provide a more detailed and realistic account of the life skills learned and used by participants. Over-reliance on implicit life skill development.
Playing for Fun and Life (Lee et al., 2017)	Primary school children	Afterschool club that integrates football and life skills to teach four core areas of individual player skills, team player skills, competing player skills, and thriving player skills.	Trained instructors teach the programme over a 12-week afterschool programme using a programme-specific manual.	(Lee et al., 2017)	Social skills Coping skills Goal setting	Designed for and implemented in South Korean secondary school context. Instructor training takes place at a university.
Golf Canada (Kendellen et al., 2017)	Child golfers	Promote the teaching of life skills through golf, and apply Golf Canada's Life Skills Framework.	Trained instructors integrate life skills into lessons using four guiding principles; focus on one life skill per lesson, introduce life skill at beginning of lesson, implement strategies to teach the life skill during lesson, and debrief life skill at the end of lesson.	(Kendellen et al., 2017)	Focus Perseverance Goal setting Emotional regulation Sportspersonship Honesty Respect Teamwork	Participants given opportunity to practice life skills during lessons. Instructors provided concrete examples of life skill transfer. Golf is a highly repetitive, individual, and largely predictable sport.

2.3 Life skill development in a primary school context

Whilst the P.E. context is ripe for life skill development, as evidenced above, there is limited focus on life skill development in primary school contexts. Moreover, what is notable in the case of this research project, is that there appears to be a minimal focus on the role of coaches in developing life skills. However, there are examples of effective life skill development programmes in the primary school P.E. context. For example, Martinek et al. (2001) evaluated 'Project Effort', a physical activity-based personal and social responsibility mentoring programme for underserved primary school children. The programme aimed to improve children's responsibility for their academic work and school behaviour. Results showed that although participants were able to apply the goal of effort to learning tasks in the classroom, transferring these skills to the classroom was difficult. This transfer was described as a "formidable challenge" and required further study (Martinek et al., 2001, p.43). However, contemporary research from Bean et al. (2018) would suggest that to overcome this challenge, coaches need to set tasks for children to transfer skills to non-P.E. contexts.

More recent research from Escartí et al. (2010) analysed the application of the TPSR model in a primary school P.E. context throughout an academic year. Findings showed that the model aided teachers in systematically structuring classes around life skill development and promoted responsible behaviour amongst participants. Life skills such as conflict management, empathy, communication and self-consciousness improved amongst the students. This systematic structuring has parallels with Bean et al.'s (2018) explicit approach to life skill development, whereby life skills receive intentional focus during lessons. Furthermore, Caballero-Blanco et al. (2013) analysed TPSR implementation in a range of contexts including primary schools, concluding that the model contributed towards positive development of children by improving responsibility behaviours and social skills. Whilst the TPSR model does not meet the life skill demands of children with regard to number of life skills it teaches, both

studies provide evidence that if harnessed effectively, the primary school P.E. context can be conducive for life skill development.

Koh et al.'s (2014) investigated the perspectives of Singaporean primary school teachers and students participating in a sport-based values training programme. The researchers found that teachers believed the programme allowed them to acquire the pedagogical strategies required to teach life skills. Moreover, participation allowed teachers to solidify their P.E. coaching philosophy by placing equal emphasis on life skill development and technical skill development during lessons. Pupils reported learning about integrity, respect, resilience and commitment, and many reported that they believed they would be able to apply the skills they had learned outside the primary school context. The findings appear to support Turnnidge et al.'s (2014) contention that when compared to subjects such as mathematics or English, life skills teachings and transfer can be integrated more effectively into P.E. lessons. Tessier, Sarrazin and Ntoumanis' (2010) conclusions reaffirm these findings. These researchers found that intentionally structuring the P.E. environment and training P.E. staff to foster social skills in pupils, results in psychosocial development amongst 8-13 year olds. However, it is not simply the environment structure and taught material that enhances life skill development in a primary school context. The presence of a caring, encouraging and empathic primary school teacher-student relationship, and encouragement to work together is associated with increased self-determined motivation on the students' behalf (Van den Berghe, Vansteenkiste, Cardon, Kirk, & Haerens, 2014). This has undoubted implications for those aiming to develop life skills through P.E., as the quality of coach training and coach-child relationship may mediate programme success.

2.4 Implicit and explicit life skill development

Sport is one of the most popular activities amongst children and youth, and is associated with numerous physical, mental and social benefits (Coakley, 2011; Pedersen & Thibault, 2014). These associations are typically based on the assumption that sport possesses an intangible list of inherent qualities which allows it to serve as a vehicle for the holistic development of young people (Brunelle et al., 2007; Lyras & Welty Peachey, 2011). However, this developmental connection is not inherent, but instead dependent on a variety of programmatic and contextual factors (Jones et al., 2016; Turnnidge et al., 2014), including the ability and knowledge of those delivering programmes to play a central role in life skill development (Bailey, 2006; Bailey et al., 2009; Forneris et al., 2012; Gould & Carson, 2008a). Whilst sport participants experience demands such as competition, skill building and social endeavour, along with programme designs and coaches that can influence learning (Pierce et al., 2017), the idea that sport automatically develops character and life skills in youth participants is questionable (Bailey et al., 2009; Coakley, 2017; Forneris et al., 2012; Gould & Carson, 2008a). This lack of automatic life skill development also has implications for primary school P.E. Whilst the national curriculum states that the aims of P.E. include developing character, communication skills, and collaboration skills (Department of Education, 2014), those delivering P.E. need to deliberately plan interventions and strategies if life skill development is to take place (Danish, 2002). According to Camiré, Trudel and Forneris (2014), the development of competent and knowledgeable coaches, and an alteration in how coaches think about their role, is required to create an optimal environment for life skill development. Facilitating this alteration within primary school P.E. coaches is a central focus of this research project.

A central reason life skill development and transfer does not automatically occur in sport and P.E. is because participants are not always capable of conceptualising that the skills

they have learned in these contexts are applicable elsewhere (Camiré, Trudel, & Forneris, 2012; Petitpas et al., 2005). In examining the development and transfer of life skills, researchers have debated the merits of two distinct approaches to teaching, implicit and explicit (Turnnidge et al., 2014). The implicit approach focuses attention towards developing sport-specific outcomes, and relies on automatic life skill development. For example, a P.E. coach who instructs pupils to speak to one another during games in a lesson, but does not make an explicit link to communication, nor reference how communication skills can be used in other contexts. The explicit approach involves coaches intentionally framing the skills during sport and P.E. as applicable in other contexts. For example, a P.E. teacher who discusses the use of goal setting in a P.E. lesson, integrates goal setting into the lesson, and also provides examples of how goal setting can be applied at home or in the classroom (Bean, Kendellen, & Forneris, 2016b; Turnnidge et al., 2014).

2.4.1 Implicit approach

The implicit approach suggests that life skill development is an automatic consequence of sport participation. McCallister et al. (2000) interviewed 22 volunteer youth softball and baseball coaches with no formal life skills training, and found that whilst the coaches recognised the value of teaching life skills, their explanations of how they taught life skills were vague and inconsistent. The researchers subsequently concluded that coaches believed that life skills were automatically developed through participation. Yet it would be unreasonable to expect coaches who are unfamiliar with life skill development to employ anything but an implicit approach. In a related study on life skill development in high school sport, Holt et al., (2008) examined if and how youth learned life skills through football. They concluded that the structure created by the coach provided opportunities for students to learn life skills, rather than explicitly teaching them. The coach provided opportunities for participants to show life skills, but did not teach the life skills or explain transfer. Moreover,

the coaches' primary focus appeared to be football performance. However, this clear reliance on implicit life skill development is to be expected, as even now the research area is in its infancy (Carson Sackett & Gano-Overway, 2017). Only in recent years have researchers focused on the deliberate, explicit approach (Bean & Forneris, 2016; Bean et al., 2018).

Whilst largely erratic, research has shown that youth can develop the ability to transfer life skills beyond sport, even if coaches do not explicitly focus on the development and transfer of these skills (Camiré & Trudel, 2010; Jones & Lavallee, 2009a). Trottier and Robitaille (2014) assessed life skill development in high school and community sport, and found that coaches often believed that transfer of life skills such as stress management and perseverance was automatic. More recently, Chinkov and Holt (2015) examined implicit transfer of life skills in Brazilian jiu-jitsu. Participants reported that they did not receive specific life skill instruction. Instead the life skills that participants developed and transferred were inherent features of Brazilian jiu-jitsu, as they are required to meet the demands of the sport. Furthermore, the researchers concluded that the values and characteristics of the sport, peer support, and the role of the coach combined to create an atmosphere conducive to implicit learning life skills, whereby participants could be active agents in their own life skill development. Although an effective example, this fundamental limitation of this approach of the is that it leaves life skills development up to chance (Bean et al., 2018), which is undesirable.

In another examination of implicit life skill development, Choi et al. (2015) assessed the influence of a 9-month sports mentoring programme on life skill development. The researchers concluded that whilst it is possible for life skills to be learned implicitly without a pre-structured programme, a structured programme improved life skill transfer. This was because within the structured programme, mentors provided participants with metaphors linking sport and life skills. Subsequent research conducted by Bean and Forneris (2017) aimed

to understand youth sports coaches' perceptions of life skill development. Participating coaches from a wide variety of backgrounds revealed that whilst they were hopeful life skill transfer occurred, they did not deliberately facilitate life skills transfer. Furthermore, this research revealed many coaches with 30+ years of coaching experience had maintained the belief that life skills were an automatic by-product of sport participation. It appears that the coaches experienced challenges when attempting to adopt new coaching behaviours to teach life skills explicitly. Data interpretation suggests that coaches also appeared to believe that life skill development was an implicit process, which was reflected in their practice as they offered little or no opportunities for transfer throughout. As will be discussed in Phase 1 of the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage, a similar attitude to life skill transfer was held by the Premier League Football Club Community Foundation (PLCF) primary school P.E. coaches at the beginning of the research process.

Whilst implicit life skill development works to a point, Turnnidge et al. (2014) highlighted some of the drawbacks of relying solely on the implicit approach. The researchers reiterate the idea that by approaching life skills from a purely implicit standpoint leads to reduced control over the skills acquired by the programme participants. They also argue that the outcomes of any life skills development programme grounded in implicit learning will have less predictable outcomes than explicitly structured programmes. Furthermore, Turnnidge et al. (2014) concluded that reliance on an implicit approach can undermine life skill programme fidelity, as participants in these programmes may not necessarily be capable of linking the skills they develop in sport and how they can use these skills in non-sporting contexts. At the same time, researchers have stated that the implicit transfer approach is possible, but only if life skills happen to form part of the coaches' underlying philosophies (Camiré et al., 2012; Collins, Gould, Lauer, & Chung, 2009). This would mean that if an implicit approach were to be taken, coaches would have to have an existing knowledge of life skills development and transfer.

However, it could be argued that all coaches naturally employ an implicit approach to life skill development to a degree through unconscious modelling (Gould & Carson, 2008a; Whitley et al., 2016), irrespective of their awareness of or intention to teach life skills. Whilst evidently not effective practice, an implicit approach may be suitable for organisations and programmes which have limited resources. Such organisations may not have the financial means or staff numbers required to comprehensively design and implement an explicitly-grounded programme (Turnnidge et al., 2014). Yet by relying on implicit life skill development, organisations are unquestionably undermining the potential success of a life skill development programme and the role of the coach in teaching these skills from their inception.

2.4.2 Explicit approach

Researchers more widely advocate the use of an explicit approach to life skill development. The explicit approach suggests that practitioners must deliberately embed life skills in their practice. Fraser-Thomas, Côté and Deakin (2005) argued against implicit life skill development in sport, suggesting instead that participation does not ensure the development of desirable habits and dispositions. Rather, programmes need to be explicitly designed to teach life skills (Bean et al., 2018), with coaches required to play an active role in appropriate implementation. In their examination of award winning American high school football coaches, Gould et al. (2007) stressed the importance of coaches identifying deliberate strategies, like actively involving students in goal setting activities, providing individualised feedback, and building peer relationships to facilitate life skill development. Regarding transfer, the coaches said they placed a repeated emphasis on applying the skills they learned in a football context elsewhere, which is indicative of the most reliable approach to life skill development.

In their examination of the strengths and limitations of implicit and explicit life skills transfer in a sporting context, Turnnidge et al., (2014) acknowledged that P.E. contexts are well

suited for the integration of explicit strategies. The researchers suggested that in sporting contexts, programme leaders should not only make participants aware that the skills they learn are applicable elsewhere, but provide participants with opportunities to practice transfer and outline strategies to apply these life skills in additional contexts (Camiré, Trudel, & Forneris, 2009; Zakrajsek, Lauer, & Bodey, 2017). This strategy could be applied in a primary school P.E. context, whereby primary school P.E. coaches may provide pupils with similar opportunities. The rationale for this strategy is that without explicit intervention, participants may not possess the confidence or knowledge to apply the skills in non-sporting contexts themselves (Danish et al., 1993). A significant conclusion reached by Turnnidge et al. (2014), was that the explicit approach must emphasise the role of programme leaders in promoting life skills transfer, with additional evaluations of explicitly structured sports-based programmes showing positive results (Brunelle et al., 2007; Weiss, 2013). Koh et al.'s (2014) investigation of teacher, coach, student and athlete perspectives of a values training programme revealed that the P.E. teachers involved would deliberately explain to the students how the values being taught could be transferred into additional life contexts. However, the P.E. teachers and sport coaches involved in Koh et al.'s (2014) study stated that lesson planning time was a significant challenge associated with the explicit approach. Yet it is this planning which allows teachers and coaches to create an environment that is conducive to life skill development.

Cope, Bailey, Parnell and Nicholls (2016) explored the types of environments coaches need to facilitate life skill development, stressing the importance of formal coach education in developing coaches' knowledge of life skills development. These researchers suggested that if coaches are to move closer towards creating an environment which is conducive to life skill development and subsequent transfer, there must be a deliberate shift in how they view their coaching role. It appears that the central factor in achieving this is the creation of coaches who are competent and knowledgeable regarding the competencies (such as life skills) that promote

PYD (Camiré et al., 2014). It is somewhat unsurprising then, that when discussing the contribution of coach education in the development of life skills, Cope et al. (2016, p.6) concluded that coaches who had not received life skills coach education are “unable to explicitly state” how they created opportunities for their players to develop life skills. Therefore, the need to develop and implement programmes which allow coaches to apply an explicit approach to life skill development is clear. This argument is reflected in the conclusions drawn by Bean, Kendellen and Forneris (2016a), who reiterated that programmes need to be deliberately structured to teach life skills and life skills transfer. Such programmes will give coaches the skills and knowledge required to facilitate explicit life skill development in both sport and P.E. contexts, depending on the programme focus.

Camiré et al.'s (2012) research involving Canadian high school coaches showed that many coaches use deliberate strategies to educate their athletes about life skills transfer. These include peer evaluations, providing opportunities for participants to display life skills in the sporting context, modelling, and taking advantage of teachable moments. It has been argued that this explicit approach, allows youth to build the confidence and awareness needed to successfully transfer life skills to non-sporting contexts (Danish et al., 2004; Gould & Carson, 2008a). A potential reason why these coaches were so effective in teaching life skills may come from their educational background, with six of nine coaches holding a bachelor's degree, as well as all coaches being certified through the National Coaching Certification Program in Canada. This finding has potential implications for life skill development programmes going forward, in that the programme contents may need to be altered to meet the demands of the coaches and context for which they are intended. Addressing this issue, Bean and Forneris (2016) assessed how differences in programme quality and positive developmental outcomes across three youth sport programming contexts could affect life skill development. The researchers investigated intentional sport, non-intentional sport and intentional leadership

contexts. The findings showed that programme quality and PYD outcomes were far greater in intentionally structured programmes than in non-intentionally structured programmes, irrespective of the context. The intentional programmes showed greater improvement in friendship, pro-social values and personal standards. These findings serve to underline the importance of not only teaching life skills explicitly, but also the need for programme developers to account for the context.

Participant debriefs have been identified as a useful way to explicitly develop life skills and promote skill transfer. It has been suggested that debriefs allow participants to reflect on the life skills embedded in the lesson, and share opinions on potential lesson alterations, thereby enhancing life skill development in programme participants (Camiré, Forneris, Trudel, & Bernard, 2011; Kendellen et al., 2017). Furthermore, discussing life skills transfer and making clear and explicit efforts to verbally address the concept of transfer during lessons can facilitate life skills transfer (Bean et al., 2018). However, whilst the explicit approach to life skill development is widely advocated in the life skills literature, researchers in the area should not dismiss the challenges and shortcomings associated with the approach. Coaches have identified that they often struggle to find the time to plan sessions in which life skills are embedded (Bean & Forneris, 2017; Koh et al., 2014). Participant coaches in Bean and Forneris' (2017) study also revealed that they found it difficult to implement pre-planned life skill development strategies during lessons due to time constraints. Furthermore, these coaches stressed that the current life skills education and training available to them is lacking, and thus inhibits them from successfully implementing explicit life skill development and transfer strategies in their lessons. Similar sentiments were reiterated by student and athlete participants in Koh et al.'s (2014) study, who perceived that coaches found it challenging to balance the teaching of skills and values during P.E. lessons. These findings underline the lack of knowledge coaches have about explicit life skill integration and teaching. Moreover, formal coach education

programmes typically present content related to the technical and physical aspects of coaching a sport, rather than life skill development (Bean & Forneris, 2017). To address this imbalance, formal courses and CPD workshops should provide specific training on life skill development and transfer (Camiré et al., 2014). In response to these difficulties, and to complement traditional coach education programme content, this research project prioritised an explicit approach to life skill development.

Based on the literature reviewed, it is clear that P.E. and sport programmes targeting life skill development would be well served to replace assumptions regarding implicit life skill development with explicit strategies. Research suggests that by deliberately teaching life skills such as goal setting, communication, emotional control, perseverance and relationship development in a youth sport context, coaches and teachers can provide children with the various skills required to thrive in contexts outside sport (Allen et al., 2015; Bean et al., 2016b; Côté & Hancock, 2016; Pierce et al., 2017), which is the global focus of this research project. However, issues remain surrounding the ability of coaches to learn about and implement life skill development strategies, and the concept of transfer. Pierce et al. (2017) concluded that although there has been significant research over the past decade investigating life skills development through sport and P.E., significantly fewer studies have addressed explicit life skills transfer. Martinek and Lee (2012) commented that our knowledge of the process of life skills transfer remains disconnected. Whilst researchers can make empirically-based recommendations for P.E. teachers, coaches and programme developers regarding transfer, the reality remains that research regarding life skills transfer is still in its infancy (Carson Sackett & Gano-Overway, 2017). An associated issue with traditional coach education programmes is that content related to holistic development is presented only at surface level (Camiré et al., 2014). Often too much new content is presented to coaches in a short time period, which limit opportunities for follow-up and knowledge integration (Knowles, Gilbourne, Borrie, & Nevill,

2001). Moreover, because the content introduced to coaches during these courses is presented out of context (Nelson, Cushion, & Potrac, 2006), it is often difficult for coaches to transfer their new knowledge and behaviours to applied professional contexts. For this transfer of learning to occur amongst coaches, it needs to be planned (Burns, Cumming, Cooley, Holland, & Beech, 2017). Therefore, there is an opportunity for researchers to work towards enhancing coaches' awareness of the behaviours that promote explicit life skill development, and helping them to apply newly developed life skill knowledge and behaviours in the primary school P.E. context.

In the primary school P.E. context, the lack of life skills knowledge on behalf of coaches is of particular relevance. Since the 2013 introduction of the P.E. and sport premium in U.K. primary schools, the percentage of external sports coaches delivering P.E. rose from 38% to 78% between 2012-2015 (Callanan et al., 2015). Despite 80% of schools spending some of this funding on external providers, there is scepticism regarding the return on investment (All Party Parliamentary Group on a Fit and Healthy Childhood, 2018). This may be attributed to the variety of sporting backgrounds that external sports coaches come from, and qualifications they hold (for example Football Association, Rugby Football Union, 1st4Sport, and Association for Physical Education). Moreover, this variety is likely to impact coach knowledge of and familiarity with life skills. For example, the participants in this research project came from a footballing background, and were thus familiar with The F.A. four corner model (The Football Association, 2015) and holistic player development. However, as noted previously, such qualifications do not necessarily guarantee a pre-existing knowledge of life skill development, irrespective of similarities in content (Gould et al., 2006; Trottier & Robitaille, 2014). Therefore, the focus of this research project is to ensure that primary school P.E. coaches develop the knowledge and behaviours to explicitly embed life skills in P.E. lessons, for the long-term physical, psychological and cognitive benefit of the pupils.

2.4.3 The implicit/explicit continuum of life skills development and transfer

Traditionally, researchers have presented approaches to life skill development as either implicit and explicit. However, Bean and Forneris (2016) advocated the idea that life skill development takes place on an implicit-explicit continuum, and should not be considered an all-or-nothing principle. This is evidenced by research which shows that youth sport participants have learned life skills as a result of their sport experiences, despite coaches failing

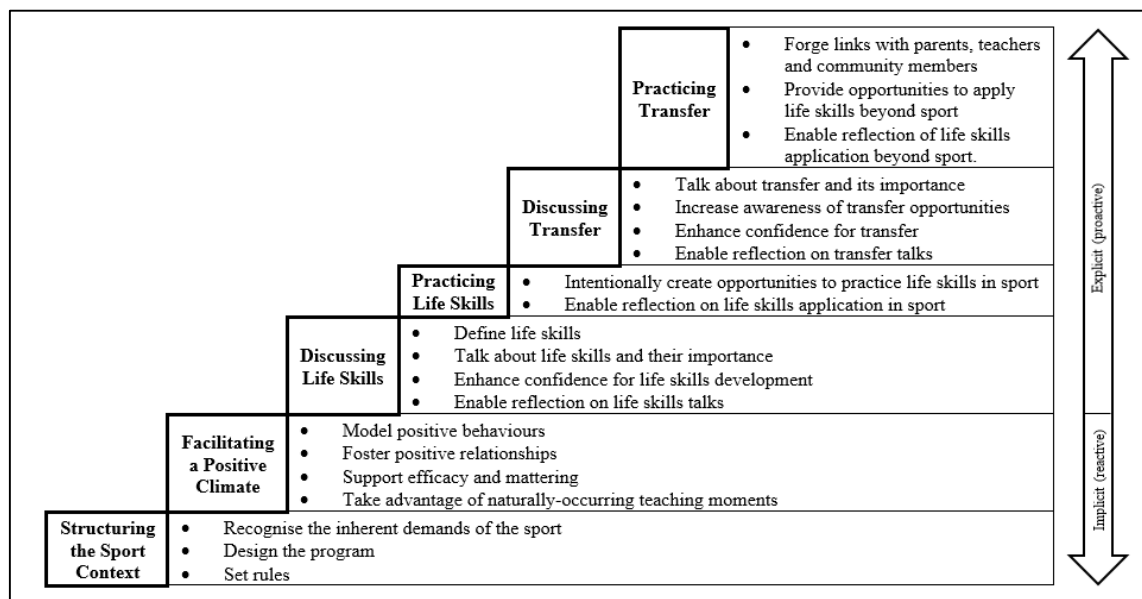


Figure 2.1 The implicit/explicit continuum of life skills development and transfer (adapted from Bean et al., 2018)

to assign time for discussing life skills (Camiré & Trudel, 2010; Holt et al., 2008). Bean and Forneris (2017) called for additional research on the implicit-explicit continuum, specifically surrounding the strategies that coaches could use to adopt a more explicit approach within youth sport. Subsequently, Bean et al. (2018) explained how life skills development and transfer is presented and distributed across six levels. The continuum (see Figure 2.1) is designed to help researchers examine the extent to which coaches are implicit or explicit in their approach to life skill development and transfer. The continuum provided the foundations on which much of this research project is built, and is referenced throughout the thesis where appropriate.

Based on empirical evidence (Bean & Forneris, 2016), the basic premise of the continuum is that life skill development and transfer are optimised, or participants have a greater likelihood of developing and transferring life skills, as they move upward along the continuum. Levels one and two state that it is possible to foster life skills implicitly by appropriately structuring the sporting context and creating a positive sporting climate. However, to move further up the continuum, coaches must adopt explicit strategies. Levels three and four build on the two implicitly-focused foundation levels, and represent the explicit processes required to develop life skills in a sporting context; namely discussing and practicing life skills. Levels five and six are concerned with the discussion and practice of life skills transfer respectively. Additionally, within the continuum, the implicit and proactive targeting of life skills is ultimately driven by the coaches' philosophy. The underlying philosophy and approach of a coach will determine the type of life skill development experiences that can be created for potential programme participants (Bean et al., 2018). In the case of this research project, it is intended that participation in the project will enable primary school P.E. coaches to integrate life skill development into their coaching philosophies, and make explicit life skill development a central pillar of their coaching practice beyond the project.

2.5 Using P.E. to teach life skills

The aim of PYD programmes, and by extension life skill development programmes, is to equip participants with the social, emotional and intellectual skills needed to become functioning members of society (Weiss, Bolter, & Kipp, 2014; Weiss & Wiese-Bjornstal, 2009). According to Bowley, Cropley, Neil, Hanton and Mitchell (2018), facilitating PYD through life skill development is crucial in preparing young people to deal with everyday challenges and risk, and enables them to make a societal contribution (Cope et al., 2016; Trottier & Robitaille, 2014). When discussing childhood development approaches in sport,

Choi, Johnson and Kim (2014) remarked that the hurried pace of society can position children in stressful and competitive environments, both inside and outside the sporting context. Fraser-Thomas et al. (2005) concluded that sports organisations and coaches should develop and implement youth sport programmes that, amongst other things, are conducted in appropriate settings and foster developmental assets such as life skills. Such programmes, the researchers posited, will serve youth with positive sporting experiences, whereupon participants will emerge as competent, confident, connected, compassionate and character-rich members of society. Given P.E. has been identified as an ideal context for life skill development (Turnnidge et al., 2014), and that almost all children are obliged to participate in P.E. classes, the primary school P.E. context was identified as appropriate for this research project. Whilst life skills can be developed in extra-curricular sport, not all children are mandated to participate in such activities outside of school, making the P.E. context preferable. Within this context, researchers have suggested that children should be taught a wide range of life skills during P.E., rather than focusing on a select few (Allen et al., 2015; Benson, 2006). If researchers can aid (for example via coach development programmes, or resource development) primary school P.E. coaches to work towards embedding the six levels of Bean et al.'s (2018) life skill development continuum (see Section 2.4.3) in their sessions, the primary school P.E. context can play a pivotal role in developing contributing members of society.

The central reason for developing life skills in young people through P.E., is the idea that the competencies and dispositions developed will lead to positive outcomes for the young person who develops them (Gould & Carson, 2008a). However, with regard to teaching life skills in a P.E. context, there is conflicting evidence regarding the breadth of life skills that coaches can expect to teach to youth participants. When researching high school tennis coaches, Carson Sackett and Gano-Overway (2017, p.208) suggested that coaches should select only a handful of life skills to focus on in their programmes, as “casting too large of a net”

would likely lead to diluted efforts and suboptimal outcomes. Conversely however, when exploring the relationships between the teaching climate, students' perceived life skills development within P.E., and their psychological well-being, Cronin et al. (2017, p.2) found support for the aforementioned pile-up effect proposed by Benson (2006). Additional research compliments the pile-up approach, showing that a breadth of experiences (such as playing school sport, playing club sport, participating in school clubs, or playing a musical instrument) in childhood positively contributes to continued development of personal assets such as competence and confidence later in life (Busseri, 2006; Fredricks & Eccles, 2006). It could be that an interaction between contextual group-based variables such as average age, ability level, demographic background, or the number of children in the lesson, mediates the 'optimal' amount of life skills to be taught. Each individual context and group of children is inherently unique, and therefore coaches embedding life skills in their lessons should be given the autonomy to determine which life skills should be taught. This combination of coach autonomy and consideration of the context and participants, allows coaches to teach the life skills they perceive to be most beneficial to a particular group, yielding greater long-term benefits (Jacobs et al., 2013). It also gives coaches the opportunity to develop individualised teaching strategies that work for both themselves and their pupils.

Many of the strategies used to teach life skills advocated in the literature are the same or slight variations of the approaches used to teach technical or physical sport skills (Koh et al., 2014; Mertens, 2012). The use of primary school P.E. lessons as a platform to develop life skills in pupils is therefore vindicated, as those delivering can be taught to incorporate life skills teachings into their practice with minimal disruption to delivery. The primary school P.E. context also allows children to participate in programmes early in life that combine the use of positive role models, the reinforcement of positive behaviours and the teaching of competition alongside conflict resolution, which is key for healthy behavioural development (Choi,

Johnson, & Kim, 2014). However, whilst the evidence presented shows that P.E. and sport participation can benefit child participants, it must be acknowledged that not all youth sport participants will develop life skills to the same degree. Pot, Schenk, and van Hilvoorde (2014) suggested that children with sporting habitus are more inclined to participate in sport as their sporting identity is already developed. Sporting habitus is defined as a set of inherited dispositions which unconsciously influence an individual's perceptions, actions, values and judgements (Bourdieu, 1984). Pot et al. (2014) argued that children with the predisposition may already benefit from the social, psychological, health and academic benefits prior to school sport participation. This contention re-emphasises the need to apply an explicit approach to life skill development, as an implicit approach may result in only those with sporting habitus developing holistically from sport and P.E. participation.

Embedding intentional and systematic life skills teachings in an appropriate context is especially beneficial for young people (Fraser-Thomas et al., 2005). To ensure life skill development occurs, coaches must intentionally embed developmental strategies into their coaching practice to ensure the children under their tutelage have adequate opportunity to practice these life skills during contact hours (Camiré et al., 2011). However, transfer of these skills to another context is required for it to be deemed a life skill. To ensure transfer occurs, coaches must also deliberately embed strategies, such as those detailed in the final two levels of Bean et al.'s (2018) continuum (see Figure 2.1), to ensure transfer occurs outside lesson contact hours. Prior to the development of the continuum, Bean and Forneris (2016) concluded that intentionally structured life skill programmes score more highly on programme quality and life skill development, from both researcher and participant perspectives, than non-intentionally structured programmes. The researchers also stated that intentionally structuring life skill development programmes allows youths increased opportunities for a supportive environment, interaction and engagement. Once more, such findings highlight the need for

coaches to place an explicit focus on life skill development during lessons. In their more recent examination of perceptions of youth sport coaches, Bean and Forneris (2017) called for future research to explore additional strategies which coaches can use to adopt such a deliberate approach to life skill development, which this research addresses. The researchers also argue that specific training on how to apply an explicit approach is needed. Given that the coaching qualifications that P.E. and sport coaches hold are typically similar (see Section 1.2.3), generally speaking P.E. coaches would benefit from life skill development training also. Such training should focus on enabling primary school P.E. coaches to integrate life skills teachings into traditional practices, rather than teaching life and physical/technical skills separately (Bean & Forneris, 2017).

Like sports coaches, it cannot be expected that primary school P.E. coaches will intentionally embed life skills in lessons as a matter of course. Rather, coach development programmes would be well served to help them to embed life skills in lessons, and adopt an explicit approach to life skill development. There is a need, it seems, for formal training which enables coaches to integrate life skill development into their practice (Bean & Forneris, 2017). Of concern, Camiré et al. (2014) found that many coaches who participated in formal coaching education felt that the courses were limited in terms of life skill development, as the course only promoted surface learning and did not address the material in depth. Their research asserts that traditional coach education courses do not address contextual factors, and ultimately fails to fulfil the needs of participating coaches (Erickson, Bruner, MacDonald, & Côté, 2008; Lemyre, Trudel, & Durand-Bush, 2007). Typically, coach education programmes and certifications for youth sport typically focus on the development of technical, physical and tactical skills, rather than the development of psychosocial capabilities (Gould et al., 2006; Trottier & Robitaille, 2014). To ensure these psychosocial capabilities are considered in this context, this project will develop a programme for primary school P.E. coaches that enables

them to embed life skills in lessons, by explicitly teaching life skills alongside sport-specific skills.

The strategies for teaching physical and technical skills are similar to those for teaching life skills (Mertens, 2012). However, a lack of formalised life skills education for coaches creates challenges, as coaches do not know that these parallels exist and subsequently do not know how, when or why to embed life skills in lessons (Carson Sackett & Gano-Overway, 2017). Yet, if researchers and those involved in life skill programme development do not acknowledge the intended context for implementation, it is likely that such programmes will fail (Jones, Edwards, Bocarro, Bunds, & Smith, 2016). Research has demonstrated that coaches cannot solely rely on coach education courses to enhance their life skill teaching capabilities (Lemyre et al., 2007), as the remit of such courses does not often encompass life skill development. Coaches must also expose themselves to a range of learning situations (for example workshops, classroom sessions and practical sessions) if they are to develop the applied knowledge and skills needed to compliment traditional coach education methods and become efficient coaches (Erickson et al., 2008; Wright, Trudel, & Culver, 2007). To support these recommendations, this project aimed to design and implement a multi-faceted development programme for primary school P.E. coaches which presented them with a range of applied learning opportunities. However, because research is lacking on how to appropriately structure the social and sporting environment to facilitate positive life skill development (Benson, Scales, Hamilton, & Sesma, 2006; Gould & Carson, 2010; Gould, Flett, & Lauer, 2012; Petitpas et al., 2005), the use of PAR meant that coach insight and opinion was used to compliment empirical evidence. This coach input is viewed as necessary, given coaches play a significant role in a young person's development within the P.E. environment (Bailey, Hillman, Arent, & Petitpas, 2013) and are arguably the most influential person in the overarching sporting context (Ntoumanis & Biddle, 1999). Moreover, Camiré et al. (2014)

concluded that providing coaches with the opportunity to interact and exchange ideas with one another in a collegial manner over a prolonged period of time, is an effective learning tool. PAR can serve to facilitate such interaction opportunities. This approach will facilitate a collaborative research process in which all primary stakeholder's voices are considered.

2.5.1 National primary school P.E. provision

Primary national curriculum subjects, for those obliged to follow it, are English, mathematics, science, design and technology, history, geography, art and design, music, P.E., computing and ancient and modern foreign languages (at Key Stage 2) (Gov.uk, 2018b). However, according to Boyle and Bragg (2006), there has been a historical elevation of English, mathematics and science into 'core' subjects, which are tested nationally. As a result, the remainder of the subjects, otherwise known as 'foundation' subjects, have been somewhat marginalised. Researchers have argued that since the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies in the late 1990s, the gap between core and foundation subjects has only widened (Blackburn, 2001; Morgan & Hansen, 2007). In the context of this project, the prioritisation of core subjects has led to a reduction in the importance of P.E. in the primary school curriculum (Mandigo et al., 2004). Moreover, insufficient teacher training, limited support and resources, and a reduction in preparation time have combined to reduce the quality of P.E. delivery in primary schools (Harris, Cale, & Musson, 2012; Rainer et al., 2012; Sloan, 2010). This growing marginalisation of P.E. exists, despite the stated role of P.E. within the primary school curriculum to develop physical competence, competitiveness, and promote active healthy lifestyles amongst pupils (Department of Education, 2013b).

The current English national curriculum framework states that the purpose of P.E. in local authority-maintained primary schools is to inspire all pupils to "succeed and excel in competitive sport and physically demanding activities", "provide opportunities for pupils to

become physically confident”, and to “build character and embed values such as fairness and respect” (Department of Education, 2014, p.260). Aside from physical and technical outcomes which are inherently associated with P.E., the national curriculum provides each Key Stage with its own set of life skill-related outcomes. Key stage 1 students should be “able to engage in co-operative physical activities”. Key stage 2 students should be able to communicate, collaborate and compete with each other, whilst learning how to evaluate and recognise their own successes. Pupils in Key stage 2 are expected to compare their performance with previous lessons, and move towards achieving their personal best (Department of Education, 2013b, 2014). However, as in traditional coach education programmes, the emphasis on holistic development within the P.E. curriculum pales in comparison to the emphasis on physical and technical skills development. Moreover, in schools such as academies or private schools, there is no legal requirement to follow this curriculum, meaning the Head Teachers of these institutions can choose to opt out of delivering the national curriculum (Gov.uk, 2018b). As such, there is a likelihood that P.E. coaches in these schools will rely entirely on implicit life skill development, which is a suboptimal approach for life skills development (Bean et al., 2018; Pierce, Kendellen, Camiré, & Gould, 2018). The likelihood of holistic development within P.E. being overlooked is also heightened due to the way in which P.E. delivery is evaluated by The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted).

It is difficult to assess whether life skills are being taught, or whether the aims of P.E. generally, are being met in schools nationally. Ofsted is responsible for inspecting and regulating primary school institutions nationwide. Schools are inspected and judged to be ‘outstanding’, ‘good’, ‘requires improvement’, or ‘inadequate - serious weaknesses or special measures’. Inspection frequency varies depending on the schools current status, but are usually conducted once every 2-3 years (Roberts & Abreu, 2018). In their most recent P.E. publication, based on inspections of 120 primary schools nationally, Ofsted (2013) assessed P.E. teaching

quality. For quality of P.E. teaching, 4% of schools scored 'outstanding', 66% of schools scored 'good' and 30% of schools scored 'requires improvement'. These figures suggest that almost 1/3 children nationally are receiving low quality P.E. provision. The report also recommended that primary schools spend at least two hours a week on P.E. However, whilst two hours of P.E. may be scheduled, the school timetable is not necessarily an accurate reflection of the amount of P.E. actually being delivered. Reasons for this include school hall unavailability, staff-pupil ratio, time left over after concentrating on other core subjects, the fact that P.E. timetabling may be left up to the individual teacher's discretion, and P.E. being suspended for other priorities (Haydn-Davies, Jess, & Pickup, 2007; National Association of Head Teachers, 1999; Rainer et al., 2012). These factors, along with others which will be discussed, often combine to result in substandard primary school P.E. delivery, which fails to meet national curriculum requirements across the board (Sloan, 2010), thus prompting the need for primary school P.E. coaches with the ability to teach life skills in their lessons.

There are further possible explanations for the high number of schools that score 'requires improvement', or fail to meet the national curriculum standards for P.E delivery. The 2015 Department of Education report (Callanan et al., 2015) on the P.E. and sport premium in primary schools, states that primary school teachers have historically lacked the confidence and skills to teach high quality P.E., as there is little focus on P.E. during teacher training and continued professional development (CPD) is typically done 'on the job'. This lack of confidence is unsurprising, given further research reiterates the lack of P.E. subject knowledge and lesson practice afforded to trainee primary school teachers (Harris, Cale, & Musson, 2012; Kirk, 2012; Sloan, 2010). A lack of subject knowledge has been shown to affect not only teacher confidence, but also the motivation to plan lessons and evaluate student progress (Shaughnessy & Price, 1995), which further compromises the quality of P.E. delivery. In addition to this, Blair and Capel's (2008) found that primary school teachers received as little

as six hours training in P.E. throughout their entire initial teacher training, which contributes to this lack of subject knowledge and confidence teaching P.E. Unfortunately at present, P.E. lesson quality is inconsistent and essentially depends on the preferences and skill set of the class teacher (Callanan et al., 2015), prompting the need for education of those delivering it. Therefore this project will enable primary school P.E. coaches to develop the knowledge and behaviours required to embed life skills in their lessons, and imbue them with the confidence required to deliver a high quality P.E. lessons.

2.5.2 Teaching life skills to reduce physical ill-health risk factors

In England in 2019/20, 25.5% of English children in reception year (age 4-5) were overweight, obese, or severely obese, whilst 39.8% of children in year 6 (age 10-11) were overweight, obese, or severely obese. Relevant to this research project and its context, children living in the most deprived areas are more than twice as likely to suffer from obesity than those from the least deprived areas. Moreover, children were more likely to be obese if their parents were (National Health Service, 2019b, 2020b, 2020a). Current figures have prompted both the National Health Service (NHS) and Public Health England to describe the current obesity situation as an epidemic (National Health Service, 2020b; Public Health England, 2017). Côté and Fraser-Thomas (2007) suggested that the development of life skills in a sporting context can enable youth to become physically active and therefore improve their physical health. As such, the intention to use life skills to promote physical health in primary school P.E. students is justified.

Government-led strategies have aimed to reduce the incidence physical ill-health amongst children. A recent U.K Government report titled ‘Childhood obesity: A plan for action’ introduced the ‘soft drinks industry levy’, which increased the cost of soft drinks for

consumers (HM Government, 2016). A £300 million investment in a ‘Cycling and Walking Strategy’ is intended to encourage children to cycle or walk to and from school, and increase the percentage of 5-10 year olds walking to school from 49% in 2014 to 55% by 2025 (Department of Health and Social Care, 2018; HM Government, 2016). The introduction of a voluntary healthy rating scheme for primary schools acknowledges and promotes a school’s contribution to helping children make better food choices and be more active (Department of Education, 2019). Yet, a potential criticism of these strategies is that they do not promote the development of initiative and adaptive decision-making strategies amongst children regarding their physical health and well-being in non-P.E. contexts. The children are passive in their engagement. However, if a coach learns to embed life skills in P.E. lessons, child participants may develop initiative and positive decision-making strategies (Holt et al., 2008; Whitley et al., 2016), which may lead to improved physical health and well-being, providing support for their use. Furthermore, if primary school P.E. coaches can alter their practice to create an autonomy supportive environment, it will enhance life skill development amongst pupils (Cronin et al., 2017). This is notable in the context of this research project, as autonomy support from teachers has been shown to predict physical activity behaviours amongst low-income youth (Vierling, Standage, & Treasure, 2007). By helping primary school P.E. coaches to embed life skills in their lessons and promote transfer using the recommendations advocated by Bean et al. (2018), it is intended that pupils will transfer life skills into non-P.E. contexts and reduce their risk of physical ill-health.

2.5.3 Teaching life skills to reduce mental ill-health risk factors

Mental health is related to the promotion of well-being, prevention of mental disorders, and the treatment and rehabilitation of people affected by mental disorders (Eime, Young, Harvey, Charity, & Payne, 2013). In 2018/19, approximately 2.73 million people in England contacted secondary mental health, learning disabilities and autism services. Of this figure,

23.2% were children (National Health Service, 2019a)[†]. Whilst this report does not distinguish between people who accessed mental health services, or learning disability and autism services, it evidences an increasing reliance on such services by children nationwide. The development of life skills such as self-esteem are associated with enhanced mental health in young people (Anderson Taylor, 2014). Moreover, Weiss et al. (2014) concluded that the transfer of life skills is associated with healthy decision-making regarding well-being. Therefore, the use of life skills to reduce the risk factors associated with mental ill-health and poor well-being is justified.

Government reports (for example Department of Health and Social Care, 2011; Mental Health Taskforce, 2016; NHS & Department of Health and Social Care, 2015) have strongly recommended a joined-up approach between government services, schools, employers and local authorities to address mental ill-health nationally. Consequently, actions taken include improved access to the psychological therapies programme, investment in new beds for children and young people, and increased funding for case management and early intervention strategies. By 2021, the Government also intends to provide mental health care to 75,000 more children. As with the physical health strategies outlined above however, it appears that these mental health strategies do not promote agency amongst children. Although life skills do not serve as an antidote to mental ill-health, life skill development aligns with the positive view of mental health advocated by the World Health Organisation (1997, 2013b), by promoting a sense of agency in children through the development of internal assets such as social skills, responsibility and empathy (Fraser-Thomas et al., 2005; Gould & Carson, 2008b). As with physical health and well-being, it is posited that life skill development in school children will result in pupils making more adaptive decisions in non-P.E. contexts that will reduce the likelihood of mental ill-health and poor well-being. The primary school P.E. context possesses the capacity to enact such positive change, as schools have been identified as an appropriate

[†] Most recent publication available at time of submission.

for well-being and life skill promotion respectively (Singh & Surujlal, 2009; Trottier & Robitaille, 2014). Developing life skills in primary school children also serves as an opportunity to enhance their global self-esteem (Gould & Carson, 2008a), which is positively associated with good mental health (Anderson Taylor, 2014). Therefore, by altering the practice of primary school P.E. coaches to embed life skills in their lessons, the mental health and well-being of pupils can be enhanced.

2.6 Summary and future directions

Coaches who combine life skills and sports teachings can have a positive impact on children, both inside and outside the P.E. and sporting contexts (Hellison et al., 2008; Trottier & Robitaille, 2014). Numerous examples of successful life skill development programmes are outlined in this review (Table 2.2). The programmes that have been presented were developed by academics for real world application, and are deemed effective if programme participants develop life skills. However, little other evaluation criteria exists. For example, GOAL (Danish, 1997; Danish et al., 1992a, 1992b), SUPER (Danish et al., 2002, 2004), The First Tee (Weiss, 2006) and TPSR (Hellison, 1995, 2003, 2011; Hellison et al., 2008; Martinek et al., 2006), were developed in conjunction with academics and deemed successful because they improved participants' life skills. However, there is scant literature explaining how these programmes came to be effective, or how stakeholders worked with one another to achieve the successfully recorded outcomes. Future research could examine such partnerships, and the underlying factors which mediate partnership success in areas such as programme development, as these may be more likely to mediate the success of a programme or product once implemented.

A shortcoming associated with many of the life skill development programmes reviewed is their relative lack of malleability, in that they are designed to teach a specific set

of life skills (for example ELITE or TPSR; see Table 2.2). These programmes are then applied in different contexts without changing the content or manner of delivery (Caballero-Blanco et al., 2013). Therefore the coaches delivering these programmes, whilst proficient in doing so, may not be proficient in embedding life skills in their practice outside the parameters of the programme they deliver. When such programmes are evaluated, it is often assumed that the life skills associated with that programme are being taught, with little scrutiny on the behaviours exhibited by the coaches. Research suggests that irrespective of the coaches' approach, a certain level of implicit life skill development takes place in the sporting context (Holt et al., 2008; Pierce et al., 2017). Therefore, all coaches in all contexts are facilitating a level of life skill development to some level, even if they are not delivering in a programme designed to do so. However, as outlined above, the implicit approach leaves life skill development up to chance (Bean et al., 2018). Therefore, it is the intention of this research project to ensure that coaches delivering P.E. in primary schools on behalf of PLCF approach life skill development explicitly. To do this, coaches will engage in a collaborative PAR project to develop coaching knowledge and behaviours to support the teaching of life skills within lessons.

Research suggests that without targeted education, coaches have typically relied on an implicit approach (McCallister et al., 2000; Trottier & Robitaille, 2014), which leaves life skill development largely up to chance (Bean et al., 2018). Primary school P.E. coaches cannot be expected to explicitly embed life skills teachings in their lessons, irrespective of their coaching qualifications or background. Furthermore, as coach education courses do not address life skill development directly, coaches cannot be expected to apply an explicit approach, which optimises life skill development and transfer (Bean & Forneris, 2017). Although previous life skill development programmes such as the First Tee and SUPER have proven effective for child and adolescent participants, it is unreasonable to think that the methods of delivery for these programmes could be transposed to a South London primary school P.E. context due to

their context specificity. Therefore, it is essential that this research considers the South London primary school P.E. context throughout the project. This will ensure the outcomes are relevant for both the participant coaches and the pupils that they teach. Furthermore, researchers should examine the underlying factors that mediate primary school P.E. coaches' ability to participate in such coach development programmes, and the underlying factors which influence knowledge implementation in a primary school P.E. context. By doing so, practical recommendations can be made for researchers who intend to develop and implement contextually-grounded life skill development programmes that promote transfer.

As the literature review has outlined, there is a dearth of research exploring the application of life skill development in primary school P.E. contexts. Moreover, little is known about how coaches apply a holistic approach in this context, and the factors which impact their capacity to do so. There is also a lack of clarity surrounding coach behaviour change in this context, and whether the application of an explicit approach to life skill development is a realistic for primary school P.E. coaches. More specifically, little is known about the role of community football coaches in primary school P.E. delivery, and their capacity to change their coaching practice to incorporate life skill development. The environmental conditions which impact this behaviour change process is also unclear.

To address the gaps identified throughout this literature review and reiterated above this thesis will address the following research question, aims, and objectives:

Research question

What factors influence primary school P.E. coaches' ability to embed life skills in lessons?

Research aims

1. Examine the ecological influences that impact P.E. coach behaviour change, and explain how these influences impacted coaches' ability to change their practice and embed life skills in their lessons.
2. Use Participatory Action Research to enable primary school P.E. coaches to change their practice and embed life skills in their lessons, for the benefit of the pupils' physical and psychological well-being.

Research objectives

1. Establish the existing level of life skills knowledge amongst participant coaches, and the degree to which they embed life skill development in their coaching practice.
2. Detail how the participant coaches and I worked together using PAR to develop a Life Skills Coaching Resource.
3. Assess the readiness of participant coaches to engage in a life skills Coach Development Programme.
4. Assess the partnership between the university and PLCF, utilising the Parent and Harvey (2009) sports partnership management model.
5. Assess the effectiveness of a Coach Development Programme, using Kirkpatrick's (1959, 1976, 1996) training evaluation model.

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Methodology

This chapter will detail the methodology for this research project to achieve the aims and objectives outlined on pages 56-57. The chapter is presented in seven main parts: 1) the research paradigm; 2) a description of Participatory Action Research (PAR); 3) a description of the research context; 4) the research design; 5) the procedure; 6) data collection and 7) data analysis.

3.1.1 Paradigm

A paradigm represents an alignment of ontological and epistemological perspectives that influence the selection of methodological choices. It defines the world, an individual's place within that world, and the scope of potential relationships to that world (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Morgan (2007) suggested that paradigms were a system of beliefs and practices that influence how researchers selected their research questions and the methods used to investigate these questions. Paradigms provide an understanding of what type of knowledge is possible, and how that knowledge can be discovered (Skinner, Edwards, & Corbett, 2015). According to Scotland (2012) a paradigm has four components: ontology, epistemology, methodology, and methods. Researchers and scholars who operate within one set of metaphysical assumptions typically reject the principles of alternative paradigms. Whilst there is a wide spectrum of philosophical stances, ontological and epistemological debates have typically divided researchers into the opposing paradigmatic constituencies of positivism and constructivism (Gratton & Jones, 2004). Positivists adopt objective epistemological and ontological views that assume the existence of a true reality that can be measured and understood via the application of scientific methods. This reality is said to be devoid of contamination or bias (Giacobbi, Poczwardowski, & Hager, 2005). Positivist findings are generalised across time and contexts, without consideration of the context in which the findings were made (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). Constructivists focus on the social, historical and value-

driven process of knowledge claims, denying that an objective truth exists (Giacobbi et al., 2005; Lincoln & Guba, 2000), and suggesting that reality is an individual's mental construction, rather than being discovered in the world (Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013).

Pragmatism often crosses numerous paradigms (Nicholson, 2013; Onwuegbuzie, Johnson, & Collins, 2009; Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013), assuming that if a community agrees that an intervention was effective, this agreement represents an objective position (Giacobbi et al., 2005). During this research project, this agreed position was reflected in consensus amongst coaches. Whilst engaging in pragmatism has been deemed unsettling as it questions the traditional orthodoxy, it has been effectively utilised in a sporting context (Nelson & Groom, 2012). The approach facilitates effective problem solving, allowing one to apply the solution most likely to achieve resolution (Huber, 2013). Within coaching, the reproduction of coaching rhetoric, truisms and value-laden ideologies is regularly prioritised over abstracted, detached and rational conceptions which relate to ontology and epistemology (Cushion & Partington, 2016). Pragmatism serves to traverse these two positions as a collaborative method that is both philosophical and empirical (Jenkins, 2017). Aligning with the pragmatic philosophical assumptions put forth by John Dewey (1859-1952), this research project is focused on creating practical solutions to real-world problems. Within this research context pragmatism allowed the researcher to examine a practical situation, make a change, and explore the consequence of that change (Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013).

Within sports coaching, researchers have cited a lack of clarity surrounding pragmatism, which has been criticised for not presenting a coherent philosophical position (Bachkirova & Borrington, 2018; Jenkins, 2017). Practical solutions to contemporary problems, emphasising the practical issues experienced by people, the research questions, and the outcomes of investigation, are the central foci an experience-centred philosophy which promotes change (Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013). Pragmatism contends that scientific

inquiry is contextually dependent and that past and present social, historical and political conditions influence scientific progress. In adopting a pragmatist paradigm, it is recognised that the topic under investigation, and the associated research questions, have greater importance than the underlying philosophical assumptions of the method. For pragmatists, achieving total agreement or objectivity, or identifying a unifying truth is not the aim. Instead, agreement within communities can allow a practical level of truth to exist, but these practical truths are findings that prove useful in a given context (Giacobbi et al., 2005). Within pragmatism, there is no distinction between theoretical knowledge and practical action. Rather knowledge is action and theory is practice (Kilpinen, 2009).

Pragmatism prioritises iterative knowledge development, rather than definitive knowledge production. It follows a “dynamic homeostatic process of belief, doubt, inquiry, modified belief, new doubt, new inquiry, in an infinite loop” (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2009, p.122), where the researcher is repeatedly enhancing past understandings within the context that they are operating in. This aligns with the PAR approach adopted in this project (see Section 3.1.2). When compared to traditional paradigms (for example positivism or constructivism), pragmatism has greater potential to combine qualitative and quantitative analysis. The approach is eclectic, allowing researchers to use what is necessary to answer the research question (Somekh & Lewin, 2005; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). However, pragmatism does not advocate the indiscriminate practice of science. Instead, using mixed methods within the pragmatic paradigm will address applied research questions from a theoretical perspective (Giacobbi et al., 2005). The practical and outcome-orientated method of inquiry is based on action, and iteratively leads to additional action and removal of doubt (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004), where good research is a process of trial and error (Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013). Within coaching, the methodological emphasis on action is critical, as it

identifies pragmatism as a paradigm which is fully grounded in active participation in the world (Bachkirova & Borrington, 2018).

3.1.1.1 Ontological considerations

Ontology is the study of being (Crotty, 1998). It is concerned with the nature of the social world (North, 2013a), and more pertinently with what constitutes reality (Scotland, 2012). Guba and Lincoln (1994, p.108) framed the ontological question as ‘What is the form and nature of reality and therefore, what is there that can be known about it?’ Early research from Rorty (1991) suggested pragmatism does not require an ontology, and instead the truth is what is useful to believe. However, like constructivists, pragmatists reject the presence of universal truths, believing instead that truth arises from relationships, negotiations, or dialogue within a community (Lincoln & Guba, 2000; Sparkes, 1998). Given these similarities, the qualitative data collection methods used, and the PAR approach adopted in this project, it is recognised that this research leans towards constructivism, within a pragmatist paradigm. Pragmatists advocate the existence of a single real world, and that all individuals have a personal interpretation of that world. Rather than erecting uncompromising boundaries between philosophical approaches, pragmatists embrace intersubjectivity as a crucial element of social life (Morgan, 2007). Acknowledging the constructivist leaning of this project once more, pragmatism places in high regard reality and human experience in action. The approach also accepts multiple realities, and rejects traditional dualisms. For pragmatists, the current truth, meaning and knowledge are tentative and evolving (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2009) and reality is that which is practical (Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013).

3.1.1.2 Epistemological considerations

Epistemology is concerned with nature and forms of knowledge (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018), how we develop knowledge claims about the world (North, 2013a), and how knowledge can be created, acquired and communicated (Scotland, 2012). As with ontology,

Rorty's (1991) early research suggested that pragmatism does not require a specific epistemological perspective. Throughout this project however, the knowledge claims of the participants was prioritised through PAR and qualitative methods. The construction of knowledge through the participants is again associated with constructivism (Cohen et al., 2018), therefore illustrating the constructivist leanings of this project. Whilst other paradigms such as positivism and constructivism hold dichotomous epistemological beliefs (Lincoln & Guba, 2000), pragmatists believe the existence of a continuum between objective and subjective viewpoints depends on the research question being asked and the particular point in the research process (Creswell, 2003; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998, 2003). Pragmatic knowledge is said to be derived from observation of interactions within a group and artefacts in their environment (Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013). Therefore, in the context of this research study, applying a pragmatist epistemology facilitated continual revision of the research plan and reasoned application of various data collection strategies where necessary. The knowledge produced within pragmatism is both constructed and based on the reality of the world one experiences and lives in (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2009).

3.1.1.3 Methodological considerations

Methodology is the strategy or action plan which determines the choice and use of particular methods (Crotty, 1998). It is concerned with why, what, from where and how data is gathered and analysed (Scotland, 2012). Guba and Lincoln (1994, p.108) framed the methodological question as 'How can the would-be knower go about finding out what he or she believes can be known?', before stating that chosen methods must fit to a pre-determined methodology. According to Crossan (2003), paradigm exploration can: 1) aid in refining and specifying research methods, therefore clarifying the overall research strategy; 2) allow researchers to evaluate different methodologies and identify the limitations of different approaches at an early stage in the research process, avoiding inappropriate and unnecessary

work and; 3) can grant the researcher creative license in selection and modification of methods, which may have previously been outside their experience.

A pragmatic approach allows for the adoption of methods which are used to solve practical problems within specific contexts, rather than those which aim to reveal underlying truths about the nature of reality (Giacobbi et al., 2005). Pragmatism is not interpreted as a set of doctrines or method (Nicholson, 2013), rather it often involves the combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods to focus on practical change in multi-phase research projects (Giacobbi et al., 2005; Nelson & Groom, 2012). In the case of this project, inductive and deductive qualitative methods were employed, which were supplemented by a small amount of numerical data in Phase 2 of the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage. However, pragmatism does advocate arbitrary methodological choices. Instead it prioritises the context-sensitivity inherent in research design (Dainty, 2008). Rescher's (2000) concept of 'realistic pragmatism', suggests due to its complexity, we must accept that the existing coaching reality can enable and constrain coaching research ideas simultaneously. So rather than meeting a set of predetermined standards, coaching research must instead be judged on its ability to account for actual coaching (Cushion & Lyle, 2010). Therefore, a PAR methodology was adopted in this research study. This approach aids participants in becoming aware of the constraints which inhibit participation in their communities, and it advocates collaboration with these participants as experts in their field (Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013). Within this research context, pragmatism and PAR facilitated the development of contextually-grounded, applied knowledge.

3.1.2 Participatory Action Research

Action research has been defined as “a method of qualitative research the purpose of which is to engage in problem solving through a cyclical process of thinking, acting, data

gathering and reflection” (Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013, p.245). It is a group of homogenous activities whereby individuals with differing power, status, and degrees of influence, collaborate to address a common problem (McTaggart, 1991). Action research assumes that the act of doing research allows people to develop new capacities and become empowered. The aim is to create working solutions to immediate concerns and develop the capacities of community members (Ozanne & Saatcioglu, 2008), and thus is particularly useful in this research context. PAR is a subset of action research. The origins of PAR can be traced to Lewin (1947), who is widely considered the founder of action research (Gillis & Jackson, 2002). However, because it has been developed across a number of fields, PAR can have different meanings and can be contradictory (MacDonald, 2012). Action research becomes PAR depending on who is involved in each stage of the process, and to what extent. The most participatory examples of PAR engage with participants as collaborators who contribute to study design, suggest methods, dictate some of the project activities, and review and evaluate the entire research process (Mackenzie, Tan, Hoverman, & Baldwin, 2012). Wallerstein and Duran (2006) defined PAR as a form of action research that focuses on the relationship between the researcher and the community members, that is characterised by co-learning, mutual benefit, and long-term commitment. The process incorporates living theories, participation, and applied practice into the research.

PAR is a method of intervention, development and change that is conducted within groups by examining an issue systematically from the perspective of the people affected by a particular issue (Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013). It embraces principles of participation, reflection, empowerment and emancipation of individuals and groups interested in improving their social reality (Berg, 2004). The approach is based on the assumption that members of a community have the capacity to investigate and improve their own circumstances. It enables community members to improve the conditions that affect their lives and initiate social change

within their communities (Frisby, Reid, Millar, & Hoeber, 2005; Holkup, Tripp-Reimer, Saois, & Weinert, 2004). PAR affirms that knowing can be based on experience, and that experiential learning can produce legitimate forms of knowledge that influence practice (Kolb, 1984). Notably in the context of this project, Cushion (2016) concluded that the sports coaching literature unanimously recognises coaches as having the capacity to identify, understand and articulate the entire determinants of their practice, and that coaches also possess the capacity to function consciously and reflectively. Therefore, the coach participants recruited for this research project were ideally placed to examine their own practice and the context in which they work. However, the determinants of success for the coaches involved in this project differ to that of the researcher.

For the community members, successful PAR may be characterised by a material improvement in their working environment. In contrast, for the researcher, successful PAR will likely be measured against the extent to which the research makes an original contribution to the research area, and the possibility of peer-reviewed publication (Mackenzie et al., 2012). However, Kavanagh, Daly and Jolley (2002) contend that PAR can be problematic for researcher, as is time consuming and unpredictable, unlikely to lead to a large amount of research articles, and is less likely to attract funding because it is perceived as messy. To mitigate against such issues, Mackenzie, Tan, Hoverman and Baldwin (2012) cited five key tenets of successful PAR. These include a high degree of access to the project setting, clear role and responsibility demarcation between the researcher and community members, significant investing in building informal relationships and networks, sensitivity to the relationship between insiders and outsiders, and finally a continual review of the project plan and willingness to alter it if necessary. As is evidenced in the subsequent chapters, this research project embodies these characteristics.

3.1.2.1 How PAR works and who's involved

The PAR process occurs across a three-phase spiral of inquiry, action, and reflection (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005; Kemmis, McTaggart, & Nixon, 2013). However, this conception has been the subject of criticism by Kemmis et al. (2013), who suggest that in reality PAR is not so neat. These authors suggested that stages often overlap, whilst initial plans become obsolete in the face of emergent findings, resulting in a more fluid, open and responsive process. Whilst such issues exist, the main priority is to ensure that researchers and community members enter into a collaborative relationship to facilitate improved practice by applying research findings on an ongoing basis (Frisby et al., 2005; Ison, 2008). Both parties must work as co-researchers to examine the priority issues affecting their lives, recognise their resources, produce knowledge, and enact change to improve the situation (Tsey et al., 2004). The community members are not research participants in the traditional sense. Rather they are active contributors who actively participate in each of the research phases (Kelly, 2005). However, the inclusion of community members as co-researchers can be challenging, given they may struggle to maintain commitment to the project over time (Gillis & Jackson, 2002), as happened in this research project. To mitigate against potential issues, the researcher must inform the community members that involvement is time-consuming, as education is required for all community members to participate. Moreover, time needs to be allocated to fully engage in the cyclical PAR process (Gillis & Jackson, 2002). Building and maintaining trust between the researcher and the community members is another central component of successful PAR. In this research context, rapport and trust was established and strengthened during coach meetings, data collection sessions, and informal communications between the coaches and the researcher. PAR can also fulfil the developmental needs and interests of coaches, by enhancing their knowledge of their professional context and of their coaching behaviours through their actions as co-researchers (Frisby et al., 2005).

The primary function of PAR is to develop practical knowledge that is useful for people in their everyday lives (Reason & Bradbury, 2008). As such, the coaches' perspectives were engaged to affirm the research context. As in Blodgett et al.'s (2011) research, the community members were engaged as the experts of their realities. The participants were encouraged to articulate their research experiences, and empowered to apply what they were learning on an ongoing basis. For the duration of the project, the coach participants worked alongside the researcher as co-researchers with the intention of understanding existing coaching behaviours, and improving coaching practice going forward. This contextual grounding is imperative, as the practical and empirical outcomes of the research process are grounded in the perspective and interests of community members, not just filtered through the perceptions of a researcher (Reason & Bradbury, 2008). Ideally, in PAR projects the researcher and community members will work in partnership. However, the reality is that research positionality between both insiders and outsiders ranges from high to low participation levels (Ozanne & Saatcioglu, 2008). It may be the case that the researcher is the one who determines the research direction and the changes necessary throughout the process, but such decisions are made following consultation with community members, and ongoing research outcomes (Kemmis et al., 2013). In the case of this research project, the main study evidences how community member input heavily influenced the research outcomes.

3.1.2.2 Conducting participatory action research

Both action research and PAR are practical strategies related to the real lives of participants which requires systematic, organised and reflective investigation, actively engaging the participants as contributors to the research process (Berg, 2004; Stringer, 1999). Reflecting on conclusions drawn by Lyotard (1984), Reason and Bradbury (2008, p.5) stated that PAR cannot be programmatic and defined in terms of hard and fast methods, but instead is “a work of art emerging in the doing of it”. Thus PAR complements pragmatism, which

accommodates philosophical eclecticism and methodological pluralism to determine what works in a given context (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2009). As noted, the process generally consists of three recurring phases; inquiry, action, and reflection (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005; Kemmis et al., 2013). However, from a methodological perspective, PAR is difficult to standardise for a number of reasons. First, it is context specific and fluid, meaning as issues arise and relationships develop, the methods are adapted in response. Therefore, the process is better described than defined. Second, it aims to solve real-world problems, meaning each investigation is different. Finally, it needs to be inclusive of the diversity of experiences community members have to capture outlier input and ownership of the process and the research outcomes. To exhibit trustworthiness, the research must evidence the systematic gathering and collation of information, so that enhanced understanding from monitoring can be fed back in to the cyclical process (Mackenzie et al., 2012). The researcher aims to act prudently and wisely so that the outcomes are effective and sustainable. For these reasons, both the researcher and community members must acknowledge that the exact outcomes cannot be known in advance of the research (Kemmis et al., 2013) .

Blodgett et al. (2011) made recommendations for each stage of the PAR research process based on feedback from aboriginal community members. The consistent application of these recommendations, as evidenced in Tables 3.1-3.3, ensured effective PAR implementation throughout the research. Whilst these recommendations served as an important guide when planning and managing this research study, the unpredictable nature of the research context at times resulted in inconsistent application of the recommendations. In instances where this was the case, it is outlined in the relevant study.

Table 3.1 Application of Blodgett et al.'s (2011) recommendations prior to engaging in Participatory Action Research

Recommended actions prior to research study	Learn about the research context	Identify key community members for collaboration	Make time to visit the context and approach community members with friendship	Establish timelines for the project and reporting to community members
Researcher action	<p>Review of primary school P.E. curriculum.</p> <p>Acquire information from PLCF about primary school P.E. programmes.</p> <p>Examine demographics of primary school-aged children in the London borough</p>	<p>Speak to PLCF management to, seek opinion on who organisational gatekeepers are (Arcury & Quandt, 1999).</p>	<p>Visit PLCF offices for formal meeting.</p> <p>Present overview of the proposed research plan to participants any request feedback.</p>	<p>Present proposed feedback timeline.</p> <p>Explain how feedback is communicated to participants.</p>

Table 3.2 Application of Blodgett et al.'s (2011) recommendations during engagement in Participatory Action Research

Recommended actions during research study	Be transparent and genuine in communication	Develop context-relevant research projects and strategies	Avoid oversimplifying information or generalising findings	Maintain consistent academic research team members	Report to the community members' leadership group regularly
Researcher action	<p>Gave participants e-mail address and mobile number of researcher. All were told they could contact the researcher with queries regarding their coaching practice or research project.</p>	<p>PAR was adopted to complement the professional obligations of the participants.</p>	<p>Updates on findings and patterns emerging from the data were presented to participants. Presentations were supplemented by informal conversations.</p>	<p>Could not be met. For changes to academic research team, see Figure 3.2.</p>	<p>Following mid-point stakeholder review, decision was taken to schedule quarterly stakeholder meetings to update community members on research progress.</p>

Table 3.3 Application on Blodgett et al.'s (2011) recommendations to ensure ongoing project application following Participatory Action Research

Recommended actions to ensure ongoing project application	Maintain ongoing relationships with community members	Implement a maintenance programme	Support community members in conducting local research	Archive community research experiences
Researcher action	<p>Following data collection, analysis and write-up, a professional working relationship was maintained with management and staff at PLCF.</p>	<p>During the final months of the project, a formal handover process to the newly appointed Coach Development Officer. Participants were also informed of the steps they needed to take to maintain the changes seen as a result of the partnership, including developing of a community of practice.</p>		<p>This thesis is an archive of community research experiences.</p> <p>All raw data was stored in accordance with ethical guidelines.</p>

Denzin (1997) recommended that following the conclusion of a PAR study, the researcher must communicate the findings to the community members and relevant stakeholders in everyday language, as academic reports are often inaccessible for those populations. Novel approaches to communicating findings include focus groups, in-group forums, informal meetings, departmental meetings and community group meetings (Stringer, 1999). Kemmis et al. (2013) noted that action research can be represented in a variety of ways, each of which can contribute to creating the public meaning of the work. This representation has implications for the output audiences, who include community members, colleagues, the research community, and in the case of this research, the community football community. In the case of this research project, the findings take the form of this thesis and the associated Life Skills Coaching Resource (see Appendix 2). However, what is created by PAR is not definitive knowledge. Rather it is a representation of the researchers' best efforts, and will likely be revised. The process builds upon the understanding of community members, and extends this knowledge to develop new insights that initiate social change and improve practice (Somekh, 2006). Therefore, the outcomes produced from this project, both empirical and practical, have the capacity to be enhanced in the future.

3.1.2.3 Researcher suitability

PAR is a cyclical process of thinking, acting, data gathering and reflection (Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013). During a PAR project, there is a focus on the relationship between the researcher and community members, a central tenet of which is co-learning (Wallerstein & Duran, 2006). Given the centrality of the researcher in the PAR process, it is appropriate to offer an insight into my personal and academic background, and detail my coaching qualifications, to substantiate my credentials for this particular PAR project.

I have played organised sport since an early age, participating in athletics, rugby, and football during my childhood and adolescence. I have since taken this passion for sport and

exercise into formal pathways of study. At undergraduate level, I studied Sport and Exercise Sciences, and at Masters level, Applied Sport Psychology. Throughout my time at university, I developed a knowledge and understanding of a range of philosophical approaches to research. In more recent years, as I have grown as a researcher during my PhD, my thoughts on this topic have been continually challenged. Whilst my early academic experiences were shaped by positivism, over time I came to value more the practical impact and applied implications of research. This philosophical transition has led me to my current, pragmatic viewpoint, where I am not solely interested in whether or not things work, but rather how and why things work, and how research can facilitate change. I have transitioned from one way of knowing to another, thus the PAR approach I adopted is both logical and appropriate.

I feel it is also necessary to acknowledge the influence my sport-related professional experiences have made on my decision to adopt PAR. My coaching qualifications include FAI Level 1 and Level 2 football coaching qualifications, the FA Primary Teaching Award, and First Aid for Mental Health Promotion for Coaches. Additionally, I have coached grassroots football since 2012, and worked as a part-time primary school P.E. coach from 2016-2019. As my breadth of qualifications and experiences have grown, and my application of declarative content has continued, I have come to appreciate that the same success coaching methods are not likely to be used by every coach. It is crucial that those working with coaches, as is my role in this research project, understand how we can individualise approaches to coach development. I believe that by focusing on the needs of the coach, rather than the content of a course, that coach behaviour change and development can be facilitated in a sustainable manner. Thus my role within this research project can be viewed as a “patchwork of philosophy, reflexivity and biography” (Atkins & Duckworth, 2019, p.102). Collectively, my personal, academic, and professional experiences combine to support my suitability to conduct this research.

3.1.2.4 Living theory

A living theory is an account one produces to explain “their educational influence in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formation in which they live and work” (Whitehead, 2008, p. 104). Living theory action research is the idea that individuals study their practice and provide explanations and descriptions about that practice. Individuals articulate their ideas as theories of applied practice, explaining what they do, why they are doing it, and what their aim is. Such personal theories are also living theories, given they change and grow as the individual themselves changes and grows. Action researchers aim to generate theories about how their learning improved practice, and how this can inform new practice for themselves and others. By detailing an action research study, one can claim to be generating a living theory of practice, by explaining with confidence that they know what they are doing and why they are doing it. This detailed explanation illustrates how knowledge from the literature is applied, and how this knowledge is reconfigured in a dynamic research context. The manner in which action research studies are presented must illustrate how the research is conducted in a systematic manner, not ad hoc, evidencing praxis (McNiff & Whitehead, 2011). Praxis is “the art of acting upon the conditions one faces in order to change them” (Hope & Waterman, 2003, p. 124). It is the inseparability of theory and practice, which mean practice is informed and morally committed (McNiff & Whitehead, 2011).

3.1.2.5 Generative transformational nature of living systems

McNiff conceived the idea of the generative transformational nature of living systems, within an ecological framework (McNiff & Whitehead, 2011). The view purports the idea that all living systems are in perpetual transformation, connected with each other, and each new transformation possesses the potential for the next transformation. All living systems are interconnected and impact one another, each with the capacity to transform itself into an infinite number of new forms. New thinking and forms of knowledge that have evolved from previous

forms influence new practices, that each new form is more fully realised than the last, and that growth is relentless and unstoppable. The pursuit of a perfect end state is not the priority, as each system has the potential to transform further. Rather, within action research, instances of improved learning and practice spawns further learning to improve practice (McNiff & Whitehead, 2011). Within an action research project, researchers and community members engage in an ongoing process of developing learning and action, and reflecting on learning and action. This process is generative and transformational, as the end of developing learning and action means the beginning of reflection on learning and action, as the PAR process spirals (McNiff, 2002; McNiff, Whitehead, & Laidlaw, 1992).

3.1.2.6 Ecological Systems Theory

Unlike living theory and the generative transformational nature of living systems, ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) is not inherently associated with PAR. The theory was developed to enable understanding of child development, and has been used in areas including crime, social work, and youth sport programming. However, the nested structure can be used to analyse many of the findings in this research study, therefore meriting inclusion. The system contends that the ecological environment consists of a series of nested structures, each of which sits within the next (see Figure 3.1). This five-level nested structure includes the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). The microsystem is the most immediate level of influences, such as their family or neighbourhood. The next level is the mesosystem, which involves the interaction between two or more settings that impact the microsystem that the individual plays an active role in, such as that between family, work, and social life. The exosystem is used to explain the settings in which the individual does not have an active role, but still influences that individual's immediate context, such as a family member's experiences at work. The macrosystem is the cultural context surrounding the individual, such as cultural norms and laws. The final level,

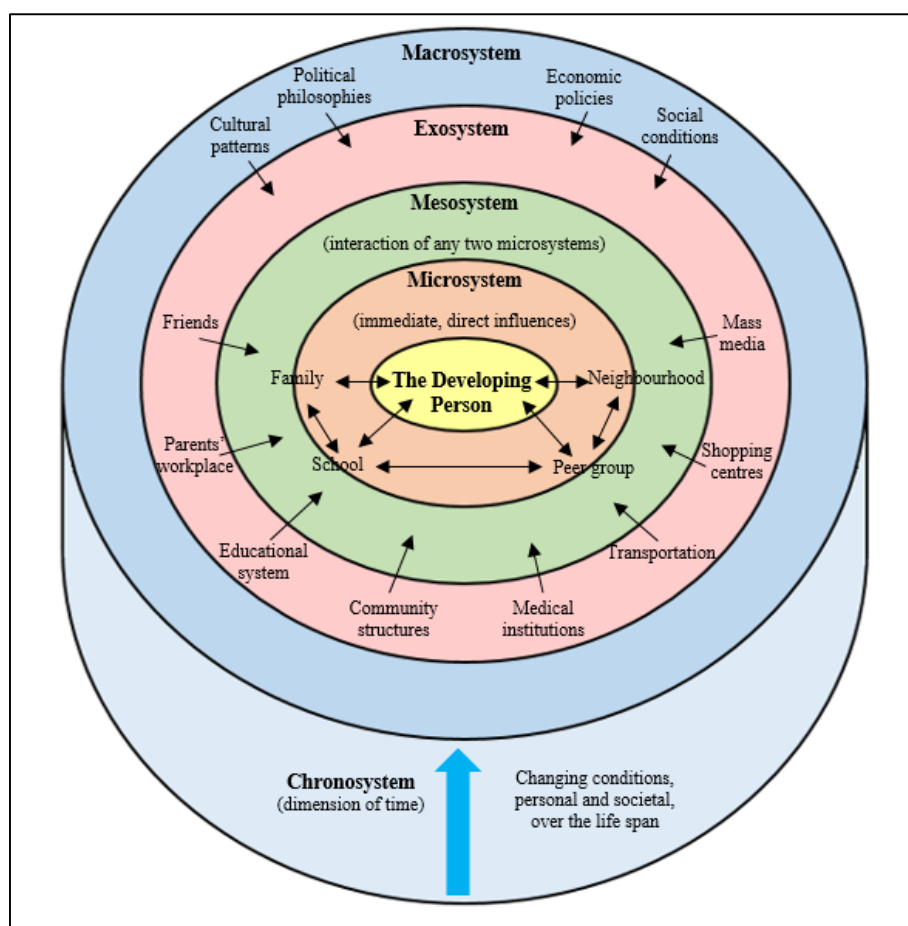


Figure 3.1 Ecological Systems Theory (adapted from Bronfenbrenner, 1979)

the chronosystem, consists of factors which may occur over the course of an individual's lifetime which impacts their development, such as marriage or retirement (American Psychological Association, 2020; Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1994). Within this study, the micro-, meso-, exo- and macrosystem level structures will be used to explain the impact of the PAR process. An example of a microsystem in this research context would be the primary school P.E. context in which the coaches worked. An example of a mesosystem influence would be the interaction (or lack thereof) between the Premier League Football Club Community Foundation (PLCF) management and the school in which the coach worked. A mesosystem example would be the lack of relationship between PLCF management and the school. Finally, an example of a macrosystem would be the place of P.E. in the primary school P.E. curriculum.






The various ecological influences that emerged from within this context are detailed throughout the Chapter 4 and illustrated in Figure 5.1.

3.1.3 Research context

This research was conducted in South London, specifically focusing on thirteen primary schools across three London Boroughs. Of these 8 were academies and 5 were maintained schools. Academies are publicly funded independent schools, which source funding from the government rather than the local council. They are run by academy trusts which employ the staff, and often have private sponsors such as business or voluntary groups, who are responsible for the academy's performance. Maintained schools are government funded, but are run by the local council, who are responsible for the school's performance (Gov.uk, 2019a, 2020). Table 3.4 illustrates OFSTED (Gov.uk, 2020) data for the 13 schools involved in this research project. Given this research concerns the holistic development of children, it would be somewhat contradictory to suggest that the test scores contained in Table 3.4 are the only indicator of

Table 3.4 School statistics (Gov.uk, 2020)

School name	Type of school	% of pupils eligible for free school meals at any time during the past 6 years	% of pupils meeting expected standard	Progress score & description		
				Reading	Writing	Mathematics
1A	Maintained	18.4%	58%	-1.5	-2	-1.4
1B	Academy	42.7%	52%	0.4	-1.8	-0.6
1C	Maintained	21.9%	83%	2.1	-0.2	2
1D	Academy	36.6%	79%	1.3	1.4	0
1E	Maintained	27.1%	64%	3.6	1.9	3.7
1F	Academy	20.5%	74%	3.1	0.9	3.1
1G	Academy	41.3%	66%	2.2	-0.7	1.3
2A	Academy	49.7%	41%	-2.2	1	-1.9
2B	Academy	32.9%	72%	-1.6	-0.3	-2
2C	Academy	51.6%	55%	-1	1.5	0.8
2D	Academy	8%	86%	2.8	1	0.7
2E	Maintained	20.9%	68%	1.4	1.8	0.5
2F	Maintained	30.8%	78%	1.3	-0.1	0.2

Well above average  Above average  Average  Below average  Well below average 

school or pupil success. Thus, these statistics serve to create context for the reader. The figures illustrate average or above average achievement in reading, writing and mathematics in most schools, yet also show that in six of the thirteen schools, over a third of children were not meeting the expected academic standards. However, average or above average academic standards are not indicative of a school's capacity to embrace a P.E.-related project focused on life skill development, as this research study will illustrate.

Given the structure of the primary school academic calendar, data collection and research implementation was complex and intermittent. Furthermore, irregular events (such as sports days and royal wedding celebrations) resulted in the cancellation of data collection sessions at short notice. The logistical demands of a singular researcher travelling between 13 schools limited the frequency with which certain sites could be visited for participant observation. Additionally, given PLCF were a major research stakeholder, their head offices served as an information hub for participant coaches. However, for coaches, the travel times between their school and PLCF head offices was often in excess of one hour. This limited the frequency and duration of research update meetings to after school hours during term time.

3.1.4 Research design

This research is a prospective case series as it followed a group of primary school P.E. coaches over a prolonged period of time to assess various aspects of the research context and contains follow-up examinations of the participants in certain studies (Ev et al., 2007; Wadsworth et al., 2003). Case series and cohort studies are often confused or misrepresented in the literature (Mathes & Pieper, 2017). The defining difference between both groups is that case series do not have a control/comparison group, whereas cohort studies do (Hartling, Bond, Santaguida, Viswanathan, & Dryden, 2011). This research design aligned with the PAR approach, allowing the researcher to aid PLCF in identifying issues in coaches' professional

contexts, and working together to address these issues. Additionally, a prospective case series ensured the expectations of PLCF were fulfilled in terms of tangible research outputs. Though an inherently academic endeavour, this research included changes in organisational structure, the development of an applied resource and guidelines for PLCF management staff and primary school P.E. coaches. By conducting a prospective case series it was possible to straddle the divide between academia and service provision, generating both empirical and applied research outputs.

3.1.5 Bias management

Bias is deemed to be any influence that provides a distortion in the findings of a study (Polit & Beck, 2014). Bias exists in all research designs and can occur at any point throughout the research process, as researchers bring their own experiences, ideas, prejudices and personal philosophies to the research process (Smith & Nobel, 2014). It is not possible to detail and follow exact procedures that systematically eliminate bias (Norris, 1997), however methodological protocols can be followed throughout the research process to mitigate against both researcher and participant bias. To manage this bias, an awareness of reflexivity is necessary on behalf of the researcher. According to Salzman (2002, p.806) reflexivity is “a constant awareness, assessment, and reassessment by the researcher of the researcher’s own contribution/influence/shaping of intersubjective research and the consequent findings”. Reflexivity allows the researcher to appreciate that they are integrated into the research, rather than remaining outside the subject or process (Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013). During this project I kept a research diary to facilitate reflexivity, which allowed me to explore methodological issues, reflect upon personal assumptions and biases, record my emotional state during data collection, and reflect upon data collection sessions (Nadin & Cassell, 2006). For example, following an observation at a school which had limited P.E. facilities, and during which a class were late for P.E. because their classroom lesson ran over, my reflective diary

entry highlighted my frustration that P.E. was “treated as a bonus subject” [Nolan, Reflective Diary, 19/03/2019] in schools. Additionally, I used reflective diary entries to critique the quality of my follow-up questioning during semi-structured interviews, particularly concerning topics that were not included in the interview schedule, but which participants felt the need to speak about. An example is how, in the early stages of the project, my diary entries captured how I was narrowly focused and would redirect the interview conversations back towards life skill development when the participants began to speak about their working conditions and the nature of support they received within schools.

Bias was also managed using both methodological and data triangulation. For example, in the case of methodological triangulation, I combined semi-structured interviews and unstructured observations when examining coach behaviours during P.E. lessons. This reduced the reliance on a single data collection method by combining two types of data, which made a contribution to mitigation of bias. Furthermore, regarding data triangulation, I collected data from both PLCF coaches and management, thereby providing different perspectives on the phenomena under study, as advocated by Cohen et al. (2018). For more detail on the reflexive diary, methodological triangulation and data triangulation, see Section 3.1.7.

3.1.6 Procedure

3.1.6.1 Inclusion criteria and recruitment

Inclusion criteria for participants differed in each phase of the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage, with specific recruitment criteria outlined in the relevant sections. Table 3.5 provides a brief description of the inclusion criteria for each phase. In phases 1, 2, 3 and 5, participants were recruited because they were full time PLCF primary school P.E. coaches, and therefore could participate in PAR process (Frisby et al., 2005). In Phase 4, participants were recruited because they were actively involved in the partnership. Both PLCF management and

coaches were recruited to provide accounts from different perspectives about their experiences within the partnership (Polkinghorne, 2005). Participants were recruited via e-mail and in person, as detailed in the individual phases.

Table 3.5 Participant inclusion criteria

Phase 1, 2, 3 & 5	Phase 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLCF primary school P.E. coach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLCF management staff member • PLCF primary school P.E. coach

3.1.6.2 Axiology

This section will provide general information on participant recruitment and ethics. The researcher undertook a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check to fulfil the requirements for university research ethics approval before the study commenced. Following approval from the university ethics sub-committee (see Appendix 3), all participants were purposively sampled. This is a deliberate choice of participant by the researcher, based on the defining characteristics of the participant. It is a non-random sampling technique which does not require an underlying theory or specific number of participants. The researcher makes a decision on what needs to be known and then recruits participants who can provide information on a topic due to their knowledge of experiences (Lewis & Sheppard, 2006). This sampling strategy aligned with PAR, allowing community members to contribute their expert knowledge of the context to the research process, whilst contributing to the development of contextually-grounded applied outcomes (Frisby et al., 2005; Holkup et al., 2004). It also aligned with the pragmatic philosophy, as participants were recruited with the intention of changing and improving coaching practice (Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013).

As PLCF co-funded this research, participants were PLCF employees. Individuals who fulfilled the inclusion criteria for the study were invited to join as participants via e-mail. Participant information sheets (see Appendix 4) were attached to the e-mail. A follow up phone

call was made to prospective participants to provide for them a more detailed description of the research, its aims and what would be expected from participants. A group information presentation was then arranged to provide further clarity. Participants were informed that participation was strictly voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any point. Participants did not receive any additional incentives to participate in the study, but were informed of its potential benefits of participation as it was also framed as a CPD opportunity. Participants then signed and returned informed consent forms (see Appendix 5). Permission was granted by PLCF to collect data at partner primary schools by the P.E. and School Sport Manager (see Appendix 15).



Figure 3.2 Coach meetings and supervisory team changes timeline

Twelve presentations were given to PLCF participants during the research project (see Figure 3.2). This aligns with Blodgett et al.'s (2011) recommendation to share the emerging findings with participants on an ongoing basis, thus facilitating PAR (Berg, 2004). The December 2016 meeting was the first formal interaction between researcher and participants. Here the research plans were presented and the process of PAR was explained. The February 2018 presentation given by PhD supervisor Nora provided an overview of how the research, its aims and intended outcomes sat within contemporary approaches to football coaching. The concluding April 2019 meeting was the final formal interaction between the researcher and participants. All other presentations mapped in Figure 3.2 were PAR update meetings, which

also facilitated the ongoing development of a Life Skills Coaching Resource (see Section 4.3.2). During the intervals between meetings, the spiralling PAR process continued.

3.1.6.3 Participants

Detailed participant information for individual phases of the main study is provided in the relevant sections.. Eleven PLCF coaches were recruited in two separate cohorts for Phases 1, 2 ,3 and 5. Two PLCF managers and two PLCF coaches were recruited for Phase 4.

PLCF coach participants were not explicitly asked to disclose details of their formal education at any point during the project, as it was considered a potentially sensitive topic. Moreover, unexpected discussions regarding the educational background of participants may have resulted in hesitancy and/or defensiveness on their behalf during data collection. However, during participant interviews and informal conversations with the researcher, some coaches spoke about their formal educational background, revealing huge variation across the sample. On one end of the spectrum, a coach detailed how they had not completed secondary education, leaving school aged 16. At the alternate spectrum end, a coach was mid-way through completing a master's degree in education. The remaining coaches had graduated from secondary education, with some going on to study at further and higher education institutions.

3.1.7 Data collection

This section will provide general information on the techniques used throughout data collection and analysis. Any variations from these techniques are noted within specific research phases. Qualitative data sources can include transcripts, field notes, jotted notes, diaries, chronological accounts and reflective notes (Pope, Ziebland, & Mays, 2000). It must be considered that qualitative data is a representation of what has occurred, rather than an exact depiction of the phenomenon under investigation. However, participants and documents for a qualitative investigation are selected because they can provide substantial insight into the

phenomena or experience under investigation. When analysing data gathered from qualitative sources, the researcher is tasked with digging below the surface to unearth experiential accounts (Polkinghorne, 2005). Data were collected via semi-structured interviews, observations and reflexive diary entries. Methodological triangulation, which is the use of different data collection methods, and data triangulation, which involves the collection of data from different people, were also employed (Cohen et al., 2018). The combination of data collection methods strengthens a study by uncovering variance that may be overlooked if using a single method (Jick, 1979; Patton, 2002).

Interviews were conducted at PLCF head offices and on-site at schools. During interviews, only the participants and the researcher were present. Live lesson observations were recorded for during the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage to examine participant coach behaviours. During observations, children and school staff (such as teaching assistants or department heads) were present alongside participant coaches. This presence of additional school staff members may have impacted the behaviours of the coaches being observed, because the presence of figures of authority can influence data collections (Hopkins, 2007). To mitigate against this, staff members were politely asked to refrain from observing lessons at the same time as the researcher.

3.1.7.1 Semi-structured interviews

The function of semi-structured interviews is to explore the views, experiences, beliefs and motivations of research participants on study-related matters. Interviews provide researchers with a ‘deeper’ understanding of social phenomena than quantitative methods alone (Gill, Stewart, Treasure, & Chadwick, 2008). Interviews garner descriptions of the life-world of the interviewee, with respect to interpreting the meaning of the phenomena being described (Kyale, 1996), and aim to produce alternative explanations of the phenomena under study (Polkinghorne, 2005).

Table 3.6 Carter and Henderson's (2005) three stages of qualitative interviews

Stage 1	Researcher introduces topic and the broad aims of the research to the interviewee, ensuring the interviewee understands their role, are comfortable, and are not intimidated or prejudiced in their responses.
Stage 2	Ask open-ended questions to gain an understanding of the phenomena under examination from interviewee's perspective
Stage 3	Ask 'rounding off' questions and invited interviewee to pose their own questions.

Semi-structured interviews are also advantageous, as they allow the participant to expand on the areas which they feel are important (Britten, 1995). All interviews were organised around Carter and Henderson's (2005) three stages (see Table 3.6). However, depending on the study design, solitary data collection methods may not provide a comprehensive overview of the phenomenon under study. In Phases 1, 2 3 and 5 of the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage, methodological triangulation was employed, as multiple data collection methods were combined. In Phase 4, data triangulation was employed, as both PLCF management staff and coaches were interviewed.. Triangulation creates a more holistic, contextual portrayal of the phenomenon under examination, constructing a more comprehensive picture what is occurring (Jick, 1979).

3.1.7.2 Observations

Observation is the principal methodology used in field research (Waddington, 2004) whereby the researcher watches a participant's behaviour in real time and documents what happens (Potter, 1996). Observations include descriptions of people, events and conversations, as well as the observer's feelings. Live observation notes should attempt to record on paper as much as is possible to record about the observation. A rule of thumb often followed is that if it's not written down, it did not happen (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984). In the case of this research, both structured and unstructured observations were used. Structured observation (Phase 2) involves the use of predetermined observation schedules to record observed behaviours (such as the Arizona State University Observation Instrument). Those using structured observation

aim to remain objective and not ‘contaminate’ the data with their own preconceptions. On the other hand, unstructured observation is used to interpret cultural behaviour, such as the behaviour of P.E. coaches in a primary school context. It is not unstructured in the sense that it is random or sloppy, but does not check a list of predetermined behaviours as would happen in structured observations (Mulhall, 2003).

During data collection, researcher bias may have influenced observation data. Given the duration of the research partnership, the frequency with which the researcher interacted with some of the participants, and the quantity of observations that took place, it is naïve to assume objectivity on the researcher’s behalf. Yet Brewer (2000) concluded that the observer’s own experience should be considered an important and legitimate source of data. During both structured and unstructured observations, the researcher served as a ‘complete observer’, by standing back and ‘eavesdropping’ on unfolding events (Burgess, 1984; Gold, 1958). However, in this research context, acting as a complete observer and simply eavesdropping on events was not possible for logistical and safeguarding reasons. Prior to every observation, the researcher had to contact the participant via e-mail to arrange a suitable date and time. Upon arrival at the schools, the researcher had to meet the participant coach at main reception and sign-in for safeguarding reasons. Over time, the level of rapport between the participants and the researcher generally improved, often to the point whereby the participant would ask the researcher for concurrent feedback on their practice (Park, Shea, & Wright, 2000; Schmidt & Wulf, 1997). As such the researcher may have exhibited a degree of unconscious bias.

Compared to interviews, observations have the advantage of capturing data in real-life contexts (Mulhall, 2003). Observations can complement interview data, as they are concerned with seeing, feeling and being present with people and things, rather than talking and listening to people (Sørensen, 2009). Observations also reduce the likelihood of being deceived by participants, as what they actually do may contradict what they claim to do during an interview

(Burns, 2000). However, the Hawthorne effect may also be in effect, whereby participants alter their behaviour because they know they are being watched (Walters, Schluter, Oldham, Thomson, & Payne, 2012). Observations can also clarify the presence of behaviours mentioned during interviews (Polkinghorne, 2005). However, it must be considered that what participants perceive they do and what they actually do can both be right, but simply represent different perspectives of the data (Mulhall, 2003). Ultimately the entire observational process is reliant upon the display of overt behaviours (Tyron, 1998), therefore methodological triangulation was employed (Cohen et al., 2018).

3.1.7.3 Reflexive diary entries

A reflexive diary was kept by the researcher to record additional data and personal reflections (Hewitt-Taylor, 2001). Reflexivity is concerned with reflecting on how research is conducted and understanding how the research process shapes the outcomes (Hardy, Phillips, & Clegg, 2001). It encourages researchers to avoid complacency and to continually review and critique one's practice (Cassell & Symon, 2004). Nadin and Cassell (2006) suggested that all researchers should use a reflexive diary, irrespective of their epistemological position and that prior to engagement, as a commitment to the pursuit of reflexivity through diary use and an awareness of one's own epistemological assumptions is needed. Reflecting through diary entries allows the researcher to continually think about their own research practice and assumptions by systematically recording their thoughts. Diary entries also serve an organisational purpose, allowing researchers to keep track of the research process as a whole. Diaries can also act as a useful substitute for conversation with fellow researchers. Such reflexive practice ensures ongoing self-critique and self-appraisal (Koch & Harrington, 1998), enhances the depth and richness of qualitative data gathered during research (Hewitt-Taylor, 2001; Morone, Lynch, Greco, Tindle, & Weiner, 2008), and supplements data gathered during

interviews and observations (Nadin & Cassell, 2006). As such it was reasoned that a research diary should be kept as a supplementary data source.

A research diary was kept for the final year of the study, although the entries were not formally analysed. The research diary was an A5 lined notebook. Twenty-six reflections were recorded, reflecting on both individual incidents and the research process as a whole. The diary served several functions, including exploration of methodological issues, supplementing the content of the interview and observation data, reflecting on personal assumptions and biases, noting one's emotional state, and reflecting on data collection sessions (Nadin & Cassell, 2006). Significant events (for example participant attrition and coach resignation) associated with the research stakeholders were also recorded.

There are shortcomings associated with reflexive diaries. Finlay (2002) warned of 'infinite regress' of the researcher becoming lost in endless narcissistic commentary, whereby the researcher focuses only themselves rather than the participants. The researcher took measures to avoid this by ensuring that diary entries contained information pertaining to all parties involved in the research process. Diary entries are also susceptible to influence from extraneous factors, such as school facilities or the weather, which may influence the researcher's interpretation of events, or impinge on the even being recorded (Hewitt-Taylor, 2001). The potential of such factors to influence the data is acknowledged.

3.1.8 Data analysis

Numerous data analysis methods are used in qualitative research, including content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005), narrative analysis (Riessman, 2005), discourse analysis (Gee, 2005), framework analysis (Srivastava & Thomson, 2009) and grounded theory (Charmaz, 1996). This research study used a modified form of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2012, 2013). Whilst they share many principles and procedures (Joffe & Yardley,

2004), content and thematic analysis are not the same. Content analysis is predominately quantitative and illustrates the frequencies of the occurrence of particular categories. The outcome is typically a numerical description of the data. Thematic analysis prioritises the qualitative aspects of the data, and therefore was deemed a more appropriate data analysis method (Joffe & Yardley, 2004). Furthermore, thematic analysis is not wedded to any pre-existing philosophical stance, allowing it to align with the pragmatist paradigm and PAR methodology adopted (Braun & Clarke, 2006). A combination of inductive and deductive thematic analysis was applied in the search for practical outcomes. It must be noted that data analysis did not simply begin after data collection finished, rather it began during the data collection process (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007) and literature review stages. This was because of the PAR approach adopted, which necessitated ongoing data collection and interpretation from the outset.

3.1.8.1 Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis is a method used to systematically identify, organise and offer insight into patterns of meaning across a data set. The identification of idiosyncratic or anomalous meanings and experiences within a single data item is not the function of thematic analysis. Rather it involves searching across qualitative data sources to find repeated patterns of meaning (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2012, 2013). Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting themes within data, which organises and describes the detail of a data set with depth (Boyatzis, 1998). Often however, thematic analysis will go further than this by interpreting various aspects of the research topic. Fundamentally, it serves to identify what is common to the way a topic is spoken or written about, and make sense of these commonalities (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

Thematic analysis was used to analyse interview and observation data. However, a modified form of thematic analysis was employed, the rationale for which will now be

presented. First, thematic analysis does not require the detailed theoretical and technical knowledge that is required for approaches such as discourse analysis or grounded theory. It offers a more accessible form of analysis which is beneficial for those early in a qualitative research career (Braun & Clarke, 2006), as the researcher is in this case. However, thematic analysis does not simply allow the researcher to paraphrase the data extracts. Instead it tasks the researcher with developing an analytic narrative around the data, highlighting to the reader what is interesting and why. Data analysis does not aim to represent everything that is present in the data, but to tell a particular story about the data in relation to the topic under investigation. The desired output is a set of themes which encapsulates the most meaningful and relevant aspects of the data, and the collective tone of this data, in relation to the topic being studied (Braun & Clarke, 2013). The purpose of a thematic analysis is to tell the complicated story of the data in a manner which convinces the reader of the validity and merit of the analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

3.1.8.2 Preparing to conduct thematic analysis

Researchers must have a clear understanding of where they stand in relation to the possible options they can take, a rationale for the choices they make, and a consistent application of these choices during data analysis, to conduct a good thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2012). Before conducting thematic analysis, Braun and Clarke (2006) stated that researchers must make choices regarding what form of analysis they are using, and to understand and explain why they are using this form of thematic analysis. Broadly speaking there are two types of thematic analysis, descriptive, and conceptual and interpretative. Descriptive analyses data in a largely illustrative manner. The conceptual and interpretative approach analyses data in detail, searching for latent meanings in the data. Both approaches offer effective analyses of data and typically serve different purposes, but can be combined. This research adopted a predominantly conceptual and interpretative approach, aligning with

the pragmatist paradigm chosen by using existing theory and literature to analyse the data (Braun & Clarke, 2012; Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013; Scotland, 2012).

Data coding, specifically the inductive deductive approaches cited by Braun and Clarke (2006) also had to be considered. Inductive coding is a bottom-up approach which is driven by the contents of the data and reflects participants' experiences (Frith & Gleeson, 2004). Deductive coding is a top-down approach where the researcher approaches the data with a collection of concepts, ideas or topics they use to code the data. Deductive coding can draw on existing theory to examine issues which participants did not explicitly articulate (Boyatzis, 1998; Hayes, 1997). In this research study, inductive and deductive approaches were combined. The deductive component used existing empirical evidence to explain and extrapolate meaning from the participant responses during the analysis process and to align with the chosen paradigm. The inductive component allowed for the creation of additional themes, which were compiled from data that was not classified within deductive themes. Thematic analysis coding and analysis often involves a combination of both inductive a deductive approaches, whether it is intended or not (Braun & Clarke, 2012). The rationale for combining both approaches was to accurately reflect the experiences of the participants involved in the research study and subsequently improve their conditions (Frisby et al., 2005; Holkup et al., 2004).

Phase 4 of the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage used primarily deductive thematic analysis to examine the partnership between collaborating organisations. The Parent and Harvey (2009) Management Model for Sport and Physical Activity Community-based Partnerships served as the framework for deductive analysis in this phase of research. The model was used throughout, initially being used to devise interview schedules, and then serving as a pre-existing framework against which the partnership could be examined. However, inductive themes were also created during data analysis. Phase 1 adopted an inductive approach to examine participants' existing understanding of life skills at the outset of the Coach

Development Programme. Later, in Phase 5, a deductive approach was employed to examine participants' understanding of life skills, and to examine the implementation and effectiveness of the Coach Development Programme. Although deductive analysis was used throughout, it must be acknowledged it is impossible to apply pure deduction, as individuals have the propensity to bring personal thoughts and biases to the data during analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

Data was organised into themes after data coding (see Section 3.1.8.3). Following the decision to combine inductive and deductive approaches, the 'level' at which themes in the data were examined also had to be decided upon (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Two levels exist; the semantic or explicit level, and the latent level (Boyatzis, 1998). The semantic approach seeks to identify themes within the surface meanings of the data, whereby the researcher is not searching for anything beyond what participants have said or what has been written. The latent approach seeks to go beyond this surface understanding, by identifying and examining underlying ideas or assumptions, and conceptualisations that are theorised as ultimately shaping the semantic content of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). To align with the conceptual and interpretative thematic analysis approach, the inductive/deductive data analysis approach, and the pragmatist paradigm, this research took a semantic approach (Patton, 1990).

3.1.8.3 Conducting thematic analysis

This section will present Braun and Clarke's (2006, 2012, 2013) six-step approach to conducting thematic analysis (Table 3.7). However, it is crucial that these six steps are treated as a guide, rather than fixed rules. These steps were applied with flexibility to fit the research questions and the data (Patton, 1990).

'Familiarising yourself with the data' was Phase 1. It involved the researcher immersing himself in the data by repeatedly and actively re-reading, watching and listening to the data in

Table 3.7 Braun and Clarke's (2006, 2012, 2013) phases of thematic analysis

Phase	Description of the process
1. Familiarising yourself with your data	Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and rereading the data, noting down initial ideas.
2. Generating initial codes	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.
3. Searching for themes	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
4. Reviewing themes	Checking in the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic 'map' of the analysis.
5. Defining and naming themes	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells; generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
6. Producing the report	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

search of patterns and meanings. Observation data was unstructured (Phases 1,3 and 5) and structured (Phase 2). Interviews were transcribed verbatim and although time consuming, serves an excellent way of familiarising oneself with the data (Riessman, 1993, 2005). Notes and ideas about the data were recorded during data collection and transcription, which were referred to in later phases. However, these notes were more representative of a stream of thoughts, rather than a polished summation of the data.

‘Generating initial codes’ was Phase 2. It began after data familiarisation and generated a preliminary list of what is in the data and what is interesting about it. Initial codes, which are “the most basic segment, or element, of the raw data or information that can be assessed in a meaningful way regarding the phenomenon” (Boyatzis, 1998, p.63), were produced in this phase. The researcher decided to code individual extracts as few or as many times as they wanted, as one code could fit into many themes. No parameters exist for the size of extracts, which resulted in large extracts, small extracts, and portions of the raw data which were not coded. As coding progressed, existing codes were modified to include new material.

‘Searching for themes’ is Phase 3. After the data had been initially coded and collated, and when the researcher developed a large list of codes spanning data set, codes were grouped into themes. At this point, the researcher examined the codes and considered how different codes could merge to form themes. A theme “captures something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.82). Researcher judgement was required to determine themes. However, theme importance does not depend on quantifiable measures. More instances of a particular theme did not mean it was more important than others. Instead, the primary themes presented captured a fundamental insight into the data and are related to the research question. The researcher often extracted subthemes within the overarching themes, following the collation of the initial codes. Subthemes are essentially data clusters with distinct meaning, which can give structure to a larger, more complex theme. They can also demonstrate the hierarchy of meaning within the data. At this juncture, the researcher also began to examine the relationships between themes and how they would complement one another when telling an overall story of the data.

‘Reviewing themes’ is Phase 4. It is a recursive process whereby the developing themes are reviewed in relation to the coded data and entire data set. During this phase many initial themes were split or discarded when it became clear they were not actual themes. Other themes collapsed into each other because they were similar. Themes were reviewed and refined at two levels. Level 1 involved reviewing at the level of the coded data extracts, which consisted of reading all the extracts of each theme and considering whether they formed a clear pattern. Once a pattern was recognised, the researcher moved on to Level 2. The process for conducting Level 2 is similar, but is concerned with the entire data set. Here the researcher considered the validity of the themes in relation to the data set, and whether the thematic map reflected the contents of the data set accurately. The data set was re-read at this point to see if the themes

worked in relation to the data set, and to code additional data which may have been missed in earlier phases. Ultimately, Level 2 seeks to determine whether the themes meaningfully capture the recorded data and tell the story of the data. It must be noted that coding and generating themes could, in theory, go on forever. When refinements failed to add anything novel or substantial to the project, the process ceased.

‘Defining and naming themes’ is Phase 5. It is concerned with first defining, then refining the themes to be presented in the final analysis. To do this, the researcher identified the focus of what each theme was about and the themes collectively, and determined what aspect of the data each theme captured. A clear statement of the unique nature of each theme and subtheme was provided. Selected extracts were analysed and presented to the reader, telling a story of each theme. Extracts were chosen on the basis that they provided a clear example of the analytic points the researcher wanted to make, and were related to other themes. Interview extracts were presented verbatim, inclusive of grammatical errors, to give a true representation of the participants’ perceptions. This analysis made interconnections between themes and was concerned with the data set as a whole, not just ‘interesting’ points which arose. The outcome of this phase is a presentation of what is interesting about the data extracts and why. This phase culminated in a clear definition of each theme being presented.

‘Producing the report’ is Phase 6. It involved the writing up and presentation of the final analysis of the data. This phase began when the final set of themes were worked out. Themes were presented in a logical and meaningful manner, often with themes building on those which had been presented before them, to communicate a coherent story of the data. Although writing and producing the report is a critical part of the analysis, it cannot take place at the end of the process. As such, writing in effect began in Phase 1 with the noting of ideas, potential coding schemes, themes, subthemes and interconnections throughout this six-step process.

3.1.8.4 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is the degree to which researchers make decisions about what constitutes quality and how quality may be ensured (Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013). There is little engagement with the topic of trustworthiness in relation to qualitative studies in sport and exercise sciences, and frequently no mention of trustworthiness at all (Smith, 2017). When trustworthiness is referenced, it is fleeting, or stated as a study limitation. Qualitative research lacks trustworthiness when it is understood through statistical-probabilistic generalisability, but applying this kind of generalisability to qualitative research is problematic. This is because the ontological and epistemological assumptions which underpin post-positivist quantitative research differ from those which underpin this pragmatic, qualitative research. As in this research study, purposive sampling of participants with a rich subject knowledge is a strength of qualitative research (Lewis, Ritchie, Ormston, & Morrell, 2014). Moreover, this research did not aim to be generalisable.

Numerous types of trustworthiness can be applied to qualitative research, including naturalistic or representational generalisability (Lewis et al., 2014; Stake, 1995), transferability (Tracy, 2010), analytical generalisation (Chenail, 2010; Lewis et al., 2014), or intersectional generalisability (Fine, Tuck, & Zeller-Berkman, 2008). This research aligns with both naturalistic generalisability and transferability, the central tenets of which were described by Smith, (2017). Naturalistic generalisability is said to occur when the research resonates with the reader's personal life, resembles their experiences, settings they move in, events they've observed, and people they've interacted with. However, this depends on how the reader interprets the research. Transferability then, occurs when people in one setting consider adopting something from another context which has been identified via research. However, researchers cannot assume that methods and approaches employed make results either context-bound or generalisable. Instead the factors which effect whether or not the knowledge

presented can transferred to other settings must be investigated (Morgan, 2007). Transferability is enabled when research findings overlap with a reader's situation and/or the reader believes they can intuitively transfer findings to their own context. Reports which involve direct testimony, such as the observation and interview data collected during this research project, alongside rich description and accessible writing, facilitate transferability (Tracy, 2010).

When considering the generalisability, qualitative research calls on the reader to be actively involved in the establishment of naturalistic generalisability or transferability (Smith, 2017). Both the researcher and reader share responsibility when trying to apply qualitative findings beyond the context in which they were originally examined (Chenail, 2010). Throughout this thesis the researcher highlighted the differences this research project made in the research context and allowed readers to see opportunities for generalisability, rather than apologising for a perceived lack of generalisability on behalf of qualitative research (Smith, 2017).

3.1.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter has contextualised the research, providing an explanation of how the research paradigm, ontological and epistemological assumptions influenced the project methodology. The research adopted a pragmatist paradigm, with associated ontological and epistemological assumptions. However, given the PAR approach adopted, and the qualitative methods employed, the constructivist learnings of the project are acknowledged. Whilst an overview of the general data collection (such as semi-structured interviews and observation) and data analysis methods (such as thematic analysis) are provided, phase-specific information is contained within the relevant sections. When considering the generalisability of the project findings, it is the responsibility of the researcher and reader to apply the findings in alternative

contexts. The findings may resonate with the reader, and even overlap with the reader's situation, evidencing naturalistic generalisability and transferability.

Chapter 4

Participatory Action Research Study

4.1 Introduction

This Participatory Action Research (PAR) study is divided into three stages, as illustrated in Table 4.1. The first stage is the Introduction and Planning Stage, which includes the early steps in the research project. The second stage is the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage, which details the active participatory action research process over the course of the research project. The third and final stage is the Conclusion Stage, which includes the final steps taken before the formal cessation of the project. The chapter will begin with an introduction to coach education, the role it plays in sport and P.E. contexts, and an explanation of its relevance in the present research context. The strengths and weaknesses of traditional coach education programmes are then discussed. Following this, the theoretical underpinnings of the project are restated. Each of the three project stages are then presented. It is necessary to note that during both the Introduction and Planning Stage and the Concluding Stage, no data were gathered or analysed. As such, the details of these stages are simply described. However the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage, is presented across five phases, all of which contain data collection, analysis, and discussion.

4.1.1 Existing Approaches to Coach Education

To provide context for the three-stage Coach Development Programme, existing approaches to coach education are now be examined. Based on Merriam, Caffarella and Baumgartner's (2007) definition of formal education, Mallett, Trudel, Lyle and Rynne (2009) described formal coach education as a highly institutionalised, bureaucratic, curriculum-driven process which is recognised by the attainment of grades, diplomas or certificates. Formal coach education programmes and the professional development associated with them is essential to sustain and improve the quality of sports coaching (Trudel, Gilbert, & Werthner, 2010). Coach education courses and programmes represent formal learning opportunities which are used to

address coaching concerns where gaps between discourse and practice exist (Cushion et al., 2003). The goal of such programmes is coach development, which is an all-encompassing term

Table 4.1 Project Stage Details

Stage		Action	Date	
Introduction and Planning Stage		Project begins	October	2016
		Introductory presentation	December	
Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage	Phase 1	Cohort 1 recruited	February	2017
		Observation cycle begins (Cohort 1)		
		Research update meeting 1	May	
		Interview Cycle 1: Needs Analysis (Cohort 1)	July	
		Research update meeting 2	August	
	Phase 2	Resource development cycle begins	September	
		Research update meeting 3	November	
	Phase 3	Nora presentation	February	2018
		Cohort 2 recruited		
		Interview Cycle 2: Readiness (Cohort 1)		
		Observation cycle begins (Cohort 2)		
		First research diary entry	April	
		Research update meeting 4		
		Stakeholder meeting 1	May	
		Research update meeting 5	June	
		Research update meeting 6	August	
		Interview Cycle 2: Readiness (Cohort 2)		
		Stakeholder meeting 2	September	
		Research update meeting 7		
		Research update meeting 8	January	
	Phase 4	Interview Cycle 3: Partnership Assessment	February	2019
		Stakeholder meeting 3	March	
	Phase 5	Final research diary entry	April	
		Resource development cycle ends		
		Observation cycles end (Cohort 1 & 2)		
		Interview Cycle 4: Project Exit (Cohort 1 & 2)		
Conclusion Stage		Research update meeting 9	April	
		Stakeholder meeting 4	September	
		Project ends		

referring to the formal and informal processes which lead towards expertise (Mallett et al., 2009). More contemporary research (Falcão, Bloom, & Gilbert, 2012; MacDonald, Côté, & Deakin, 2010) has shown that coach education programmes, if correctly structured, can positively impact both coaches and participants in sporting contexts. However, a long-standing criticism of coach education programmes is their limited scope (Abraham & Collins, 1998; Lyle, 2007). This raises the question of fidelity regarding traditional, formal coach education programmes.

In their comparison of formal and informal coach education programmes, Mallett et al. (2009) noted that formal coach education often makes limited contributions to coaching practice, with informal learning experiences proving more beneficial. Moreover, Rossi and Cassidy (1999) suggested that coach education has less impact than the hours spent in a playing or coaching role. This low impact may be due to the predominant focus on technical, tactical and physical knowledge and sports science topics (Bean & Forneris, 2017; Gould & Carson, 2008a; Nelson et al., 2006; Santos et al., 2017), with the assumption that the coach has the capacity to apply what they have learned in their own specific settings, despite the content being presented out of context (Gilbert et al., 2009). Additionally, it may be that coach education programmes often advocate a ‘right way’ of coaching that are based upon strictly prescribed coaching behaviours and neglect the idea of coaching as a social process (Cushion et al., 2003), irrespective of the context. Indeed Gilbert and Trudel (1999) noted that coaches who attend large scale coach education programmes receive the same information before rerunning to vastly different contexts. To address the issues associated with the seemingly low impact of such formal processes, coach education programmes may benefit from focusing more broadly on coach development, rather than traditional views of education and certification (Gilbert, 2006). This approach may prove more beneficial for knowledge growth amongst coaches.

According to Cushion et al. (2003) coaching knowledge in P.E. contexts is not complete or absolute, but constantly evolving. To advance such knowledge, calls have been made for universities to partner with schools to link research with practice in P.E. contexts (Hellison et al., 2000; Patton, 2012), as with this project. Such calls have been answered to a degree, with researchers examining the relationship between coaching and the P.E. delivery. Kirk (2012) suggested it is essential for both coaches and P.E. teachers to have an understanding of one another's fields, as there is considerable crossover in their domains within schools nationally. This crossover is unsurprising, as there is long standing evidence highlighting that many teachers become involved in coaching by virtue of their role (Lyle, 2002). Lavin, Swindlehurst and Foster (2008) have alluded to the frequent use of sports coaching in primary schools both inside and outside curriculum time, whilst the use of school funding for sports coaches is commonplace (Ofsted, 2014). Therefore, it seems there is a requirement for contextually grounded coach development programmes, as those delivering primary school P.E. may not have progressed through traditional teacher training routes. Such programmes, if structured correctly, could positively impact both primary school children and primary school P.E. coaches, particularly if an emphasis is placed on life skill development. However, current programmes are often similar in structure to traditional coach education processes, in that they are instructive and/or decontextualized. Such factors are long-standing limitations associated with traditional or formal coach education.

Coach education programmes often fail to focus on the pedagogical and socio-cultural aspects of coaching (Cassidy et al., 2008). Moreover, these programmes present too much information over a short time period with minimal opportunities for follow-up and knowledge integration (Knowles et al., 2001), and have a tendency to de-contextualise learning (Nelson et al., 2006). In their examination of training on individual and organisational performance in national sport organisations, Millar and Stevens (2012) referred to professional training and

human resources literature to explore the factors which mediate training success. Noted factors influencing the transfer and application of coaching knowledge included motivation, training design and organisational structure. Motivation to transfer skills centres on the desire of an individual to use the knowledge and skills they have learned during training on the job (Colquitt, LePine, & Noe, 2000). Motivation is an essential component in training transfer (Gegenfurtner, Veermans, Festner, & Gruber, 2009), as without it there will be no alteration in behaviour (Tai, 2006). Training design is the way the education programme is structured and delivered to meet the needs of the trainees, providing them with the capacity to transfer what they've learned back to the job (Velada, Caetano, Michel, Lyons, & Kavanagh, 2007). Finally, organisational structure refers to the degree to which employers support their employees to apply their new knowledge following training, with evidence suggesting that a positive correlation exists between support and knowledge application (Cromwell & Kolb, 2004). Evidently, such factors require consideration if coach development programmes are going to be designed in a progressive manner.

For decades, coach education and certification programmes have been approached from a traditional teaching approach, with the development of knowledgeable coaches being acknowledged as a strength (Trudel & Gilbert, 2006). Such formal education processes can ameliorate issues associated with informal learning experiences, moderating the relevance and controlling the amount of the content provided to learners (Mallett et al., 2009). However, it appears that such strengths are largely outweighed by the failure of such programmes to develop effective coaches (Trudel & Gilbert, 2006). These often rigid education process are characterised by feedback and evaluation (Vella et al., 2013), with similar or identical content being deliver to all participants. Jones (2000) argued that because these courses are developed along rationalistic lines, they do not develop the necessary intellectual and practical competencies that allow coaches to think creatively and problem-solve. Given that coaching is

a highly improvised process (Wiersma & Sherman, 2006), the uniformity within traditional coach education may fail to fully prepare coaches for a largely unpredictable working environment. It seems that the typical one-shot coach education programme facilitate in short-term knowledge retention, rather than the enhancing coaching practice (Gilbert et al., 2009). In line with the conclusions drawn by Vella et al. (2013), it appears a combination of formal and informal learning components are necessary to address such issues in coach education, certification and development programmes going forward.

Mallett et al. (2009) noted the existence of formal, non-formal and informal leaning situations. Formal learning situations are characterised by institutionally sanctioned structures and guided delivery, with rigid structure and a carefully organised learning opportunities such as lectures (Santos et al., 2017), but have been criticised for their lack of scope (Abraham & Collins, 1998; Lyle, 2007). Pertinently, the fidelity of large-scale formal coaching programmes have been called into question, as they have proven ineffective in providing coaches with the skills needed to be a successful coach (Cushion et al., 2003; Trudel & Gilbert, 2006). For example, coaches in Santos et al.'s (2017) study noted that structured course content was not conducive to learning, with most coaches reporting minimal levels of knowledge retention and application. It appears the primary issue is that formal coach education processes cannot deliver all key learning principles or prepare coaches for the unpredictability of an applied context. Thus coach education and development structures must strive to incorporate extensive and variable experiences, facilitating the conversion of situated learning to understanding and application (Mallett et al., 2009).

To ameliorate the limitations associated with formal coach education, Nelson et al. (2006) suggested that programmes would have more relevance and influence if coach educators focused on theory-informed practice, rather than a closed skill approach. Thus formal coach education must not be the totality of coach education (Vella et al., 2013), and must be

complimented by non-formal processes (Wright et al., 2007). One such example are the non-formal coach education experiences described by Mallett et al. (2009), which straddle the divide between formal and informal processes. Akin to formal education, people deemed to be knowledgeable in a particular area facilitate learning via workshops and conferences, which are slightly less formal than the exact nature of traditional processes. However, it is arguable whether these less formal learning opportunities provide coaches with the full remit of skills needed to succeed in what Vella et al. (2013, p.428) termed the “messy reality of coaching practice”, as they are still decontextualised. To ensure coaches benefit from these non-formal development experiences, it appears there is a requirement for the incorporation of informal learning opportunities into traditional programmes.

Informal learning experiences can provoke learning, but unlike formal and non-formal programmes, are typically unguided and/or incidental. Yet informal learning opportunities, such as unplanned conversations and incidental networking, can be contained within formal or non-formal programmes (Mallett et al., 2009). It has been noted that adult learners, teachers and coaches place high value on such contextually grounded learning experiences, which are directly related to their needs (Gilbert et al., 2009). Furthermore, researchers have suggested that the failure of traditional coach education programmes to address these contextual needs may result in a lack of confidence to coach amongst recipients, as the content delivered is too far removed from the setting in which it is intended to be delivered (Trudel et al., 2010). A manifestation of this phenomenon may be seen in the feedback received by Santos et al. (2017), with one participant coach suggesting that education courses were 70% theoretical and 30% practical. In the case of elite and youth sport coaches, informal learning opportunities have proven capable of addressing such shortcomings, with the performance of everyday work activities being shown to make a significant contribution to coach development (Mallett, Rossi, & Tinning, 2008; Rynne, Mallett, & Tinning, 2008).

The benefits of informal learning opportunities however, are not limited to coaches. MacDonald et al. (2010) found that young athletes working with coaches who participated in an informal coach training reported higher rates of personal and social skills in comparison to those working with untrained coaches. Nonetheless, Mallett et al. (2009) suggested that differentiating between formal, non-formal and informal learning experiences may actually be less helpful than acknowledging the role each plays in coach development. Perhaps what is most surprising is the seemingly long-standing failure of those designing coach education programmes to integrate the various different learning opportunities, given contextual relevance has been part of the coach education discourse for half a century (Gilbert et al., 2009). Whilst informal opportunities are high in authenticity, and coaches feel like they learn more via informal opportunities, the obvious limitations of this learning approach include a lack of quality control, feedback and innovation that the formal and non-formal programmes can provide (Mallett et al., 2009). Thus, an integrated form of coach development which incorporates both formal and informal learning opportunities is desirable for optimal coach development.

By integrating the various learning opportunities into coach development programmes, the practical and experiential elements of coach learning, which enhance coach development, can be effectively harnessed. Vella et al. (2013) cited the need for learning within coach education to be situated within practical demonstrations, whereby the coach learner and educator work collaboratively to facilitate understanding of the link between programme content and coaching practice. It was stated that such collaborative relationships should focus on practical rather than theoretical understanding. Irrespective of the theory, researchers noted that coaches have a preference for practical demonstrations and opportunities to apply the theoretical aspects of formal coach education courses (Vargas-Tonsing, 2007; Wiersma & Sherman, 2006). However, these practical demonstrations should not involve showing coaches

what to do, rather it is about encouraging coaches to draw upon their own strengths and resources to adapt to the changing contextual demands. In relation to life skill development, when examining youth sports coaches' perspectives of the worthiness of positive youth development in coach education courses, Santos et al. (2017) found that coaches yearned for the inclusion of material related to psychology and life skill development in Level 1 qualifications. Participants also voiced their desire for the integration of more PYD-related practical strategies in mainstream coach education. Yet, whilst the provision and adoption of practical learning strategies is desirable, the experiential knowledge of coaches cannot be neglected.

Trudel and Gilbert (2006) noted that across all sporting contexts, coaches place a higher value on experiential learning than on formal coach development. Historically it has been found that coach education and certification programmes are less valued than informal and experiential learning opportunities (Cushion et al., 2003; Lyle, 2002; Trudel & Gilbert, 2006). Such findings are linked to the idea that coaches translate experience into knowledge and skills through the inherent reflection associated with the activity, context and culture in which they practice (Gilbert & Trudel, 2001, 2009). Langan, Blake and Lonsdale (2013) noted that more research regarding intervention effectiveness is required to facilitate growth and improvement in coach education, which this study aims to do. Moreover, Gilbert et al. (2009, p.13) stated that for coach development to be fully effective, it “absolutely must” contain a contextually-based experiential learning component. However, it is also important to remember that it is essentially impossible for formal educational situations to encompass the full remit of experiential learning required to embed learning (Mallett et al., 2009), meaning coaches must take responsibility for their own learning outside organised programmes. By creating programmes that place an emphasis on professional responsibility and autonomy, coach educators can better prepare coaches to benefit from the range of experiences they have away

from structured programmes. Fundamentally, the need to account for the coaching context and actual experience during developmental programmes is crucial. By rethinking the traditional approach to coach education and development, future programmes can expect to adequately prepare coaches for a wide range of coaching contexts (Cushion et al., 2003). The living theory of practice produced in this project will inform future programme developers and coaches working in similar contexts.

4.1.2 Theoretical Underpinnings of this Project

To ensure that the coming sections of this study are fully comprehensible, it is necessary to reiterate the three fundamental theoretical concepts that underpin this research; living theory, the generative transformational nature of living systems, and ecological systems theory (see Section 3.1.2.4-3.1.2.6). The detail provided across these three stages is evidence of the living theory of primary school P.E. coach development. The chronological order in which the project stages were conducted highlights the generative and transformational nature of the study, as each phase is clearly influenced by the last.

4.2 Introduction and Planning Stage

Table 4.2 provides full detail of the formal elements of the Coach Development Programme the participant coaches engaged in. For clarity, it is presented at this point in the thesis. As detailed in Table 4.1, the Introduction and Planning Stage is the first of three main stages within this study. The three-month stage, running from October 2016 to January 2017, represents the early steps taken in the research process. As previously noted, no data was collected or analysed during this stage. Rather this served a preparatory stage for the rest of the project. During the Introduction and Planning Stage, I conducted a literature review on coach development, life skill development, and primary school P.E. delivery. I also made an introductory presentation about the project to the Premier League Football Club Community

Table 4.2 Coach Development Programme Formal¹ Cohort Meeting Details

Date		Meeting	Content ²	Modality ³
2016	December	Cohort 1 introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researcher: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Introduces PhD project to Cohort 1 coaches, covering: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Goals of the project 2. Rationale for the project and project plan 3. Introduction to Participatory Action Research ○ Introduces concept of life skills to Cohort 1 coaches⁴, covering: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Definition of life skills 2. Examples of key life skills for children 3. Definition of life skills transfer 4. Examples of life skills transfer and importance of transfer 5. Discussion of how life skills may be embedded in P.E. lessons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researcher-led PowerPoint presentation with opportunity for questions • Discussion between coaches and the researcher⁵
2017	May	Research update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researcher: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Shares updates with coaches from ongoing inquiry, action and reflection cycles (from data collection and analysis December-May), including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Detail on initial coach observations 2. Detail on initial coach interviews 3. Discussion surrounding coaches' current approaches to P.E. delivery ○ Introduces more detailed life skills content⁴, covering: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implicit approach to life skill development, including applied examples 2. Explicit approach to life skill development, including applied examples • Coaches: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide feedback on experiences of embedding life skills in P.E. lessons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researcher-led PowerPoint presentation • Discussion between coaches and researcher⁵

¹ The content detailed in this table are the formally scheduled elements of the Coach Development programme. The informal elements of the programmes, such as conversations between the coaches and me after observation data collection sessions, are accounted for in the Figure 4.1 spiral.

² Throughout the programme, I supported coaches after observation data collection sessions at schools, through informal conversations about life skills and what I had observed. Observation totals can be seen in Table 4.6 and Table 4.11.

³ All presentations and workshops took place at PLCF Head Offices on weekday evenings, after coaches had finished their working day at their respective primary schools.

⁴ As the programme progressed coaches' understanding of life skill development and their capacity to embed life skills in lessons grew. In response to this progression, newer, more detailed life skill and coaching content was iteratively integrated into the PowerPoint presentations that I delivered. For example, during the Cohort 1 introduction meeting in December 2016, I presented a basic introduction to life skill development, and provided some applied examples of what life skills were. However, by the time the research update meeting took place in August 2018, I presented Bean et al.'s (2018) implicit/explicit life skills continuum (see Figure 2.1) to coaches.

⁵ As the coaches' understanding of life skills grew, the nature of the discussions between the coaches and me changed. For example, meetings in 2016 and 2017 were characterised by coaches asking me questions about declarative life skills content. However, in 2018 and 2019, the coaches used these meetings to share details and learnings from their practical experiences, with the object of improving the collective coaching practice of those involved in the project.

Table 4.2 (Continued)

Date		Meeting	Content	Delivery
2017	August	Research update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researcher: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Shares updates with coaches from ongoing inquiry, action and reflection cycles (from data collection and analysis May-August). ○ Presents life skills ‘refresher’ session, prior to the start of the new school year, covering: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Definition of life skills 2. Examples of key life skills for children 3. Definition of life skills transfer 4. Examples of life skills transfer and importance of transfer 5. Discussion of how life skills may be embedded in P.E. lessons 6. Implicit approach to life skill development, including applied examples 7. Explicit approach to life skill development, including applied examples • Coaches: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide feedback on experiences of embedding life skills in P.E. lessons from previous academic year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researcher-led PowerPoint presentation • Discussion between coaches and researcher⁵ • Interactive workshop activities
	November	Research update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researcher: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Shares updates with coaches from ongoing inquiry, action and reflection cycles (from data collection and analysis August-November). ○ Introduces more detailed life skills content⁴, covering: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction of Bean et al.’s (2018) implicit/explicit continuum 2. Discussion on which life skills may be grouped and taught together • Coaches: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide feedback on experiences of embedding life skills in P.E. lessons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researcher-led PowerPoint presentation • Discussion between coaches and researcher⁵
2018	February	Cohort 2 introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researcher: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Introduces PhD project to Cohort 2 coaches, covering: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Goals of the project 2. Rationale for the project and project plan 3. Introduction to Participatory Action Research ○ Introduces concept of life skills to Cohort 2 coaches⁴, covering: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Definition of life skills 2. Examples of key life skills for children 3. Definition of life skills transfer 4. Examples of life skills transfer and importance of transfer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researcher-led PowerPoint presentation with opportunity for questions • Discussion between coaches and researcher⁵

Table 4.2 (Continued)

2018	February (continued)	Cohort 2 introduction (continued)	<p>5. Discussion of how life skills may be embedded in P.E. lessons, using applied examples from Cohort 1 data collection and feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Explains to Cohort 2 coaches what Cohort 1 coaches have already done. 	
	February	Nora presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provides Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 coaches with an overview of how the research project, its aims and intended outcomes sit within contemporary approaches to football coaching, covering: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Holistic approaches to sport coaching 2. Integration of an holistic approach to coaching into coaching qualifications 3. Life skill development in football coaching 4. Holistic coaching in the academic literature 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor-led presentation with opportunity for questions • Interactive workshop activities
	April	Research update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researcher: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Shares updates with coaches from ongoing inquiry, action and reflection cycles (from data collection and analysis November-April). ○ Introduces more detailed life skills content⁴ to Cohort 2, covering: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implicit approach to life skill development, including applied examples 2. Explicit approach to life skill development, including applied examples 3. Introduction of Bean et al.'s (2018) implicit/explicit continuum 4. Discussion on which life skills can be grouped and taught together • Coaches: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide feedback on experiences of embedding life skills in P.E. lessons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researcher-led PowerPoint presentation • Discussion between coaches and researcher⁵ • Interactive workshop activities
	June	Research update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researcher: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provides mid-summer project update. • Coaches: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide feedback on experiences of being involved in project to date. 	Researcher-led PowerPoint presentation
	August	Research update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researcher: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Shares updates with coaches from ongoing inquiry, action and reflection cycles (from data collection and analysis April-August). ○ Presents life skills 'refresher' session to all participants, prior to the start of the new school year, covering: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. F.A. four-corner model 2. Participatory Action Research 3. Implicit approach to life skill development, including applied examples 4. Explicit approach to life skill development, including applied examples 5. Bean et al.'s (2018) implicit/explicit continuum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researcher-led PowerPoint presentation • Discussion between coaches and researcher⁵ • Interactive workshop activities

Table 4.2 (Continued)

2018	August (continued)	Research update (continued)	<p>6. Discussion on which life skills can be grouped and taught together</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaches: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide feedback on experiences of embedding life skills in P.E. lessons from previous academic year 	
	September	Research update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researcher: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Shares updates with coaches from ongoing inquiry, action and reflection cycles (from data collection and analysis August-September). ○ Explains rationale for collaborative development of Life Skills Coaching Resource ○ First version of Life Skills Coaching Resource introduced and distributed to the coaches. ○ Coaches use Life Skills Coaching Resource to plan a hypothetical P.E. lesson 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researcher-led PowerPoint presentation • Interactive workshop activities
2019	January	Research update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researcher: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Shares updates with coaches from ongoing inquiry, action and reflection cycles (from data collection and analysis September-January). • Coaches <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide formal feedback on resource usage and experiences of working with different versions. ○ Discussion between coaches and researcher on how best to utilise the resource in applied context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion between coaches and researcher⁵ • Interactive workshop activities
	April	Research update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researcher: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Final version of the resource introduced and distributed to the coaches ○ Formally notifies coaches of project end 	Researcher-led PowerPoint presentation

Foundation (PLCF) coaches and management members who would become research participants (see Section 3.1.6.3). By taking these steps, the Introduction and Planning stage led me to orientate the project focus towards the development of tangible change within the research context, thereby embodying the pragmatic paradigm adopted (see Section 3.1.1).

4.3 Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage

The Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage is a 27-month stage running from February 2017 to April 2019, and is the main stage in this PAR study. The stage is divided into five phases (see Table 4.1). All of the project data were collected, analysed and presented in this stage. The research findings are also discussed in each of the respective phases. The objective of Phase 1 is to establish the existing level of life skills knowledge amongst participant coaches, and the degree to which they embed life skill development in their coaching practice, within the context of the partnership. The Phase 2 objective is to detail how a Life Skills Coaching Resource was developed in this context, for coaches working in a South London primary school P.E. context. The objective of Phase 3 is to assess the readiness of participant coaches to engage in a life skills Coach Development Programme. The Phase 4 objective is to assesses the partnership between the university and PLCF, utilising the Parent and Harvey (2009) sports partnership management model. The objective of the final phase, Phase 5, is to assess the fidelity of the Coach Development Programme using the Kirkpatrick (1959, 1976, 1996) training evaluation model. For clarity, each Stage and Phase is presented separately and in the order in which they were initiated, although it is important to note that some phases were conducted simultaneously (such as Phase 1 and Phase 2). The illustration of this PAR process will serve to detail a living theory of primary school P.E. coach development.

Throughout each of the five phases in the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage (see Table 4.1), both the coaches and I played an active role in the research process. The Inquiry,

Action & Reflection Stage illustrated in Figure 4.1 represents a spiralled process, rather than a cyclical process. Therefore, it is necessary to detail the difference between a spiral and a cycle. In the context of this study, the spiralled process is characterised by the iterative development and integration of new understanding into the process on an ongoing basis. In practical terms, this means each time a the three-point process is complete, both the coaches and I begin the next transition through the process at a newer, deeper level of understanding than that which was previously held. The understanding of the context is built on an ongoing basis, with the knowledge development of the previous process determining the start point of the next. This spiralled process differs from a cycle, as a cycle infers that the same three-point process remains identical each time the process is undertaken.

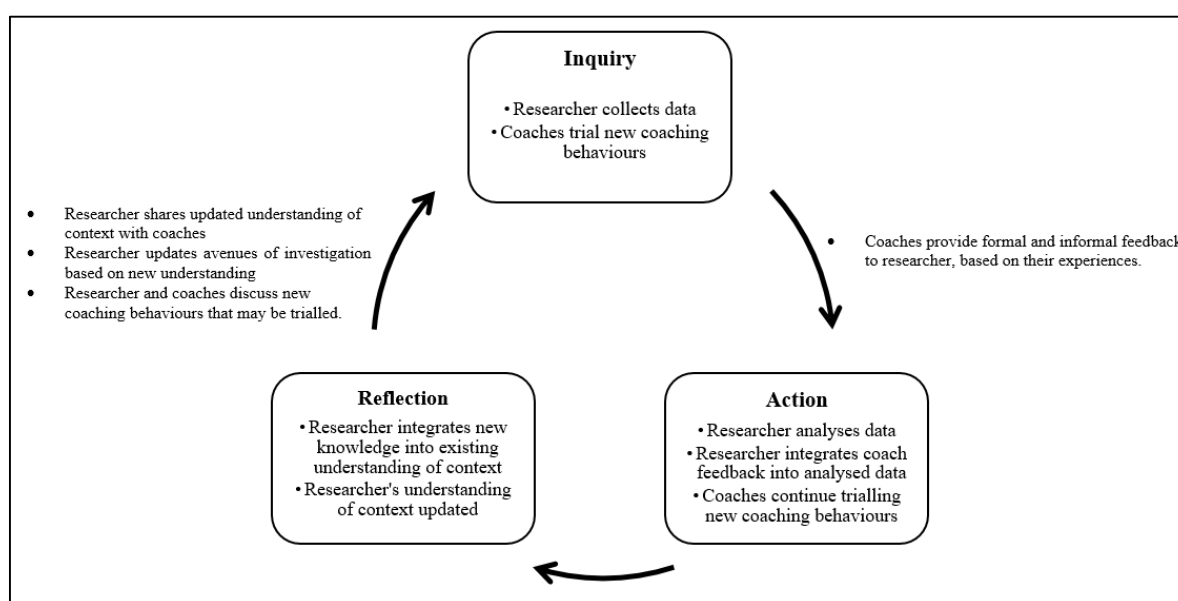


Figure 4.1. Inquiry, Action and Reflection Spiral

During Inquiry, I collect data via observation and interviews, whilst the coaches trial new coaching behaviours in lessons. Between Inquiry and Action, the coaches provide me with both formal (via interviews) and informal (in conversation) feedback on their experiences delivering P.E. lessons. During Action, I analyse the data collected throughout Inquiry, and integrate coach feedback into the analysed data, whilst the coaches continue to trial new

coaching behaviours in lessons. During Reflection, I integrate the new knowledge I have developed during Action into my existing understanding of the context, therefore updating my overall understanding of the context. Between Reflection and the next iteration of Inquiry, I share this updated understanding of the context with the coaches, update avenues of investigation based on this new understanding, and discuss with the coaches new coaching behaviours which may be trialled. Inquiry then begins again at a new starting point, and the spiralled process continues.

Given each spiral began and ended at a newly developed point, some transitions through the process were short in duration, whilst others were longer. Moreover, it is important to note that as this PAR process continued and matured, the input of the coaches grew. Over time, the process became nimbler, focusing less on gaining a general understanding of the context and more on the small differences that could be made to coaches' circumstances. This spiralled process is evidenced throughout Phases 1-5 of the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage.

4.3.1 Phase 1

Phase 1 began in February 2017. The phase consists of observation and interview data, and details the needs analysis conducted on the PLCF primary school P.E. coaches. This phase is related to the first project aim, which is to examine the ecological influences that impact coach behaviour change, and explain how these influences impacted coaches' ability to change their practice and embed life skills in lessons. The objective of Phase 1 is to establish the existing level of life skills knowledge amongst participant coaches, and the degree to which they embed life skill development in their coaching practice, within the context of the partnership. As such, this needs analysis examines coaches' knowledge of life skill development and their coaching behaviours which were related to life skill development, and serves as a rationale for the subsequent life skills Coach Development Programme. The needs analysis also addresses Blodgett et al.'s (2011) recommendation to learn about the research

context prior to a Participatory Action Research (PAR) project. Given the PAR approach adopted, it should be noted that the Coach Development Programme and Life Skills Coaching Resource (see Appendix 2) produced during Phase 2 were adapted on an ongoing basis, in response to the context and participant feedback.

4.3.1.1 Method

This study adopted a PAR approach (see Section 3.1.2), ensuring participants actively contributed to the production of contextually grounded empirical outcomes. This three-stage study details a 27-month long Coach Development Programme, conducted across five phases. This phase consisted of a needs analysis that examined the participants' existing knowledge and coaching behaviours in relation to life skill development, and also contains details of the Coach Development Programme. The research was conducted in a South London primary school context, with participant interviews and observations conducted on-site at schools. Some interviews took place at PLCF head offices. Semi-structured interviews (see Section 3.1.7.1) were utilised to garner a deeper understanding of the participants' knowledge of life skills and their perceptions of their coaching behaviours related to life skill development. Unstructured observations were also conducted, reducing bias through methodological triangulation (Cohen et al., 2018). Furthermore, to supplement the observation and interview data, the researcher kept a reflexive diary. The function of the diary was to allow the researcher to reflect on personal biases, note their emotional state (Nadin & Cassell, 2006), reflect on their position within the research partnership (see Section 3.1.7.3), and reflect on significant incidents during the research process. However, reflective diary data was not formally integrated into the data analysis process in this phase. This data was only integrated in Phase 5. During this phase, the diary was important for encouraging engagement and reflection as a personal resource rather than a data source.

4.3.1.2 Participants

Participants were recruited using purposive sampling (see Section 3.1.6.2). Inclusion criteria stipulated participants had to be a full-time PLCF primary school P.E. coach. As PLCF co-funded the research, it was appropriate that participants were organisation employees and worked as P.E. coaches in South London primary schools. The rationale for including The F.A. Level 1 qualification criteria is that it provides coaches with an introduction to coaching football and working with children from under 7's (The Football Association, 2017), covering the age bracket during which children attend primary school. As mentioned in Section 1.2.3, the number of class teachers delivering P.E. in the U.K. dropped from 94% in 2012/13 to 83% in 2014/15. In the same time period, the number of external sports coaches delivering P.E. has risen from 38% to 78% (Callanan et al., 2015). In their examination of primary school P.E. in England, Randall, Richardson, Swaithe and Adams (2016) found that 33.3% of P.E. lessons were delivered by external P.E. coaches, with an additional 4.5% of lessons being taught by the class teacher and sports coach together. Additionally, in institutions such as academies and private schools there is no legal requirement to adhere to the national P.E. curriculum (Gov.uk, 2018b). This policy is resulting in an ever-increasing number of private organisations delivering P.E. to primary school children. Therefore the participants recruited for this study represent coaches who will come to deliver primary school P.E. over the coming years, should this trend continue. By recruiting participants from PLCF, the practical outcomes developed during this research may also prove useful for coaches delivering with other private providers.

Table 4.3 Participant cohorts, pseudonyms and schools

Cohort 1		Cohort 2	
Coach name	School name	Coach name	School name
Alex	PLCF 1A & PLCF 1G	Robyn	PLCF 2A
Chris	PLCF 1B	Toni	PLCF 2B & PLCF 2F
Jordan	PLCF 1C	Jessie	PLCF 2C
Jamie	PLCF 1D	Bailey	PLCF 2D
Jody	PLCF 1E	Charlie	PLCF 2E
Lee	PLCF 1F		

Ten adult male PLCF primary school P.E. coaches, one adult female PLCF primary school P.E. coach (Mean \pm SD for age and for duration of employment with PLCF = 32 ± 11 y and 3 ± 5 y, respectively) participated in the research project. Participants were recruited in two separate cohorts and were assigned pseudonyms. School names were also anonymised (see Table 4.3). Cohort 1 contained six male coaches who were recruited in February 2017. Cohort 2 contained four male coaches and one female coach who were recruited in February 2018. Participants were recruited in separate cohorts for several reasons. First, there is high coach turnover at PLCF, which limited the number of coaches who could be recruited at the outset of the study. Second, the ever-expanding primary school P.E. and sport programmes that PLCF deliver meant that there was an increase in the number of coaches who fulfilled the inclusion criteria in February 2018. Finally, given the requirement to generate usable outcomes for PLCF, Cohort 2 participants were recruited to involve as many PLCF primary school P.E. coaches in the research as was feasibly possible. This recruitment approach aligned with the concept of PAR (Berg, 2004; Frisby, Crawford, & Dorer, 1997; Frisby et al., 2005), in that it considered the complexities of implementing research in a live context and facilitated generation of practically applicable outcomes. It also aligned with the pragmatist paradigm, as it does not adhere to strict participant recruitment guidelines (Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013).

4.3.1.3 Data collection

A needs analysis was conducted with the six participants from Cohort 1 from February 2017 to September 2017. One semi-structured interview (see Section 3.1.7.1 & Appendix 6) was conducted with each participant at each respective primary school. The researcher developed the initial interview schedule before consulting with the research supervisors and making minor modifications. The interview schedule was devised to gain an understanding of the participants' coaching careers and experiences to date, their perceptions of their current

coaching practices, their understanding of The F.A. four corner model (The Football Association, 2015), and life skills generally. The specific questions concerning the psychological and social corners of The F.A. four corner model were related to life skill development. Average interview duration was 59 minutes. Interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This resulted in 117 pages of single-spaced transcribed raw data being collected.

Twenty three live unstructured observations (see Section 3.1.7.2), lasting an average of 42 minutes, were also conducted at the participants' respective primary schools. Each participant was observed delivering at least three lessons. This resulted in 26 pages of single-spaced raw data being collected. The descriptive statistics for observations in Phase 1 are illustrated in Tables 4.4 and 4.5.

Table 4.4 Mean lesson duration and participants for Phase 1

Lesson Duration	42 mins
No. of Children	29
Gender ratio (male:female)	15:14

Table 4.5 Lesson totals for Phase 1

Environment	Outdoor (artificial grass)	6
	Outdoor (grass)	6
	Outdoor (concrete)	11
Class teacher or Teaching Assistant present	Yes	19
	No	4
Year group	Mixed	1
	1	1
	2	5
	3	3
	4	6
	5	6
	6	1
Sport/Activity	Athletics	11
	Cricket	5
	Multi-sports	2
	Striking & Fielding	2
	Tennis	3

4.3.1.4 Data Analysis

Data were organised using Nvivo data analysis software (QSR International, 2020). Both inductive and deductive approaches to thematic analysis were used to analyse all data. Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step approach to thematic analysis was followed, although in Phase 1 a largely inductive form of thematic analysis was employed. Ensuring trustworthiness, rigour and quality was essential (Golafshani, 2003). All interview data was audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. Data triangulation between participants ensured multiple perspectives of shared experiences were considered (Cohen et al., 2018). In Phase 1 observation data was used to supplement participant interview data (Polkinghorne, 2005). The observations were unstructured, with the researcher acting as a complete observer (see Section 3.1.7.2) and noting down what occurred during lessons in real time. A reflexive diary was also kept during data collection. The reflexive diary entries were made following significant events experienced by the researcher. The diary served to explore methodological issues, supplement interview and observation data, and facilitated researcher reflection across a variety of topics and issues (Nadin & Cassell, 2006) (see Section 3.1.7.3). The contents of the reflective diary were not formally analysed for this Phase, but were during Phase 5.

4.3.1.5 Findings

Table 4.6 Phase 1 themes

Themes
Shortcomings of coach education
Understanding of psychological and social skills
Reliance on implicit life skill development
Constraints within the primary school environment
Lesson planning and reflection

Phase 1 is a needs analysis, examining the participants' existing knowledge of and behaviours related to life skill development, and an exploration of the factors that affect such knowledge

and behaviours. It also contains details of the Life Skill Coach Development Programme. Phase 1 themes are presented in Table 4.6.

4.3.1.5.1 Shortcomings of coach education

Conversations with the coaches revealed that traditional coach education programmes they completed largely failed to replicate the conditions they faced when delivering in schools:

You know, it's all 'This is how we want you to do it. This is how you do it and this is how you set up. Go and deliver'. But on a coaching course it's coaches coaching coaches. So everybody's there to help you pass... I can do a session with 30 coaches and it might be a bit boring, but they'll all do it to... because they know that I'm being observed. Whereas you've got 30 kids don't care if you're being observed. [Chris, Interview, 13/07/2017].

Both Chris and the other coaches agreed that traditional coach education programmes did not adequately prepare them for applied practice. This was because adult participants in a practice coaching session during a coach education programme were more responsive to instruction than children in a live P.E. lesson.

4.3.1.5.2 Understanding of psychological and social skills

Prior to the Coach Development Programme, coaches' understanding of psychological and social skills was low. When asked to explain psychological development, Lee stated "I don't know what to tell you really" [Lee, Interview, 10/07/2017]. Jamie then explained how a "psychological skill... would be something as simple as throwing and catching" [Jamie, Interview, 07/07/2017], whilst Chris suggested that "the social skills and the psychological skills are the same" [Chris, Interview, 13/07/2017]. It is evident that prior to the initiation of the Coach Development Programme, coaches did not have a comprehensive understanding of social and psychological skill development, and therefore life skill development.

4.3.1.5.3 Reliance on implicit life skill development

Analysis of observation data showed that whilst coaches were applying good practice, there was generally a primary focus on physical and technical skill development. One such example was illustrated when observing Chris:

Chris told pupils to pair up and then appointed one kid a coach and the other an athlete. ‘Athletes’ had to sprint and ‘coach’ watched. Coach then gave feedback to athlete – one good thing and one thing to work on. Then asked kids to explain to the rest of the group what the feedback was. Chris guided them towards precise technical instruction for ‘what they did well’ e.g. ‘take longer strides’ instead of ‘run faster’. Coaches gave feedback, then observed again to see if athletes had learned and altered their technique based on feedback given. Coaches then fed back again to athletes. Kids then swapped roles [Chris, Observation, 10/05/2017].

This focus on physical and technical skill feedback reflected the collective attitude amongst coaches that life skills develop automatically. Furthermore, Jody suggested that if a coach could improve the physical and technical skills of pupils “then naturally their psychological [skills] would become... better” [Jody, Interview, 05/07/2017].

The data illustrate that the coaches did not appear to focus on physical and technical skill development accidentally, and that the emphasis placed on physical and technical skill development by coaches during lessons was deliberate. It is clear that prior to the Coach Development Programme, life skill development was not a priority, and coaches did not explicitly address it.

4.3.1.5.4 Constraints within the primary school environment

There were a range of environmental constraints within schools which prevented coaches from delivering the lessons they wanted to. The majority of coaches cited inadequate facilities and space as P.E. delivery constraints. Compounding this, schools did not view P.E. as a priority subject, often removing children from lessons to do other subjects:

So in year 3 it happens a lot. So one class in particular – I take them for P.E, but potentially up to ten children would stay behind with the TA to finish their homework... They just see it as an opportunity to... It’s a free lesson, you can come and do this instead to finish your homework [Jody, Interview, 05/07/2017].

This lack of prioritisation of P.E. is also evident in the often low teacher to pupil ratios in P.E. classes, making it difficult for the coaches to supervise all pupils. During one P.E. lesson, Lee delivered to a class of 54 [Lee, Observation, 25/05/2017], making it effectively impossible for him to adequately supervise and coach all pupils.

4.3.1.5.5 Lesson planning and reflection

Data analysis showed that prior to the Coach Development Programme, the participant coaches generally did not formally plan or reflect on their lessons. Chris suggested that he doesn't "get enough time to write six session plans a week" [Chris, Interview, 13/07/2017], whilst Alex mirrored the sentiments of other coaches, and cited a lack of time as the primary reason for failing to plan:

So how I see it, you have a short window to teach what I'm teaching... you get 35 minutes, 40 minutes a lesson... So you're always looking at your folder 'Have I covered that? I'm going to try and cover it next week', but you forget to cover it. And you might write it down... but I will forget to cover it because I need to get the lesson out of the way... I have to complete my six lessons, do you know what I mean? [Alex, Interview, 10/07/2017]

When speaking about reflection, Chris admitted "I struggle to review after the session... time is difficult." [Chris, Interview, 13/07/2017]. The time constraints which prevented coaches from planning or reflecting on lessons prompted the decision to create a Life Skills Coaching Resource, which included planning and reflective components (see Phase 2).

4.3.1.6 Discussion

4.3.1.6.1 Prior understanding and coach education experiences

Education surrounding life skill development is essential if coaches are going to embed life skills in lessons. In the past, coaches who have not received training or education on how to develop life skills have been unable to state how they would provide sport participants with the opportunities to develop life skills (Gould et al., 2007; McCallister et al., 2000). Moreover,

a macrosystem level factor with mainstream coach education courses is they typically prioritise technical, tactical, and physical development, with limited life skills content (Bean & Forneris, 2017; Gould & Carson, 2008a; Nelson et al., 2006; Santos et al., 2017). Given that educating coaches about life skill development is not the explicit aim of such courses, it is therefore unsurprising that prior to the Coach Development Programme participant coaches had no real understanding of life skill development. Issues related to this lack of understanding surfaced within the microsystem, as coaches placed a primary focus on physical and technical skill development, and a relied on implicit life skill development. Coaches cannot fall prey to the idea that participants will simply catch life skills because of participation (Whitley et al., 2016), rather life skills teachings must be explicit. Fortunately many of the strategies advocated in the literature to teach life skills are slight variations of the those used to teach technical and tactical skills in sport (Martens, 2012). Those educating coaches can addresses the microsystem level focus on physical and technical skill development by highlighting the similarities in how the skills are taught, and support coaches to develop and embed individualised life skill development strategies in their lessons. Carson Sackett and Gano-Overway (2017) suggest that because coaches are typically unaware of such parallels, it is necessary for coach educators to design resources written for the lay coach, and incorporate these resources into coach development programmes. The development of one such resource is presented in Phase 2. Furthermore, a relationship between the learner and coach educator is needed to facilitate programme content application (Vella et al., 2013). As a result, the Coach Development Programme considered these factors and ensured the programme was representative of their everyday coaching realities, unlike those experienced by the coaches before.

The use of adults as participants on prior coaching courses that participant coaches attended did little to replicate the conditions that coaches found themselves working in schools. This mesosystem level issue finding mirrors previous research that suggests formal coach

education is disconnected from actual coaching practice and real world problems (Paquette & Trudel, 2018), and that it does not facilitate the development of the professional knowledge required for effective practice amongst teachers (Gilbert & Trudel, 2009). Participants in Bean and Forneris' (2017) study cited such education as a barrier to embedding life skills in sessions. Given that coaching is a lifelong process, the limited impact of formal coach educations means that a greater emphasis needs to be placed on experiential knowledge when educating coaches (Cushion et al., 2003; Mallett et al., 2009). Furthermore, Vella et al. (2013, p.426) recommended that coach educators must “allow high levels of autonomy and educate according to principles and not behaviours.” According to Vella and Perlman (2014), such autonomy-based coach education initiatives are largely absent. However, given research surrounding coach education and life skill development is still in its infancy (Bowley et al., 2018), this is to be expected. To address these educational shortcomings, and the lack of life skills knowledge held by participants, the Coach Development Programme was designed to approach coach development in a contextualised manner, by giving the coaches autonomy. Using Jacobs, Knoppers and Webb's (2013) research as an exemplar, a contextually based bottom-up approach was deemed appropriate, whereby individual coaches designed lessons and activities that were meaningful for their students, rather than implementing a standardised life skill curriculum.

4.3.1.6.2 Influence of the primary school context

The degree to which participants could plan and deliver quality lessons prior to the Coach Development Programme was adversely impacted by the primary school context and the associated ecological influences. Contextual factors can determine the origin of teaching behaviours in P.E. (Van den Berghe et al., 2014), and thus must be understood in this research context. When designing and implementing psychosocial programmes and interventions, researchers have noted the importance of considering the contextual factors which impact these

programmes (Hemphill, Templin, & Wright, 2015; Jacobs & Wright, 2018; Larsen, Alfermann, Henriksen, & Christensen, 2014). Within this project, an examination of the primary school P.E. context and the factors that impact it is appropriate. Factors included microsystem level influences such as time constraints and inadequate P.E. facilities, both of which reflect the low priority placed on P.E. in the primary school context, which is a macrosystem level factor.

The limited time afforded to participants to plan and deliver lessons was a significant microsystem level factor that influenced participation in the Coach Development Programme. The findings highlight how such time constraints negatively affected the coaches' capacity to plan and reflect on lessons, therefore inhibiting programme involvement and professional development. Researchers have cited a lack of time as a determining factor in the quality of P.E. provision (Morgan & Bourke, 2008; Rainer et al., 2012; Sloan, 2010). However, the lack of time to plan and deliver quality P.E. lessons is indicative of a wider macrosystem level issue concerning P.E. and time, given researchers have suggested that an ever-reducing, and currently insufficient, amount of time is allocated to P.E. during initial teacher training (Caldecott, Warburton, & Waring, 2006a, 2006b; Harris et al., 2012). The time constraints faced by participants are a reflection of the waning priority placed on P.E. in U.K. primary education; a macrosystem level issue evidenced in almost every aspect of this project. According to Rainer, Copley, Jarvis and Griffiths (2012), the (now abolished) Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency's emphasis on literacy and numeracy lessons in the mornings and P.E. lessons in the afternoon is indicative of how P.E. is not considered a priority subject. The P.E. facilities in schools also served as a microsystem level issue for coaches, and personified this low prioritisation. These factors combine to highlight the generative and transformational nature of the school context, whereby the low prioritisation of P.E. on a national scale is reflected in the poor quality of the P.E. facilities in primary schools.

The poor facilities in primary schools were an additional microsystem level barrier to quality P.E. provision. Data analysis highlights how across schools, facilities for P.E. were largely inadequate, undermining participants' capacity to deliver high quality P.E. lessons. This has been a factor in prior life skill (Bean et al., 2014), youth development (Iachini, Beets, Ball, & Lohman, 2014; Jones, Edwards, Bocarro, Bunds, & Smith, 2016), and P.E. programmes (Rainer et al., 2012). The poor facilities illustrate how P.E. is not viewed as a priority subject in primary schools. Moreover, the additional sessions that PLCF coaches had to deliver outside of normal working hours also undermined P.E. quality, as they left participants without adequate time to plan and reflect on lessons. Although unsociable working hours can impact a coach's capacity to reflect (Knowles et al., 2001), it is evident that neither the schools nor PLCF understood the importance of affording coaches the time to plan and deliver lessons prior to the Coach Development Programme. These factors ultimately reduced the quality of the P.E. lessons being delivered by PLCF coaches, and is further evidence of the macrosystem level narrative that P.E. is not a priority subject within primary schools.

4.3.1.7 Phase 1 summary

Phase 1 examined the existing knowledge and practice of coaches regarding life skill development. The phase highlights how the prior coach education received by PLCF coaches emphasised physical and technical skill development, not life skill development, which was a macrosystem level influence on coach behaviours. Life skills were not explicitly addressed on prior coach education courses and as a result, the coaches relied solely on implicit life skill development in lessons. In response, the Coach Development Programme was orientated to address the educational void the coaches have experienced, by taking advantage of the crossover in teaching physical and technical skills, and life skills. This is most immediately evident in Phase 2 of the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage, during which a Life Skills Coaching Resource is developed in response to the needs of the coaches. However, prior

education alone does not determine the coaches' capacity to embed life skills in lessons. Microsystem level constraints within the school environment, such as lack of time and facilities also impinged on coaches' capacity to plan and deliver lessons.

4.3.2 Phase 2

Based upon the needs analysis conducted in Phase 1, the orientation of the PAR project shifted towards the development of both empirical knowledge and tangible outcomes that can be used by coaches in comparable contexts. Such knowledge and outcomes should better enable coaches to alter their practice and embed life skills in lessons more readily. More specifically, Phase 1 highlighted the need for the development of a Life Skills Coaching Resource, to enable participant coaches to embed life skills in their lessons. The development of this resource began in Phase 2 of the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage. Thus, an objective of this phase is to detail how a Life Skills Coaching Resource was developed in this context, for coaches working *in this context*. The phase is related to the second project aim, which is to use PAR to enable primary school P.E. coaches to change their practice and embed life skills in their lessons. The section will detail how I collaborated with the PLCF primary school P.E. coaches to develop a Life Skills Coaching Resource, over 20 months (September 2017 to April 2019) of a three-year research partnership. It is necessary to state that whilst the development of the resource ran for longer than the duration of Phase 2 specified in Table 4.1, because the development of the resource began during Phase 2, the entire resource development process will be presented at this juncture to ensure clarity for the reader.

The phase will illustrate how PAR facilitated an alteration to the original study objectives, ensuring the research outcomes met the demands of the context, and in doing so created a living theory of practice. The phase consists of three components: 'Original Checklist Tool Development', 'Reaction Component', and 'Action Component.' These components are

an adapted version of the PAR approach employed by Frisby, Crawford and Dorer (1997), and Holt et al. (2013), who based their respective approaches on the five-phase approach designed by Green et al. (1995). This phase helps to communicate how PAR facilitated a change in focus from what I had originally planned, to what was finally achieved. Ultimately, the primary focus changed from the development of an observational checklist tool, to develop a coaching resource to actively address the needs of PLCF primary school P.E. coaches in their professional context, therefore embodying the true ideal of PAR (Berg, 2004; Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013; Wallerstein & Duran, 2006). As such, the reader must possess an understanding of the context and the work of PLCF.

For over 25 years, PLCF have been using sport and the club brand as a vehicle for positive change in some of London's most underprivileged communities. Within these communities, PLCF initiatives target vulnerable sub-groups which include primary school children, women and girls, people with disabilities, and the elderly. As detailed in Sections 2.5.2-2.5.3, the incidence of physical and mental ill-health in the U.K. is high across such sub-groups. Such figures have prompted PLCF to not only establish a series of initiatives to directly address physical and mental ill-health concerns, but to also establish initiatives aimed at reducing risk factors for physical and mental ill-health in vulnerable communities. Within the context of this research project, primary school children are the sub-group of interest. Section 3.1.3 details how the research context incorporates 13 primary schools across South London. Data presented in Table 3.4 shows the average percentage of children in receipt of free school meals at any time during the past 6 years within these schools is 8% higher than the national average (Gov.uk, 2020). This data indicates that a higher than normal percentage of the children from these schools come from economically deprived backgrounds. PLCF fulfil a crucial role, by offering high quality subsidised P.E. and sport programmes to schools whose limited financial means often mirror that of their vulnerable student population. PLCF's partnership

with a university in the case of this project illustrates an effort to enhance primary school P.E. provision for the benefit of the school pupils through coach education and life skill development.

This research project represents a concerted effort by PLCF to enhance the quality of school P.E. provision through life skill development. As part of this Coach Development Programme, PLCF primary school P.E. coaches and I worked collaboratively to develop a Life Skills Coaching Resource based on the principles of PAR. Phase 5 of the Inquiry, Action and Reflection stage highlights how this resource proved to be a vital component in helping coaches to alter their coaching practice and embed life skills in lessons. For example, when speaking about changing his coaching practice, Coach Jody noted that “What helped [him] most was the resource sheet, with all the life skills named on it” [Jody, Interview, 04/04/2019]. This phase will therefore detail how the coaches and I engaged in a PAR study to collaboratively develop a Life Skills Coaching Resource that helped the coaches to change their practice.

The manner in which PAR is developed and carried out is highly contextual, as it is applied in live contexts. Due to the unpredictability of these contexts, and the inability to predict what may occur, the researcher needs to be flexible in all stages of the research process (Spaaij, Schlenker, Jeanes, & Oxford, 2018). However, the inappropriate application of methods, inadequate time in the field, weak research relationships, and shallow participation (Ozanne & Saatcioglu, 2008), as well as reduced precision, measurement and control (McKernan, 1996), are criticisms of PAR. Therefore, the primary objective of this phase is to provide a detailed explanation of how the participant coaches and I worked together in a strong relationship to apply PAR in a deliberate and systematic fashion to develop a coaching resource that ultimately helped PLCF coaches to alter their coaching practice. This explanation will serve as a living theory of practice. The five-phase research approach advocated by Green et al. (1995), and subsequently employed by Frisby et al. (1997) and Holt et al. (2013), is used as

a framework to explain the PAR process. The development of the resource addresses the need for the development of pedagogical instruments that aid in promoting holistic development in youth sport and P.E. contexts (Bean & Forneris, 2017; Strachan, MacDonald, & Côté, 2016), and addresses the central aim of any PAR study, which is to develop practical outcomes that relate to the community members' lives (Berg, 2004; Reason & Bradbury, 2008). Therefore, the second objective of this phase was to produce a useable outcome for the community members involved. Prior to detailing how these objectives were achieved within this research context, the key tenets of PAR and theoretical underpinnings of the study are explained.

4.3.2.1 Key tenets of participatory action research

PAR is a homogenous group of activities developed to improve social, economic and cultural practice, whereby individuals from different backgrounds collaborate in relation to a common concern (McTaggart, 1991). PAR is a subset of action research (MacDonald, 2012). The transition from action research to PAR is determined by who is involved in each of these stages and to what degree. In its most participatory form, researcher and community members make collaborative decisions on study design, methods, facilitation of study activities, and review and evaluate the process collectively (Mackenzie et al., 2012). Unlike many approaches to research, PAR does not consist of a series of hard and fast methods (Reason & Bradbury, 2008). Instead the approach consists of three phases: inquiry, action, and reflection. However, these stages are likely to overlap and merge as learning occurs. Moreover, initial research plans often become obsolete as a consequence of emergent findings resulting in a more responsive and adaptive research process (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005; Kemmis et al., 2013; Lewin, 1947). To engage in PAR is not to follow a sequential series of steps, rather it is a more organic process whereby the researcher enters into a collaborative relationship with community members who possess knowledge of, and the expertise to influence, their immediate context.

Blodgett et al. (2011) articulated PAR as a spiralling research cycle in which the lead researchers must consider a series of recommendations before, during, and after the project (see Table 4.7). The primary focus of PAR is the mutually beneficial relationship between the researcher and community partners as co-researchers, who strive to produce practical knowledge that is useful for people's everyday lives (Reason & Bradbury, 2008; Wallerstein & Duran, 2006). Practical research applications are pursued in PAR, rather than the discovery of defining truths (Mertens, 2005; Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013). PAR views community members as active contributors to the research process who have the capacity to investigate and improve their personal circumstances, and are therefore involved in almost all stages of the research process (Frisby et al., 2005; Holkup et al., 2004; Ison, 2008; Kelly, 2005). This act of doing the research helps participants to develop new capacities (Ozanne & Saatcioglu, 2008). In this research context, PLCF coaches were viewed as experts in their professional context, and their input is deemed essential in developing a Life Skills Coaching Resource to improve their coaching practice.

Table 4.7 Blodgett et al.'s (2011) PAR project considerations

Prior to project	During project	After project
Learn about the research context	Be transparent and genuine in communication	Maintain ongoing relationships with community members
Identify key community members for collaboration	Develop context-relevant research projects and strategies	Implement a maintenance programme
Make time to visit the context and approach community members with friendship	Avoid oversimplifying information or generalising findings	Support community members in conducting local research
Establish timelines for the project and reporting to community members	Maintain consistent academic research team members	Archive community research experiences
	Report to the community members' leadership group regularly	

Coaches possess the capacity to identify, understand and explain the determinants of their practice (Cushion, 2016). In this context, the incorporation of knowledge surrounding these determinants was necessary to develop a coaching resource that was contextually-

grounded and therefore useful. Within PAR generally, the recruitment of community members as co-researchers is necessary to ensure that the outcomes that are developed are grounded in the interests and knowledge of community members, and not simply a reinforcement of the researcher's assumptions, which may lead to researcher bias (May, 1999; Reason & Bradbury, 2008). Yet the recruitment of community members as co-researchers can be challenging. Community members require a level of understanding to fully participate, which necessitates a significant time commitment on their behalf. Moreover, there is no guarantee that this commitment to the project will not waver over time (Gillis & Jackson, 2002), or that the circumstances that surround the availability of community members will remain constant. Participant attrition was a factor in this project, as three participant coaches left their roles at PLCF over the course of the project. From the researcher's perspective, a significant challenge is planning within a dynamic timeframe, and adjusting to delays in the research schedule (Mackenzie et al., 2012). This is because the lead researcher needs to accommodate changing priorities and pursue emerging lines of inquiry. As is evidenced in this section, making adjustments to the original research plan to overcome challenges associated with participants and the context is central to an impactful PAR study. Explaining how I navigated such challenges is necessary to simplify the research process and make it accessible to those who are usually excluded from knowledge production (Park, 2001), resulting in the development of practical, useable outcomes.

4.3.2.2 Theoretical underpinnings of this study

The three primary theoretical concepts that underpin this research study must be reiterated so that the findings of this study can be clearly understood. These concepts include living theory, the generative transformational nature of living systems, and ecological systems theory (see Sections 3.1.2.4-3.1.2.6). This phase describes the collaborative development of an applied coaching resource, which as evidenced in Phase 5, enabled coaches to engage in new

practices by embedding life skills in their lessons, and reflecting on their practice. Phase 2 offers both a description and rationale for my actions as a researcher thereby revealing new understandings. This detail is the living theory of Life Skills Coaching Resource development in a primary school P.E. context. The generative and transformational nature of this research is evidenced in the resource development process, particularly in the early stages of its development. Finally, the ecological influences that impacted the coaches and the design of the resource are of particular relevance in this section.

4.3.2.3 The research context

For three years, I led a research project between PLCF and a university that focused on developing coaches who could teach life skills to primary school children through P.E. This section details a 20-month period of this project that was dedicated to the collaborative development of a Life Skills Coaching Resource between PLCF coaches and I. As detailed in the Introduction, PLCF are a charitable organisation who use sport as a vehicle for positive change, designing and implementing initiatives for targeted sub-groups in underprivileged communities. One such initiative is the primary school P.E programme, from which the coach participants from this research project were recruited. In line with St. Mary's University, Twickenham ethical guidelines, all participants were made aware that participation in the study was entirely voluntary (see Section 3.1.6.2). The vast majority of coaches viewed participation as an opportunity to develop professionally, with only one coach choosing not to participate. However, as experienced by Holt et al. (2013) in their development of sport-based after-school programmes using PAR, PLCF staff turnover impacted the direction of this study, with three PLCF primary school P.E. coaches leaving PLCF (and therefore withdrawing from this study) during the project. Additional factors such as coach isolation and a lack of knowledge surrounding life skill development also influenced the PAR study direction and data collection. The phase began with an objective to develop an observational checklist tool, but was altered

in response to the context, resulting in the development of a Life Skill Coaching Resource. The reasons behind this change in study objective will now be explained.

4.3.2.3.1 The original phase objective: Life skills checklist tool development

The original objective of this phase was to develop an observational checklist tool that any coach could use to determine which life skills they were embedding in lessons. Gould and Carson (2008) cited the need for observational tools that would allow researchers to capture the unique aspects of sporting contexts. Existing examples include the Coach Behaviour Assessment System (Smith, Smoll, & Curtis, 1978), the Arizona State University Observation Instrument (Lacy & Darst, 1984), and the System for Observing the Teaching of Games in Physical Education (Roberts & Fairclough, 2012). Yet none of these tools consider life skill development. The lack of a life skills observational tool may be attributed to the idea that life skill development is relatively complex, with skill development occurring on an implicit/explicit continuum. Additionally, the coach behaviours that promote life skill development are not always observable (Bean et al., 2018). Given these factors, it was deemed unreasonable to expect coaches unfamiliar with this continuum, or life skill development generally, to be capable of discerning which life skills they were teaching in lessons, if they wished to do so. This conceptual complexity, coupled with the absence of a specific life skills tool, was the rationale that supported the initially proposed development of an observational checklist tool for all coaches. However, an additional reason for tool development were my personal motivations as the primary researcher. Because PLCF had agreed to match-fund the research, I assumed a self-imposed sense of responsibility to objectively prove both my worth and the worth of the project to the funders. I believed that by quickly producing a tangible outcome in the form of the tool would objectively validate both myself and the project. Therefore, for a time, the tool development pursuit continued. However, as is detailed in Section 4.3.2.7, this pursuit has since been identified as a necessary part of the PAR process.

Disclosing this information is necessary to maintain reflexivity, which is a defining characteristic of ethical research (Atkins & Duckworth, 2019), and therefore this study.

The initial decision to develop an observational checklist tool was also based on observation being the primary methodology employed in field research (Waddington, 2004). There are two types of observation: structured and unstructured (Mulhall, 2003). The proposed observation tool was to be a structured micro-observational tool, aiming to quantify observed phenomena by producing counts of the behaviours under observation (Krebs, 2000). Shortcomings associated with structured observation include a thin mechanistic quality and often an obsessional complexity of procedures for use (Gillham, 2008), meaning those using structured observation may require extensive knowledge and training. However, Gillham (2008) also suggests that structured observation allows an individual to link events over time to get an idea of their behavioural patterns. This is notable in this research context, as the proposed checklist tool was to be used in conjunction with other strategies such as interviews to develop an understanding of coach practice (Jamshed, 2014), or to allow coaches to reflect on their practice using video, and plan for future delivery (Cushion, 2016; Nelson & Cushion, 2006). Yet these proposed uses would not solve the immediate problems faced by PLCF coaches in schools, somewhat undermining a fundamental consideration in a PAR study.

One issue with observational tools is that they are often inappropriate for the proposed research question (Cope, Partington, & Harvey, 2017). Such a statement is pertinent in the context of this study because, as is detailed in Section 4.3.2.7., the demands of the research context prompted a reconsideration of the need to develop an observational checklist tool. Moreover, within a PAR project, the researcher must accept they have a responsibility to others, and must place the interests of others above their own (McNiff & Whitehead, 2011). After concluding that the initially proposed tool would not be an appropriate direction for this phase, the focus changed to developing a Life Skills Coaching Resource. The difference between the

initially proposed tool and the resource that was ultimately developed, is that the intended use for the former was to evaluate coaching practice, whilst the latter was designed to help coaches change their coaching practice. Details of this transition process are presented in Component 1 (Section 4.3.2.7.1) and Component 2 (Section 4.3.2.7.2) below.

4.3.2.3.2 The revised phase objective: Life Skills Coaching Resource development

Over time, as I became more comfortable and capable in my role as an action researcher, the focus of the phase was changed in response to the context. A defining characteristic of PAR is that both the researcher and community members share a common concern (Kemmis et al., 2013). A defining factor in determining why the phase objective was changed was that the development of the observational checklist tool was not a concern that the PLCF coaches and I shared. Furthermore, the checklist tool development did not place the experiences of the community members at the centre of the inquiry, but rather the desires of the researcher. To use PAR to pursue the desires of the researcher alone would be to compromise the integrity of the project. Yet the decision to alter the direction of the research was not based on my opinion alone. During observations, it became clear that coaches required more help to successfully embed life skills in lessons (see Section 4.3.1.5.3). The need for help was also evident in Phase 1, during which coaches cited a lack of planning time as a factor that impacted their ability to embed life skills in lessons (see Section 4.3.1.5.5). Furthermore, the coaches frequently spoke about how they were struggling to embed life skills in P.E. lessons during informal conversations before and after observation and interview sessions. These factors help to explain why the development of the observational tool was no longer prioritised. Additionally, because PAR places an emphasis on collaboration through the process of participation, community members help define problems and find solutions (Gillis & Jackson, 2002). By expressing a desire for help during the research project, the coaches helped to define the problem, namely embedding life skills in lessons. The decision to collaborate with the

coaches to develop a Life Skills Coaching Resource was therefore merited, as it was viewed as a solution to a shared problem. Details of this part of the study are provided in Component 3 (Section 4.3.2.7.3).

Addressing the problem coaches faced with an effective solution was challenging. As evidenced in Phase 1, at the outset of the research project the coaches held a limited understanding of life skills development and also a limited understanding of how to develop life skills through their practice. The coaches also faced a series of barriers in the primary school environment that limited their capacity to engage in the Coach Development Programme and research generally. Time was a fundamental engagement barrier that impacted successful session planning and implementation. To help solve these immediate issues, it was decided that the Life Skills Coaching Resource must serve two fundamental functions. First, the resource would simplify life skill development and the process of embedding life skills in lessons. Second, it would facilitate lesson reflection. However, it would need to be time efficient to use, to mitigate against the time constraints coaches experienced when planning and delivering primary school P.E. lessons. Therefore, the structure of the resource needed to be uncomplicated. As a result, the first iteration of the resource is presented on a single page (see Appendix 7). Yet, as will be detailed throughout this phase, PAR allowed elements of the initially proposed checklist to be integrated into the resource, and facilitated the refinement of the Life Skills Coaching Resource on an ongoing basis through a variety of data collection mechanisms. Over the course of 20 months the resource went through five formal iterations, and as is noted in Phase 5, significantly aided the coaches in changing their practice, enabling them to embed life skills in primary school P.E. lessons.

4.3.2.4 Methods

An iterative and cyclical data collection and analysis process took place, given the PAR approach adopted. Refinements to the resource were made based on informal conversations

with the coaches, reflective diary entries, my personal experiences of being immersed in the context, observation and interview data from throughout the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage, and the application of evidence from the literature. This is not to suggest however, that the methodology was improvised or unsystematic. Rather, a recurring and systematic transition through the three phases of inquiry, action, and reflection (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005; Kemmis et al., 2013) ensured the repeated and ongoing collection and analysis of data, and the application of findings in an iterative manner (see Figure 4.1). The result of this is a series of differing research cycles, each of which is influenced by the findings of the last. Kemmis et al. (2013) suggested that PAR is not a neat process, with stages often overlapping and plans being discarded in the face of new findings, as was the case in this study. The ongoing data collection process is dynamic and iterative, with prior cycles informing the direction on the next. In the case of this study, different data were collected and analysed during each cycle. Moreover, depending of the findings in each cycle, and the needs of the coaches, the Life Skills Coaching Resource was altered accordingly, meaning it was different each time coaches used it in the field. Using Green et al.'s (1995) five phases as explanatory framework, this phase is divided into three developmental components, which explains how PLCF coaches and I collaboratively developed the final version of the Life Skills Coaching Resource (see Appendix 2).

4.3.2.5 Participants

Participants were those recruited in Phase 1. Inclusion criteria stipulated participants had to be a full-time PLCF primary school P.E. coach. The participants were ten adult male PLCF primary school P.E. coaches and one adult female PLCF primary school P.E. coach (Mean \pm SD for age and for duration of employment with PLCF = 32 \pm 11 y and 3 \pm 5 y, respectively). Participants were recruited in two cohorts. Cohort 1 contained six male coaches who were recruited in February 2017. Cohort 2 contained four male coaches and one female coach who were recruited in February 2018. For more detail, see Section 4.3.1.2 and Table 4.3.

4.3.2.6 Data collection

The dynamic and unpredictable nature of a PAR study means that the type of data to be collected is uncertain, leading researchers to describe PAR studies described as messy (Baum, MacDougall, & Smith, 2006; Kavanagh et al., 2002). The same is true of this phase of research, in that the initial data collection plan and that which occurred were extremely different. This was a rational outcome, as the phase's initial plan and its eventual enactment fulfilled two entirely different functions. Therefore, data collection and analysis were not linear or pre-determined, despite the existence of an initial research plan. Primary data included reflexive diary entries, and details from informal conversations between the coaches and me. The decision to include details from informal conversations was based on the need to represent the relationship between the researcher and community members, which is a defining feature of high quality PAR (Berg, 2004; Coughlan & Brannick, 2014; Mackenzie et al., 2012). Furthermore, Giulianotti, Hognestad and Spaaij (2016) noted the importance of developing effective relationships with skilled, experienced, and informed community members, in order to collect accurate and essential data in new contexts. The inclusion of the conversations ensured that such data, which was often divulged informally or in passing, was factored into the resource development process. I also drew on my experiences of being immersed in the research context, and embraced the value of these experiences by allowing them to inform the direction of investigation. Observation and interview data from throughout the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage were also considered during the resource refinement process. Because the defining characteristics of PAR are context specificity and methodological fluidity, as issues occur and relationships mature, the methods and activities conducted are ineluctably changeable, necessitating review and modification. As a result, PAR is better described than defined (Mackenzie et al., 2012). As such, Section 4.3.2.7 outlines the three-component PAR

process that resulted in the development of the Life Skills Coaching Resource. This process serves to detail a living theory of practice.

4.3.2.7 Developing a Life Skills Coaching Resource using PAR

Much like the work of Holt et al. (2013), this section will provide an empirical example of how PAR was conducted, and explain how the coaches and I collaborated to develop a Life Skills Coaching Resource. This resource allows coaches to plan primary school P.E. lessons with a life skill focus embedded in them, as well as helping coaches to formally reflect on these lessons. The research approach was informed by Frisby et al. (1997) and Holt et al. (2013), who used Green et al.'s (1995) five-phase framework to present their work. Phase 1 is 'defining the problem', an example of which is the community members seeking outside help to investigate a research problem. Phase 2 is 'building relationships', such as the development of a relationship between the researcher and the community members. Phase 3 is 'community mobilisation', which can be demonstrated by community members assuming a degree of responsibility for the research study. Phase 4 is 'data collection and analysis', an example of which is how the community members are involved in collecting, analysing and drawing conclusions from the data. Finally Phase 5 is 'action', which can be exemplified by changing existing norms to meet the newly visible needs of the context (Holt et al., 2013). By using these steps to guide the PAR process, the resource development was sensitive to the needs of the coaches. However, I took the decision to reduce this five-phase process to three components. This was done to detail how the research unfolded in the field. To divide this section into five phases would be to misrepresent that which actually happened, given some phases occurred simultaneously. Therefore I grouped phases of Green et al.'s (1995) framework together and presented them as three components with altered titles.

The first of these three components is titled 'Original Checklist Tool Development', and is concerned with 'defining the problem' and 'building relationships'. It details the original

plan for the phase, and how that plan was pursued up until the decision to change the phase objective. The second component is titled the 'Reaction Component', and is concerned with 'community mobilisation'. This component details the transition from checklist tool development to Life Skills Coaching Resource development, how aspects of the former were integrated into the latter, and how this resulted in a decision to engage coaches more actively in the PAR process. The final component is titled the 'Action Component', and is concerned with 'data collection and analysis' and 'action'. This component details how the Life Skills Coaching Resource was developed refined through PAR. In following these components, the phase produced successful outcomes for both the researcher and community members.

4.3.2.7.1 Component 1: Original checklist tool development

The original objective of this phase was to develop an observational checklist tool for all youth sport and P.E. coaches. To achieve this objective, a six-stage procedure based on Brewer and Jones' (2002) and Roberts and Fairclough's (2012) five-stage processes for establishing contextually valid systematic observation instruments was initiated. The first stage was to establish content validity, which is concerned with the relevance of the content (Vogt, 1999) and is achieved through a literature review and discussions between specialists in a given field (Cheffers, 1977). Therefore, a review of life skills literature and relevant coaching resources was conducted, and a list of relevant life skills or 'content codes' was compiled. Examples of these content codes can be seen in the 'Life skills taught' column in Table 2.2. Content codes describe the pedagogical focus or the 'what' of a specific coaching behaviour (Allan, Turnnidge, Vierimaa, Davis, & Côté, 2016). The inclusion and exclusion of content codes was discussed with the research supervisors. By identifying the gaps in the literature, the literature review process allowed me to establish a up-to-date understanding of the research area (Grant & Booth, 2009), and to account for the primary school P.E. context, which is a

critical step when developing systematic observation tools (Brewer & Jones, 2002). This process resulted in an initial list of 143 content codes, and the cessation of this stage.

The second stage involved developing an initial version of the checklist tool and selecting an appropriate sampling method. This first version of the tool was three page document containing the 143 content codes identified, and event sampling was selected as an appropriate sampling method (Mann, 1999; Siedentop, 1976). Following this, the third stage aimed to determine the preliminary validity of the tool via a pilot study. This involved using the tool to observe two primary school P.E. lessons, which helped to identify underlying issues with the tool. Following this pilot study, the tool size was reduced to two pages and number of content codes was reduced from 143 to 106. A number of content codes were removed, as they were duplicates of codes which already existed. Others were collapsed or modified from their original form to generate new terms. This was done by combining two or more existing terms and collectively renaming them, which is consistent with measures taken during observation instrument development in the past (Allan et al., 2016). Within the tool, similar content codes were grouped together in categories to make the observation process more manageable (see Appendix 8). However, it was determined that trying to identify the potential presence of 106 different content codes during a typical P.E. lesson would be unfeasible. Moreover, as a result of being immersed in the research context, and conducting participant observations and interviews for other phases in the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage, I began to realise that the coaches required tangible help to embed life skills in lessons, as evidenced in my reflective diary entry:

Over the past few months I have been observing physical education lessons conducted by the [PLCF] staff, in various Primary schools throughout South London. Lessons have focused on a range of sports, including cricket, athletics, gymnastics, tennis and general motor skill development. There are vast differences in the quality of coaches, or rather the quality of the coaching, from school to school. I feel that some coaches are consciously making an effort to create an environment for holistic development amongst the children, some are simply

sticking to what they know and have always done, and others (in the vast minority) could stand to apply themselves more. From a coaching perspective, it is evident that the coaches have the best interests of the children at heart for the most part. However, the coaches are clearly not trained to teach the children life skills in this context. It is clear that in the vast majority of cases, the coaches rely on life skills teachings to transfer on an implicit basis amongst the children [Nolan, Reflective Diary, 24/05/2017].

The sentiments expressed in this diary entry, combined with informal coach feedback, initiated the case for a change in the phase objective. The diary extract in particular highlights the need to develop a coaching resource that allowed PLCF coaches to explicitly embed life skills in lessons. This reliance on implicit life skill development is also evidenced in Section 4.3.1.5.3. As previously noted, within a PAR study, the researcher must place the needs of the community members before their own (McNiff & Whitehead, 2011). Therefore, taking the decision to change the objective was justified, as it placed the needs of the coaches above my own, and placed an issue relevant to them at the centre of the inquiry. By taking this decision, the resource and project became further grounded in the context, as the needs of the coaches were prioritised over my own desires to produce outcomes aimed at justifying PLCF's investment in me as a researcher.

4.3.2.7.2 Component 2: Reaction Component

Any changes in the identification of the common problem in a PAR study need to be clearly recorded and articulated, illustrating how events led to the change and providing a rationale for the updated study direction (Coughlan & Brannick, 2014). Therefore, this section will articulate this change in direction. Holt et al. (2013) warned against a perceived need to move quickly into action to create change, as the action may not represent the community members. In the case of this phase, my initial desire to produce an observational checklist tool is indicative of such a rushed approach. Moreover, I was guilty of overlooking Blodgett et al.'s (2011) recommendation to learn about the research context before initiating a PAR study. As previously noted, part of the motivation to produce this checklist was a self-imposed desire to

prove my worth and that of the research to PLCF. In hindsight, the decision to focus on developing a coaching resource is clearly more appropriate objective, as it focuses on the coaches needs rather than my desires as a researcher. Yet such mistakes are an inherent part of the PAR process.

Researchers can only determine whether the original line of inquiry and the action taken was appropriate by implementing a research plan. Furthermore, researchers can only decide what feeds into the next study cycle based on the evaluation of inquiry and action (Coughlan & Brannick, 2014). This dynamic planning structure, which often extends the study timeframe, is a major challenge associated with PAR. However, this scope for flexibility, and revision of the methods in response to the context, is a defining feature of successful PAR (Mackenzie et al., 2012). Whilst the three generally accepted phases of a PAR cycle are inquiry, action, and reflection (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005; Kemmis et al., 2013; Lewin, 1947), Coughlan and Brannick (2014) noted the importance of engaging in further planning between cycles. In this particular research phase, this intervening step was characterised by the division of a plan to develop a Life Skills Coaching Resource, using elements of the checklist tool to inform it.

During PAR studies, initial research plans can be rendered obsolete as a consequence of emergent findings, which take the research study in a new direction (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005; Kemmis et al., 2013; Lewin, 1947). However, this does not mean that the initial steps are irrelevant. As illustrated in this section, the checklist tool content codes were used to develop the first version of the Life Skills Coaching Resource (see Appendix 7). This showcases an inherent strength of PAR and this study, as a prior research cycle informed a subsequent cycle. As noted in Section 4.3.2.3.1, the original phase objective was to develop an observational checklist tool that coaches could use to determine which life skills coaches were embedding in lessons. Because of this, the original checklist tool contained content codes related to various aspects of coaching, such as how coaches dealt with misbehaviour, and the

coaches' technical understanding of the sport they were delivering. However, for a PAR study to achieve success, the practical outcomes must be usable. For instance, there would be no point in creating a coaching resource that was so complex and time consuming to use, that it negatively impacted coaching behaviours. Considering this need to create a usable and concise Life Skills Coaching Resource, only the content codes from the 'Social skills' and 'Psychological skills' categories in the checklist tool (see Appendix 8) were integrated into the resource development process. These 53 content codes were chosen to provide coaches with an exact aim for their lessons (for example, to design and implement a game in which communication and responsibility are fundamental features), rather than an abstract aim (for example, to be conscious of how your relationship with colleagues can influence your immediate environment, and subsequently impact a pupil's capacity to develop life skills). The integration of these content codes resulted in the inclusion of 44 life skills (derived from the 53 content codes) in the first version of the coaching resource. To make lesson planning more straightforward for the coaches, the 'Social skills' and 'Psychological skills' categories from the checklist tool were maintained. Within these categories, the life skills were grouped together under topic headings, which were intended to serve as lesson themes for the PLCF coaches. This process saw the production of the first version of the Life Skills Coaching Resource (see Appendix 7).

This first version of the Life Skills Coaching Resource was presented to PLCF coaches at a research meeting. I explained to coaches how the resource development objective had been changed, and how a PAR approach was going to be employed to ensure that the resource considered both the needs of the coaches, and the primary school P.E. context. During this meeting, paper copies of the resource were given to each coach. Coaches were then asked to complete the resource as if they were planning a lesson, and were then invited to give initial feedback on the resource, and how they would go about using it to plan and deliver lessons in

future. Electronic copies of the resource were later distributed via e-mail. Coaches were then instructed to use the resource to plan and deliver future lessons. In keeping with the PAR approach, coaches were also asked to provide me with feedback surrounding their experiences of using the resource, and what could be modified to improve it. Yet despite the development of the resource, and the efforts made to engage the coaches as co-researchers, they appeared reluctant to use the resource in the field, as illustrated in this reflective diary entry:

The coaches are failing to use the resource in their sessions. Coaches appear to be struggling to embed life skills teachings into their sessions, despite the development of the resource. During recent observations I became annoyed that the coaches were not using the resource. The observations have also revealed that the coaches in question are either a) incapable of engaging with the research process on the level necessary to ensure successful outcomes, or b) simply not engaging with the research.

On the other hand, the positive aspect of this revelation is that it has allowed me as a researcher to refine and restructure the research process going forward, in order to increase the likelihood of success. In terms of increasing coach engagement with the resource, my observations have made it clear to me that I need to provide coaches with greater levels of support in the future, particularly in relation to embedding life skills teaching into their sessions [Nolan, Reflective Diary, 07/11/2017].

This diary entry reaffirmed the need to refine the resource through PAR and give the coaches greater ownership in its development, as they were not using the resource that had been developed almost exclusively by me. I proposed that the development of a more context-specific resource would serve to support the coaches to change their practice, and move towards regularly embedding life skills in lesson. Moreover, the need to actively engage the coaches as co-researchers was reaffirmed. Changes towards the co-construction of knowledge are of benefit to the integrity, quality and appropriateness of a PAR study, and can lead to community members feeling a greater deal of ownership over the research (Spaaij et al., 2018). Therefore, I deemed it necessary to revise the research plan again, to ensure that the coaches were more actively involved in the research process. This adjustment in the research plan is evidence of how I considered Blodgett et al.'s (2011) recommendation to develop and implement context-relevant strategies during this phase.

4.3.2.7.3 Component 3: Action Component

The Life Skills Coaching Resource was refined over a 20-month period. The resource went through five iterations in this time, four of which were during Component 3. To ensure that the resource was altered to meet the coaches' needs, and in keeping with the PAR approach, direct feedback from the coaches regarding their experiences using the resource was required. As evidenced in Component 2, the coaches did not fully embrace the newly developed resource, and did not use it to plan lessons following its introduction. However, disputing the assumptions made in my reflective diary entry in Component 2, the coaches themselves were not at fault for this failure to engage in the PAR process. Rather, during informal conversations between the coaches and me, the coaches stated that a lack of planning time in schools prevented them from using the resource. This sentiment is evidenced in Section 4.3.1.5, whereby constraints within schools are cited as the primary barrier to lesson planning. Such shortages in planning time are a defining factor in the quality of P.E. provision (Morgan & Bourke, 2008; Rainer et al., 2012; Sloan, 2010). Throughout the entire resource development process, a lack of adequate lesson planning and delivery time were cited as a primary barrier to resource usage and ultimately behaviour change. Therefore, it was necessary to produce a resource that was time-efficient to use, but also incorporated feedback from the coaches regarding what was useful.

Throughout the 20-month process, the coaches provided regular feedback on how the resource could be modified and improved. Whilst it is unfeasible to detail how every formal and informal interaction between the coaches and I that informed the development of the resource, explicit comments and requests from coaches significantly influenced resource development. Resource modifications were also made based on my understanding of the coaches' needs and capabilities, my understanding of how to teach life skills effectively, and how I felt coaches would be able to integrate life skills teachings into their practice in the

primary school P.E. context. It is important to recognise that, by simply being immersed in the primary school P.E. context during data collection sessions, I was able to intuitively interpret the needs of the coaches and make adjustments to the resource without direct feedback from the coaches. This aligns with Kolb's (1984) contention that within PAR, knowing can be based on experience, as experience serves legitimate source of knowledge. A notable example of explicit coach feedback occurred during a Phase 3 interview, when Coach Bailey requested the inclusion of “a section where we could draw our diagrams and the setup and what we’re doing, just briefly” [Bailey, Interview, 13/08/2018]. Following this, an area for illustrations was added to the resource. After conducting an observation with coach Toni, my reflective diary entry recounts a request to include tick-boxes:

[I] spoke with Toni today regarding the resource used in the sessions. She suggested that if I could introduce a tick-box element to the resource, it might help people to articulate why they may or may not be meeting their session targets. Toni also said that she felt the resources were becoming easier to use and more useful as they were being changed [Nolan, Reflective Diary, 05/02/2019].

This diary entry shows that whilst the coaches were becoming more comfortable using the resource, and acknowledged that the resource had improved over time, they were not satisfied with keeping it in a fixed state. In this instance a tick-box function was added to the resource as a result of the feedback. These examples are evidence of the coaches’ maturation as co-researchers, and their ever-increasing degree of ownership of the project, which is a fundamental component of PAR (Coughlan & Brannick, 2014; Mackenzie et al., 2012). Such collective inquiry between the coaches and me also helped to establish ownership of information on their behalf, demystify the research process, and build trust in the relationship (Maguire, 1987; McTaggart, 1991), therefore increasing the quality of the research outcomes. At this juncture, coaches were also given the autonomy to select the life skills that they deemed appropriate for the class they were teaching, having previously been instructed to teach a specific group of life skills. For the coaches, this meant a not only more contextually-grounded

resource was produced, but a more targeted holistic approach to their coaching practice in general. The entire resource development and refinement process was articulated well by Coach Robyn, who during a Phase 5 interview said that the resource “grew with the project” [Robyn, Interview, 03/04/2019]. As is evidenced in Section 4.3.5.6.3.3, this input from coaches was invaluable, as the resource ultimately helped the coaches to change their practice and embed life skills in their lessons. However, in my role as primary researcher, it was also necessary for me to apply my subject knowledge to enhance the empirical foundations of the resource to ensure that the resource was evidence-informed, rather than solely opinion-based.

Over the course of this research project, my understanding of coach development and life skills development evolved. In the case of coach development, reflection is a central tool for professional development. It is the mechanism by which people learn through experience (Edwards, 1999), and is central in facilitating the improvement of practitioners’ professional judgments, their understanding of new situations, and their achievement of academic and professional aspirations (Schön, 1983). Therefore, a reflective element was integrated into the resource, considering Schön's (1983, 1991) concept of reflection-on-action, whereby coaches were encouraged to step back into the lesson after it had finished to understand what could be learned from the experience. In the interest of time, coaches were instructed to focus on critical incidents, rather than their lessons generally-because they impact one’s thinking, and are events from which individuals learn and subsequently adapt their behaviours (Hanton, Cropley, Neil, Mellalieu, & Miles, 2007). By including this element, the resource promoted reflection, therefore facilitating coach development (Cropley et al., 2012; Gilbert & Trudel, 2005). The decision to ask coaches to reflect immediately after lessons was also intentional, as coaches place great value in learning from experience, which can be used to stimulate reflection (Gilbert et al., 2009). Reflecting on action in this way gives applied practitioners the opportunity to retrospectively make sense of their thoughts and feelings at the time (Lindsay, Breckon,

Thomas, & Maynard, 2007). From a practical perspective, whilst it was recognised that the coaches had limited time to reflect upon lessons, it was necessary for coaches to reflect as soon after the lesson as was possible so that they did not forget the details of critical incidents. The idea that coaches can translate their experiences into knowledge and skills via reflection that is embedded within the activity, context and culture in which they practice (Gilbert & Trudel, 2001, 2009) was communicated to coaches. Consequently, the resource served to embed reflection in the lesson delivery experience, by asking coaches simple questions about how the lesson went and what they would change if they were to deliver the lesson again. However, the inclusion of a reflective element in the resource was not merely a superficial or symbolic decision. It was intended to enhance coaching practice and predicate a shift towards coaches adopting a more holistic coaching philosophy, the benefits of which the coaches were repeatedly made aware of throughout the entire project.

Gilbert et al. (2009) cited the need to develop reflective coaches, rather than targeting a specific change in coach behaviours. Therefore, the purpose of the reflective element of the resource was to do more than ask coaches to complete a nominal exercise; it was intended to stimulate deeper thought about their practice. In a global sense, reflection is necessary for coaches to understand the complexity of sporting contexts, and should be used to refine and develop one's coaching philosophy (Gilbert & Trudel, 2005). According to Bean et al. (2018), coaches wishing to facilitate life skill development and transfer should regularly question their ideology through reflection. Moreover, if coaches develop philosophies in which sport and life skills are viewed as equal and complimentary pursuits, they can focus their efforts on embedding strategies that optimise life skill development and transfer, which was a fundamental goal of this research project at the outset. Whilst the resource did not promote this depth of reflection following every lesson, it was intended that the accumulated reflections on critical moments would encourage the coaches to reconsider their coaching practice and refine

their personal coaching philosophy over time, resulting in them placing a greater emphasis on life skill development in lessons in future. To assist coaches in evolving their philosophies in this direction, I also elected to integrate literature related to implicit and explicit life skill development in the final version of the resource (see Appendix 2).

The outputs of PAR studies are grounded in the context in which they are developed. However, it is also important to assimilate content from the relevant research area if the outputs are to be considered of sufficient empirical quality. Although life skills content was integrated during Component 2 in the form of the original checklist content codes, it was necessary to integrate content that enabled coaches to strategically plan lessons in which life skills are embedded. As detailed in Section 2.4, there are two primary approaches to life skill development: implicit and explicit. The implicit approach involves focusing on sport-specific outcomes, without purposely framing these skills as transferable. The explicit approach involves creating an environment in which skill transfer is purposefully emphasised by coaches (Bean et al., 2016a; Turnnidge et al., 2014). Rather than framing life skills as an all or nothing principle, Bean et al. (2018) concluded that life skill development takes place on a six-level implicit/explicit continuum (see Figure 2.1). The first two levels are related to implicit development, with the other four related to explicit development. The six-level continuum is designed to examine the extent to which coaches are implicit or explicit in their teaching of life skill development and transfer. However, rather than adopt the continuum for evaluation purposes, the continuum content was integrated into the resource as a planning aid. Because explicit life skill development is preferable (Bean & Forneris, 2016, 2017; Bean et al., 2018; Gould & Carson, 2008a), the four explicit levels of the continuum were integrated into the resource to help coaches to place a more explicit focus on life skill development. The four levels ('discuss life skills', 'practice life skills', 'discuss transfer' and 'practice transfer') served as prompts for coaches when planning and delivering lessons. The decision to include this

content was not rushed, and was only integrated into the final version of the resource. Considering the feedback coaches provided as part of the PAR process, the informal conversations I had with them, and the observation and interview data from Phases 3 and 5 of the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage, it was evident that the coaches' understanding of life skill development had improved significantly over the course of the study (also see Section 4.3.5.6.2.2). Based on this improved understanding, integration of material related to implicit and explicit life skill development was merited in the latter stages of this phase. This alteration marked the final revision of the resource (see Appendix 2), and the end of the three-component development process.

The definitive version of the resource was finalised following this 20-month PAR development process. At this point, coaches told me that they felt the resource did not require any further modifications, and was sufficiently helpful when planning and reflecting on lessons. Given their role as co-researchers, and because they were using the resource on a daily basis, I embraced their recommendation to stop the refinement process. This allowed the coaches to plan and deliver lessons using an unchanged resource until the cessation of the research project, granting them the time necessary to effectively integrate life skills knowledge into their practice (Sloan, 2010).

4.3.2.8 The role of the resource and the need to account for the context

The resource was intended to complement the Coach Development Programme in which the coaches were engaged throughout this phase. From an ecological systems perspective (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), it served to impact coaches at a microsystem level, allowing them to plan lessons and influence their immediate professional context. The resource however, was not the definitive answer to the all of the engagement and implementation barriers that coaches faced when trying to plan and reflect on lessons. Whilst it is a somewhat extreme example, the following diary entry was recorded after a lesson observation, and

evidences the omnipresence of such barriers in the primary school P.E. context. It neatly summaries the main barriers faced by all coaches (such as poor facilities, and a lack of prioritisation on P.E.) across all schools, re-emphasising the need for a resource to help coaches change their practice in an often imperfect learning context:

Today I visited Robyn... for his final observation session. When I got to the school and met Robyn I noticed that the old playground had been repurposed as a staff car park. The old staff car park now serves as a playground, and is where Robyn had to deliver his lesson (and all of his outdoor lessons).

I waited outside with Robyn for the class teacher to bring the class to P.E. The class ended up arriving 12 minutes late to a 50-minute scheduled lesson. The teacher said that they were late for P.E. because they were practicing for SATs. Added to this, after the lesson got started, at any one time, four children were removed from the P.E. class to practice SATs. As soon as four returned, another four left, completely disrupting the flow of the lesson.

When I asked Robyn why he didn't use the grass area to deliver P.E. instead of in the car park, he told me that it was covered in fox droppings and there were beehives in the trees. Essentially the area was not maintained by the school to a safe standard, and therefore was unsuitable for P.E. classes. In one area of the grass there was also a pile of rotting wood and old benches.

As per his contract Robyn is supposed to be supported during delivery by a P.E. teacher or Teaching Assistant. Instead today, the class teacher stood by the side of the lesson and watched.

In my opinion this example is indicative of the types of conditions and obstacles facing many PLCF coaches who deliver P.E. in south London primary schools. It is also indicative of the general attitude towards P.E., whereby it is treated as a bonus or add-on subject. Subjects such as maths and English (SATs subjects) are almost always given preference [Nolan, Reflective Diary, 19/03/2019].

As evidenced here (and throughout the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage), the barriers that coaches faced in primary schools made engaging in new behaviours particularly difficult. This diary entry serves to illustrate a macrolevel level issue within the coaches' professional context, namely that P.E. is not treated as a priority subject. The Life Skills Coaching Resource was intended to help coaches overcome these barriers, and allow them to plan lessons in which the context was considered, whilst simultaneously promoting change in their coaching behaviours over time. Without the application of PAR, such barriers would not have been considered during the development of the resource, thus rendering it ineffective for the coaches who used it.

4.3.2.9 Findings and discussion

The objectives of this phase were twofold. The first objective was to detail how 20 months of collaborative PAR resulted in the development of a Life Skills Coaching Resource, therefore producing a living theory of practice. The second objective was to develop a practical outcome for the community members, which took the form of a coaching resource. Based on Green et al.'s (1995) framework, these objectives were achieved across three components. Component 1, 'Original Checklist Tool Development', details the first three steps which were taken to develop an observational checklist tool, in line with the recommendations set out by Brewer and Jones (2002), and Roberts and Fairclough (2012). This included a review of relevant literature, the development of an initial version of the tool and the selection of an appropriate sampling method, and a pilot study. During this component, it was concluded that the coaches needed more help when embedding life skills in lessons, signalling an alteration to the original phase objective. This change is representative on the generative transformational nature of living systems, whereby one plan evolved into something different. Component 2, 'Reaction Component', details this change in the phase objective. By showing the generative transformational nature of the study, this phase underlines the inherent strength of PAR, as the emergent findings led to a new direction for the research study (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005; Kemmis et al., 2013; Lewin, 1947; McNiff & Whitehead, 2011). This phase also illustrates how the content codes from the checklist were integrated into the first version of the resource, showing that despite the decision to take the research in a new direction, that the initial steps were a necessary part of the process. Finally, Component 3, 'Action Component', details how the coaches and I collaboratively developed the Life Skills Coaching Resource. The description of this three-component process produced of a living theory of practice, evidencing the achievement of the first phase objective. The practical outcome of this phase is a context specific Life Skills Coaching Resource, evidencing the achievement of the second phase

objective. However, the findings presented are not representative of a final solution to the issues faced by all coaches in such contexts, given that the context, the coaches, and the resource are generative and transformational. Instead, these findings represent what worked in this context at this particular point in time, rather than fulfilling the initially ambitious phase objective to develop an observational checklist that could be used across different youth sport contexts. Ultimately this process embodies praxis, in that theory and practice are intertwined (McNiff & Whitehead, 2011).

As shown in Component 1 and 2 of the phase, the initially proposed checklist was not an appropriate pursuit in this research context at the time of investigation. Whilst tools such as that proposed can help practitioners focus on important elements of coaching that may otherwise be ignored, they can also serve to dilute the complexity of an applied context, by deconstructing practice into a series of boxes to be ticked. Had I failed to take the decision to alter the original phase objective, this attempt to generate a tool to oversimplify the context would have prevented the coaches from fully engaging in their roles as co-researchers, which is essential in PAR (Frisby et al., 2005). Moreover, the complexity of the context would not have been reflected in the living theory of action research, or in the resource itself, given the original focus was on evaluating, rather than understanding and positively influencing the context. Upon reflection, it is clear that the original research objectives and methods were conceived prior to developing a necessary understanding of the primary school P.E. context and the needs of the coaches within it, overlooking the recommendation of Blodgett et al. (2011) to consider the context beforehand. However, upon initiating the original research plan, collecting data in the context, and receiving feedback from the coaches about what they really needed, the living theory of practice became necessarily informed, and the needs of the coaches became the primary focus of the phase, thus embodying PAR (Berg, 2004; Mackenzie et al., 2012; McNiff & Whitehead, 2011; Reason & Bradbury, 2008).

The feedback from the coaches working in the context, my personal experiences of being in the research context, and the contextual constraints identified in throughout the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage, prompted the shift in the phase objective, consolidating the position of the coaches at the heart of the inquiry. By producing a resource for the coaches' use, the research satisfied the needs of both co-researcher parties. The resource served to help coaches when planning and delivering lessons, and given that PAR is fundamentally concerned with the development of practical outcomes (Berg, 2004; Reason & Bradbury, 2008; Wallerstein & Duran, 2006), evidences the successful role the coaches played as co-researchers. Moreover, the evidence presented in Component 1 and Component 2 show how the initial direction of the phase was a necessary part of the process, as the checklist content codes informed the resource content, evidencing the generative capacity of the phase from its outset. The integration of the most contemporary life skill development research (Bean et al., 2018) in Component 3, heightened the emphasis on explicit life skill development, and served to give coaches a specific focus for their lessons. Whilst the lack of initial resource use on behalf of the coaches was disappointing, it was not surprising given coaches' lack of familiarity with both the resource and the topic of life skill development. However, as is evidenced in later phases of the PAR study, when the coaches were given the opportunity to plan and deliver lessons using an unchanged resource in the final year of the Coach Development Programme, their practice improved. The resource served its purpose as a practical solution to an immediate problem.

Whilst resource usage cannot directly influence immediate macrolevel issues, such as the low priority of P.E. in schools generally (see Section 4.3.1.5.4 and diary entry in Section 4.3.2.8), it can be used to immediately address the microsystem, by enabling the coaches to plan and deliver lessons in which life skills are embedded. As noted, the resource ultimately serves to facilitate gradual change in practice and philosophy on behalf of the coaches. Whether

or not it does so is yet to be seen. It must also be acknowledged that the effectiveness of the resource is dependent on the user's level of life skills knowledge. Without the underlying life skills knowledge, such as that developed during the Coach Development Programme, it is unlikely that coaches would be able to use the resource effectively. Overall, the collaborative development of the resource is justified, as to pursue the original development of the checklist would have been to ignore the context and the needs of the coaches within it.

4.3.2.10 Conclusion, limitations and future research

The phase explains the development of a living theory or practice within a primary school P.E. context, by detailing the development of a Life Skills Coaching Resource through PAR. The three-component approach, based on Green et al.'s (1995) PAR framework, illustrates the generative transformational nature of the study, showing how the pursuit of the original research objective ultimately informed the practical outcome in the form of the resource. PAR served to facilitate this change, by placing the needs of PLCF coaches at the heart of the inquiry. In the early stages of resource development it became clear the creation of an observational checklist was not an issue in the eyes of the coaches. Instead, these coaches needed help embedding life skills in, and reflecting upon the lessons they delivered in schools. The Life Skills Coaching Resource could address this problem. Moreover, the coaches' experiences as co-researchers in developing this resource could serve as a vehicle for behaviour change on their behalf. As Section 4.3.2.7 shows, PAR is not a straightforward process. It is, as researchers have suggested, messy (Baum et al., 2006; Kavanagh et al., 2002). The purpose of this section has been to communicate how the resource was developed through PAR, in an understandable way. Moreover, by adopting a PAR approach, a living theory of practice that details how to develop coaching resources to aid coaches to embed life skills in a primary school P.E. context has been created. The detail provided shows that both the coaches and I

knew what we were doing and why we were doing it, evidencing what McNiff and Whitehead (2011) deemed morally-committed and evidence-informed practice, or praxis.

Whilst this phase produced the intended outcomes, and achieved its stated objectives, it is not without limitations. As evidenced, the original research plan did not adequately account for the context. Whilst it played a central role in the development of the living theory of practice and the resource itself, the expediency with which the common problem was identified could have been accelerated. A more comprehensive needs analysis surrounding context-based coaching practice may have addressed this shortcoming. Moreover, my initial desire to develop the checklist tool may have sent the wrong message to the coaches as co-researchers regarding the phase objective, especially as the checklist tool was reductionist and evaluative, rather than an instrument which would support coaches in the field. This focus on evaluation may have overshadowed my desire to collaborate with and help the coaches, and may explain the coaches' initial reticence to utilise the resource as part of the PAR process. Future research in this area should aim to communicate alternative living theories, which explain how researchers and coaches can use PAR to improve coach behaviours. Additionally, researchers are encouraged to partner with coaches from non-educational contexts, such as sports clubs, to develop resources which can be used to promote life skill development amongst youth participants. Finally, as illustrated by the changing nature of the tool and the findings in prior studies, primary school P.E. coaches face a range of professional challenges in the primary school context, such as low prioritisation of P.E. and poor facilities. Thus, future researchers should fully examine the impact of such professional constraints on coaching practice.

4.3.2.11 Phase 2 summary

This phase detailed the development of a Life Skills Coaching Resource using a PAR approach. The phase, based on Green et al.'s (1995) framework, was conducted in three components. Component 1 detailed the initial steps taken to develop an observational checklist

tool. Component 2 detailed how the phase objective changed, and how the development of a Life Skills Coaching Resource was more appropriate than the development of an observational checklist tool. This component also detailed how checklist content was integrated into the Life Skills Coaching Resource. Finally, Component 3 detailed the collaborative PAR process between the coaches and me, explaining how the final resource was developed over a 20-month period. Data included reflexive diary entries, and details from informal conversations between the coaches and me. Observation and interview data collected during other research phases, as well as my experiences of being immersed in the research context, also impacted the research direction. The phase and associated resource serves to advocate the use of PAR to improve applied coaching practice.

4.3.3 Phase 3

As illustrated in Table 4.1, Phase 3 of the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage initiated in February 2018. This phase is related to the project's first aim, which seeks to examine the ecological influences that impact coach behaviour change, and explain how these influences impacted coaches' ability to change their practice and embed life skills in lessons. The objective of this phase is to assess the readiness of participant coaches to engage in a life skills Coach Development Programme. The phase began following a presentation from a member of the PhD supervisory team, Nora. As detailed in Section 3.1.6.2, the presentation provided participant coaches with an overview of how the research, its aims and intended outcomes sat within contemporary approaches to sports coaching. Moreover, as will be explored further in Phase 4, the presentation served to re-energise participant engagement in the PAR project, stimulating renewed enthusiasm for the project amongst the coaches. The phase consists of interview data, and is an assessment of the readiness of participant coaches to engage in a life skills Coach Development Programme. Additionally, as part of my ongoing learning and reflection as a researcher, stakeholder meetings were formally initiated in this phase. These

meetings brought together PLCF management staff and members of the PhD supervisory team to speak about the research project and its ongoing progress.

4.3.3.1 Method

This phase of the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage assessed the readiness of participant coaches to engage in the Coach Development Programme using semi-structured interviews. Participant interviews were conducted on-site at schools and at PLCF head offices. Semi-structured interviews (see Section 3.1.7.1) were utilised to garner a deeper understanding of the participants' knowledge of life skills and their perceptions of their coaching behaviours related to life skill development. To supplement the observation and interview data, the researcher kept a reflexive diary. The function of the diary was to allow the researcher to reflect on personal biases, note their emotional state (Nadin & Cassell, 2006), reflect on their position within the research partnership (see Section 3.1.7.3), and reflect on significant incidents during the research process. However, as in Phase 1, reflective diary data was not formally integrated into the data analysis process in this phase. Rather, reflective diary entries were only integrated in Phase 5.

4.3.3.2 Participants

The participants were those recruited for Phase 1 (see Section 4.3.1.2). This included ten adult male PLCF primary school P.E. coaches and one adult female PLCF primary school P.E. coach (Mean \pm SD for age and for duration of employment with PLCF = 32 \pm 11 y and 3 \pm 5 y, respectively).

4.3.3.3 Data collection

Data collection initiated in February 2018, during which Cohort 1 were interviewed. Cohort 2 were interviewed in August 2018. One semi-structured interview (see Section 3.1.7.1 & Appendix 9) was conducted with eleven participants at their respective schools. Again, the

researcher developed the initial interview guide before consulting with the research supervisors and making minor modifications. The interview schedule was devised to gain an understanding of how prepared the participants were to engage in a Life Skills Coach Development Programme, or their individual 'readiness.' Readiness has been defined as one's beliefs and attitudes about change, and their perception of the necessity for change (Weiner, Amick, & Lee, 2008). It is a mindset that reflects one's willingness or receptiveness to alter how they think during the process of change (Bernerth, 2004). Within an organisation, employee readiness is concerned with the beliefs, intentions, attitudes and behaviours regarding the degree to which change is necessary, and the organisation's capacity to achieve this change (Armenakis, Harris, & Mossholder, 1993; Rafferty & Simmons, 2006). Factors such as management relationships, role knowledge and skills, and role demands impact readiness (Miller, Madsen, & John, 2006), with low readiness serving as a barrier for change (Simpson, 2002). In the context of this research study, readiness is concerned with how prepared PLCF coaches were to engage in the Coach Development Programme and change their practice. The coaches' individual levels of life skills knowledge, and their working conditions, may moderate the degree of readiness.

Average interview duration was 44 minutes. Interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This resulted in 158 pages of single-spaced transcribed raw data being collected. The interviews for Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 were not conducted at the same time. For reasons outlined in Section 4.3.1.2, Cohort 1 were recruited in February 2017 and February 2018 respectively. As will be further detailed in Phase 5, Cohort 1 and 2 began the coach development programme at staggered intervals, which was facilitated by the PAR approach adopted.

4.3.3.4 Data analysis

Data were organised using Nvivo data analysis software (QSR International, 2020). Both inductive and deductive approaches to thematic analysis were used to analyse all data. Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step approach to thematic analysis was followed. During this phase a largely inductive form of thematic analysis was employed. Again, ensuring trustworthiness, rigour and quality was essential (Golafshani, 2003). All interview data was audio recorded and transcribed verbatim, and data triangulation was utilised. A reflexive diary was also kept during the data collection process. Diary entries were made following significant events experienced by the researcher, and served to explore methodological issues, supplement interview and observation data, and facilitate researcher reflection across a variety of topics and issues (Nadin & Cassell, 2006) (see Section 3.1.7.3). Once again, the contents of the reflective diary were not formally analysed for this phase, but were during Phase 5.

4.3.3.5 Findings

Phase 3 examines participants' readiness to engage in the Coach Development Programme following its initiation, including the factors that influenced participant engagement in the programme. Phase 3 themes are presented in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8 Phase 3 themes

Themes
Readiness to engage in Coach Development Programme
Factors restricting readiness for the Coach Development Programme
Understanding of research project and core concepts

4.3.3.5.1 Readiness to engage in Coach Development Programme

Initially participants found it difficult to engage in the Coach Development Programme. Chris noted that this was “because there was a lot of information... and there didn’t seem to be a main focus.” [Chris, Interview, 22/01/2018]. However, over time, he and the other coaches felt the programme became more specific. Yet, whilst coach readiness was initially low, and

they felt that engaging could be overwhelming and added to their workload, Jessie acknowledged the relevance of the programme in an applied context:

Yes, I hope the kids will never get into a fight at bus stop, but if you live in South East London, then eventually you're going to see one, or hear of one, or your mate will be in one. And I think that's where the P.E. element has to come in with the life skills, because that's where you can prepare them for those scenarios, [but] obviously in a nicer way [Jessie, Interview, 01/08/2018].

Building on this, Charlie stated how engagement in the programme meant that he began to focus on the social and psychological development of the pupils in his class. Like the other coaches, Charlie began to place a greater emphasis on life skill development in lessons due to his ongoing participation in the programme. Although coach readiness at the outset was inconsistent, the coaches' ever-increasing understanding of the long-term purpose of the project facilitated increased engagement and behaviour change as time passed.

4.3.3.5.2 Factors restricting readiness for the Coach Development Programme

Many of the improvements seen from the Coach Development Programme were undermined by factors that restricted coach engagement. One such factor was how life skill development would have “just been breezed over” [Bailey, Interview, 01/08/2018] during previous coach education experiences. A perceived lack of support by PLCF management staff was also identified as a factor restricting engagement:

Basically I didn't really even ask them for any help. You know, I'd only contact with you about this research. Ah, I don't remember any... information from them, any contact about the research. I mean, [they] just asked me in one of the meetings 'How is the research going?' And I said 'Yeah, it's good' [Jordan, Interview, 23/01/2018].

A compounding factor, related to the perceived lack of management support, were the additional professional responsibilities the participant coaches fulfilled outside their full-time P.E. coaching hours. Chris spoke about how he had to deliver two PLCF Development Centre sessions on weekday evenings, which was typical of most coaches. When asked about the

coaches' working schedule, Jamie stated frankly that "there's no break. There's no let up. It's relentless... It's non-stop" [Jamie, Interview, 31/01/2018].

An additional factor that restricted engagement in the Coach Development Programme was the absence of a community of practice. However, because the funding for the project was only guaranteed for three years, the Coach Development Programme had to begin quickly. This meant that many desired programme structures, such as a community of practice, could not be immediately implemented. Collectively these factors stunted the potential of the Coach Development Programme to facilitate maximal behaviour change amongst the participant coaches, reducing their capacity to embed life skills in lessons.

4.3.3.5.3 Understanding of research project and core concepts

It became clear that when compared to the needs analysis, coaches had a more comprehensive understanding of the primary research terms after being involved in the research project for a year or more. When asked to describe life skills, participants responded with increased accuracy, when compared to the beginning of the project. The participants' understanding of the project's global purpose was also clearly summarised by Bailey:

I think it's about hitting the social and the psychological corner a lot more. Particularly in schools... Instead of just delivering P.E., as opposed to just focusing on the technical, tactical and physical corner. So it's more about getting into life skills, life values, discipline. It's not just about the actual subject, it's about prepping them for a future... Going out in to the world basically [Bailey, Interview, 13/08/2018].

It is evident that as time progressed, increased participant engagement in the Coach Development Programme enhanced their understanding of life skills and the relevance of the project, creating a positive iterative cycle.

4.3.3.6 Discussion

4.3.3.6.1 Coach readiness and factors impacting it

Change readiness has been defined as an individual's "beliefs, attitudes, and intentions regarding the extent to which changes are needed and the organization's capacity to successfully undertake those changes" (Armenakis, Harris, & Mossholder, 1993, p.681). In the context of this study, coach readiness concerns the capacity of participants to engage in the Coach Development Programmes at its outset, with the intention of altering their coaching behaviours to promote life skill development. As noted in Phase 1, the coach education PLCF coaches received prior to the Coach Development Programme focused almost exclusively on physical and technical skill development. Côté and Gilbert (2009) noted how The F.A. Youth Modules (which are now integrated into The F.A. Level 1 and 2 qualifications) moved away from content knowledge and place greater emphasis on pedagogical and interpersonal knowledge, which is needed to develop life skills more effectively. However, evidence suggests that participation in these programmes does not result in significant changes to coaching practice (Stodter & Cushion, 2014), as reflected in Phase 1. Furthermore, individuals who do not see behaviour change as important are unlikely to be ready to alter their approach (Passmore, 2007). Because prior coach education experiences did not emphasise life skill development, the coaches did not view life skill development as a priority, and did not readily engage in the Coach Development Programme at the beginning. The prior education received by the participant coaches was another mesosystem level influence, as it compromised their initial readiness to engage in the programme and subsequently change their coaching behaviours. However, additional contextual factors, including limited support from PLCF management and the absence of a community of practice, also reduced readiness.

Support, or lack thereof, from PLCF management during the early stages of the programme was a mesosystem level factor that negatively impacted participant engagement.

Burns et al. (2017) cited support during training as a key predictor of reactions and learning. Furthermore, when considering programme implementation and fidelity, administrative support has been cited as a key feature for effective in-service education (Durlack & DuPre, 2008; Iachini et al., 2014), whilst limited support and resources can contribute to low levels of delivery confidence (Morgan & Bourke, 2005). Such factors are indicative of the management approach experienced by the PLCF coaches, which is a mesosystem level factor that helps to explain their lack of readiness. To mitigate against a lack of readiness or intention to change amongst both male and female coaches, Sagas, Cunningham and Pastore (2006) advocated the use of mentoring programmes to support coaches. In the context of this study, the Coach Development Manager (see Phase 4) was a deliberate step towards developing such a mentorship system, and signified a mesosystem level or change on behalf of PLCF to support coaches. However, this role was only created towards the end of the project. The lack of peer support at the outset of the Coach Development Programme, most notably the absence of a community of practice, was another mesosystem level influence on participant readiness.

A community of practice, or the opportunity to work collaboratively with other PLCF primary school P.E. coaches, did not formally exist before the Coach Development Programme began. A community of practice, or learning community approach, consists of a group of coaches with a similar interest, who attend regularly organised meetings to discuss coaching issues. This allows coaches to become responsible for their own learning and promotes meaningful reflection (Camiré et al., 2014). Moreover, perceived coaching efficacy is linked to social support from peers (Feltz, Chase, Moritz, & Sullivan, 1999). Yet within PLCF, such collaboration between participant coaches did not happen before the Coach Development Programme, and was only a minimal component of the programme itself. Instead, before the programme, the coaches worked in relative isolation.

The use of peer leaders in coaching contexts are highly effective, and more desirable than outside ‘experts’. This is because the peer leader has instant credibility with other group members, will be able to relate to real problems of practice, and will be able to participate in the testing of community generated strategies (Gallimore, Ermeling, Saunders, & Goldenberg, 2009; Gilbert et al., 2009). The absence of such leaders is a mesosystem level factor that helps to explain why participants were not ready to engage in the Coach Development Programme at its outset, as the coaches were not used to working collaboratively. Furthermore, communities of practice facilitate ongoing learning, which is a key predictor of behaviour change. This has undoubted implications for the legacy of the programme, which is addressed in detail in Section 4.3.5.7.4. Even within the same organisations, communities of practice will be ineffective unless elements of the setting are designed to sustain the community (Culver & Trudel, 2006). This approach however, is dependent on the sustained commitment of a peer leader (Gilbert et al., 2009). Such considerations reinforce the need for the Coach Development Manager role detailed in Phase 4. As will be explored, the Coach Development Manager serves as a mesosystem level influence intended to facilitate sustained change following Coach Development Programme cessation, highlighting again the generative and transformational potential of the programme. It must be acknowledged however, that whilst the readiness to engage in the Coach Development Programme was low at the outset, coach attitudes and commitment changed over time, to the point where participants were actively engaged.

4.3.3.6.2 Enhanced understanding

Despite their lack of readiness, the participants’ understanding of the research project and life skill development improved following initial engagement in the Coach Development Programme. This is attributed to their ongoing engagement in the programme and the PAR approach, which countered the participants’ initial hesitancy. In contexts such as primary schools, when coaches gain experience and education, they become better equipped to

understand their complex role, develop coherent philosophies, and connect their philosophies to life skill development (Collins et al., 2009; Gould et al., 2007). Additionally, evidence shows that over time, initiatives like the Coach Development Programme enhance coach capacity to embed life skills in lessons (Falcão et al., 2012), and increase their awareness of the importance of embedding life skills in lessons (Camiré et al., 2012; Gould et al., 2007). In this context, these benefits were accentuated by the situated learning environment, whereby coaches applied their new knowledge whilst teaching P.E. lessons (Mallett et al., 2009). This series of ecological influences enhanced the coaches' understanding of life skill development. Prior to programme initiation, due to their lack of knowledge surrounding life skill development, participants also held the perception that life skills were automatically developed in and transferred beyond the P.E. context (Bean & Forneris, 2017; Trottier & Robitaille, 2014). Yet continued participation in the programme dispelled this assumption over time, highlighting increased conceptual understanding on behalf of the participants. The structure of the Coach Development Programme served as a mesosystem level factor that facilitated this increased understanding.

In their examination of PYD in swimming, Johnston, Harwood and Minniti (2012) concluded that during education processes, the language used by experts needs to be readily comprehensible to coaches. The coaches in this study all cited low understanding of the academic language used within sport psychology and education. Similarly, with the coaches in this study, it became evident that their initial understanding of the language surrounding life skill development was limited, thereby reducing their readiness to engage. However, because participants were frequently exposed to associated language as the Coach Development Programme progressed, their understanding of the programme aims and life skill development improved. This was complemented by the researcher, who recognised that accessible terms also needed to be used more regularly when presenting content to coaches. These mesosystem

level factors mediated the coaches' capacity to understand and use the information that was presented to them, particularly at the beginning of the programme. Additionally, based on prior recommendations (Bean et al., 2014; Bowley et al., 2018; Koh et al., 2014), the Coach Development Programme accentuated the importance of integrating life skills alongside physical skills, rather than teaching them separately. As time progressed, this approach allowed coaches to understand the study purpose and life skill development more readily. Although the participant coaches deliver P.E. lessons and possess the qualifications that allow them to do so, none of them are trained P.E. specialists. Therefore the participants needed time to continue to integrate life skills knowledge into their practice (Sloan, 2010), and develop their understanding of life skill development through trial and error. The PAR approach further enhanced this understanding.

Given the PAR approach adopted, the researcher was able to apply the recommendations made by Zakrajsek and Zizzi (2008), and tailor workshops to the context of the coaches to ensure they understood the immediate value of the content. This meant that during the research update meetings, which were conducted throughout the Coach Development Programme (see Figure 3.2), the researcher could tailor the life skills material to the South London primary school P.E. context. This mesosystem level factor facilitated both coach engagement in the programme and behaviour change. Moreover, this approach allowed the researcher to develop a more collaborative partnership with the participants, and ask them for feedback and ideas to enhance the Coach Development Programme and associated resource. Such collaboration has been shown to enhance the effectiveness of coach education over time (Vella et al., 2013). However, whilst undoubtedly relevant, it is noted that the findings in this section relate to coach readiness and initial responses to the Coach Development Programme. Longer-term changes are discussed in Phases 4 and 5.

4.3.3.7 Phase 3 summary

Phase 3 examined coach readiness to engage in the programme itself. It is evident that coach readiness to engage in the Coach Development Programme was inadvertently undermined by prior coach education; a mesosystem level factor that resulted in coaches viewing life skill development as a low priority and prioritising physical and technical skill development. The degree of coach readiness was also impacted by the lack of support PLCF coaches received from PLCF management who were hands-off in their management approach. Moreover, the traditional emphasis the lack of a community of practice and peer interaction were further mesosystem level factors which meant that PLCF coaches were not supported to engage in the programme by one another. Yet, as PLCF coaches continued to participate in the programme, they displayed an increased understanding of life skill development. This enhanced understanding was complemented by the researcher's decision to integrate more accessible language into the Coach Development Programme. In a global sense, the use of a PAR approach facilitated increased understanding on behalf of the coaches, as programme content was tailored to meet their needs. This phase contributes to the living theory of primary school P.E. coach development, by detailing the factors that impacted coaches' readiness to engage in the Coach Development Programme, and how programme participation was associated with increased understanding of life skill development.

4.3.4 Phase 4

Phase 4 initiated in February 2019. The assessment of the partnership was necessary at this juncture, as the partnership had entered its final months. As in Phase 1 and Phase 3, this phase is related to the first project aim, and examines the ecological influences that impact coach behaviour change, and explains how these influences impacted coaches' ability to change their practice and embed life skills in lessons. The phase objective is to assess the partnership between the university and PLCF, utilising the Parent and Harvey (2009) sports

partnership management model. The assessment of this partnership will also reveal how the partnership impacted on coach behaviour change throughout the Coach Development Programme.

The 92 professional clubs operating in the Football League and Premier League engage in charitable and community outreach programmes (EFL Trust, 2019; Premier League, 2019) and collaborate with external organisations on a variety of projects. This section will highlight the need for a partnership assessment by revealing both the dearth of research examining the intricacies of such partnerships, and the lack of applied recommendations on how stakeholders can maximise the resources of both partners for mutual benefit. Therefore, this research has implications, not only for the university and PLCF, but for any sporting organisation or academic institution wishing to collaborate with external partners. This section will introduce the concept of partnerships and provide a critical analysis of existing sports partnership research, before detailing the qualitative data collection and analysis methods employed to examine the effectiveness of the partnership between the university and PLCF. Following the findings and discussion sections, the conclusion, areas for future research and study limitations are detailed. The detail provided in this phase will also serve as a living theory of partnership effectiveness between the university and PLCF.

4.3.4.1 Partnerships in sport and P.E

Partnerships have been defined in different ways. Brinkerhoff (2002, p.21) defined them as “a dynamic relationship... based on mutually agreed objectives, pursued through a shared understanding of the most rational division of labour... [and] mutual influence, with a careful balance between synergy and respective autonomy, which incorporates mutual respect, equal participation in decision making, mutual accountability and transparency”. Partnerships have also been described as “an action of sharing ‘goods’ and ‘knowledge’ between partners, coupled with a concerted process where the methods of execution and the objectives are known and

accepted by all” (Boutin & Le Cren, 2004, p.28). Lymbery (2006) suggested the term partnership should be used when two or more agencies have established arrangements that allow them to work together. Whilst multiple definitions of partnerships exist, the commonalities such as multiple stakeholders, sharing of workload, collaborative planning, and agreed responsibility, are clear. Crucially, the partnership between the university and PLCF exhibits all of these components. As such, a working definition of partnerships in the context of this research is a collaborative, mutually beneficial relationship between two organisations, which harnesses the resources of both parties to advance professional practice and evidence-based research in a P.E. and sporting context.

The development of partnerships in P.E. and sporting contexts is not a recent phenomenon, and a range of factors have impacted their formation over time, including government policy and funding, and the creation of community football schemes. A recent example of partnerships within a physical activity context are the 43 ‘Active Partnerships’ facilitated by Sport England as part of the government’s Sporting Future strategy, who are tasked with identifying opportunities to increase sport and physical activity in their local communities (HM Government, 2015; Sport England, 2019b). Within this strategy ‘London Sport’ are the regional active partner for London (Active Partnerships, 2019; London Sport, 2019), and have previously recognised the work of various PLCF community programmes. Similarly, in football, the National ‘Football in the Community’ scheme was launched in 1986 to address social and sporting changes and develop greater links between professional football clubs and their local communities (Brown, Crabbe, & Mellor, 2006). The U.K Government have also identified football as a vehicle for promoting positive social change in areas including health, social inclusion, social regeneration, and increased physical activity participation. However, the evidence to support this contribution towards social change is questionable, with Mellor (2008) suggesting that little change has occurred in reality. Yet, such attention has led

to an increase in funding for community football projects (Parnell et al., 2013), including initiatives run by PLCF.

Decentralised funding policies and the availability of the P.E. and Sport Premium has opened up the primary P.E. market to a wide range of deliverers, small businesses, charities, social entrepreneurs and professional sports clubs. Organisations like PLCF serve to link professional football clubs and charity (Parnell et al., 2016). In primary schools, the most common use of P.E. and Sport Premium funding has been the employment of specialist sports coaches and P.E. teachers (Gov.uk, 2014). Harris et al. (2012) argue that this is due to the often inadequate P.E. training trainee primary school P.E. teachers receive during their teaching qualifications. However, the situation is multifactorial, and the confluence of government policy, funding strategies, and inadequate trainee teacher education has increased the reliance on organisations like PLCF to deliver primary school P.E. in their local communities. These circumstances place organisations like PLCF in a position whereby they can enact positive change through the formation of partnerships with external organisations, such as the university.

As previously mentioned, all professional English football clubs engage in charitable initiatives, often partnering with external organisations to develop and implement programmes in schools and local communities. Despite this, there remains a dearth of research in the area, particularly related to the planning, management, and evaluation of these partnerships. Parent and Harvey (2009) developed a sports partnership model which they argue contains the basic components to build, manage, and evaluate a partnership, such as that between the university and PLCF. Though research on network processes in public management is considerable, Parent and Harvey's (2009) theoretical model for sport and physical activity community-based partnerships is the first of its kind (Lucidarme, Marlier, Cardon, De Bourdeaudhuij, & Willem, 2014), which may explain the lack of research in the area. Within this research context the use

of the model is highly appropriate, given PLCF are a community-based organisation who use sport as a vehicle for positive change. Thus, the phase adopted the model to examine the partnership between the university and PLCF from the perspective of four PLCF staff members. The phase intends to explore how aspects of the partnership impacted PLCF coaches' capacity to change their behaviours, and also intends to provide guidance for those establishing partnerships between community football organisations and higher education institutions. If, as Mackintosh (2011) suggested, we are to embrace calls for evidence-based policy and research-informed practice when working in sports partnerships, studies such as this are needed to add to the debate surrounding 'what works?'.

4.3.4.2 Components of effective partnerships

In his examination of the U.K primary P.E. sector, Sloan (2010) cited the importance of developing partnerships between schools, external organisations and the wider community (Penny, Hill, & Evans, 2003; Raymond, 1998). When examining partnerships, Mohr and Spekman (1994) concluded that determining whether each partner was satisfied with the other partner was essential in evaluating partnership success. An indicator of partnership satisfaction and success was meeting or surpassing the expectations of a given partner (Cologhirou, Hondroyiannis, & Vonortas, 2003). However, expectations need to be mutually agreed between stakeholders before the partnership begins if they are to be addressed in earnest. Though not always possible, one such expectation should be the managerial and staff consistency for the duration of the partnership. Mackintosh (2011) cited the need for sensitivity in managing personalities as crucial for the day-to-day functioning of a partnership. Moreover, Mackintosh noted that a sense of staff change and turnover was essential to manage a partnership day-to-day. Yet, one's ability to manage differing personalities whilst ensuring low staff turnover cannot be guaranteed for the partnership duration. Therefore, it is necessary to involve staff

who possess context knowledge and expertise, and are willing to ensure partnership success (Agranoff, 2007).

Staffing is a central factor that contributes to satisfactory and successful partnership outcomes. High quality staff members are an essential component of an effective partnership, as they possess core knowledge and expertise in the partnerships area of interest, and have an understanding of the operating region (Lucidarme et al., 2014). Yet the potential reluctance of staff to engage in the new actions proposed by a partnership must be considered by stakeholders as a threat to partnership effectiveness (Coughlan & Brannick, 2014). Thus, in this research project, the recruitment of PLCF primary school P.E. coaches as participants is intended to mitigate against this risk, as an inherent component of the coaches' role is to use P.E. to enact positive change within schools. By employing such coaches, PLCF are addressing long-standing calls to employ specialist P.E. teachers to assist in delivering P.E. in primary schools (Blackburn, 2001; Fairclough & Stratton, 2000). Unfortunately for some schools, working with organisations like PLCF is not always a practical or affordable option (Penny & Jess, 2004; Warburton, 2000), and presents an opportunity for PLCF to allocate sufficient funding towards staffing, in a bid to increase the effectiveness of the partnership in schools. Finally, staffing issues have also been attributed to an inadequate allocation of time for partners to communicate (Lucidarme et al., 2014) and inadequate time for lesson preparation (Sloan, 2010). Therefore, staff need to be afforded the time to communicate with peers and plan lessons if a partnership such as that between the university and PLCF is to be successful. By taking such measures, organisations such as PLCF can help staff to develop trust within the partnership, which is necessary to ensure success.

Trust between partners is essential for relationship quality (Misener & Doherty, 2012), which contributes to an effective partnership. Typically, trust is developed over a long period of collaboration and positive personal contact between stakeholders, and is often complimented

by clear role and task delineation. A high level of trust is associated with increased knowledge and skill sharing between partners (Marlier et al., 2015). In order to build trust, Marlier et al. (2015) found that increased periods of collaboration time, close personal contact, professional co-ordination and a shared external focus were essential. Additional components that mitigate the effectiveness of partnerships and relationships within sport-related organisations have also been cited. These include the social relationships between board members, upper and lower management and employees in sports teams and non-profit organisations, managerial structure in sport and non-profit organisations, role responsibility and task definition in national sport organisations, and the quality of formal and informal communication in sport tourism (Devine, Boyd, & Boyle, 2010; Kikulis, 2000; Rayne, McDonald, & Leckie, 2019; Shaw & Allen, 2006). Whilst these factors have been presented across different contexts to that under investigation in this phase, the findings are relevant as they serve to signal potential factors which may influence the partnership between the university and PLCF.

4.3.4.3 Parent and Harvey (2009) model

Although various partnership evaluation models exist in domains such as social care (see Rummery & Coleman, 2003) and regeneration (see Laffin & Liddle, 2006), the Parent and Harvey (2009) model (see Figure 4.2) is the only theoretical model designed to evaluate sport and physical activity community-based partnerships (Lucidarme et al., 2014), rendering it appropriate to evaluate a partnership involving PLCF. Although by no means all-inclusive, the use of this model ensures that the opinions of various stakeholders at administrative and implementation levels of partnerships, which are infrequently taken into account (Provan & Milward, 2001) are considered, providing a comprehensive overview of the partnership and evaluating its effectiveness. The model assesses selected components of community based sports partnerships in a three-part feedback loop of partnership antecedents (variables relating to the formation of the partnership), management of the partnership (variables relating to the

functioning of the partnership), and partnership evaluation (variables relating to the evaluation of the programme and the partnership), which feeds back into the antecedents and management (Parent & Harvey, 2009). Building on Parent and Harvey's (2016) partnership evaluation in a physical activity context, this phase will apply the model in a primary school P.E. context. Moreover, it also moves to address Lindsey's (2006) long-standing call to examine P.E.-based partnerships longitudinally.

The model is composed of three components: antecedents, management, and evaluation. Antecedents include the project's purpose, its environment, the nature of the partners and the partnership planning. This component specifically investigates partnership goals, the perceived influence of the context, stakeholder motives involve themselves in the

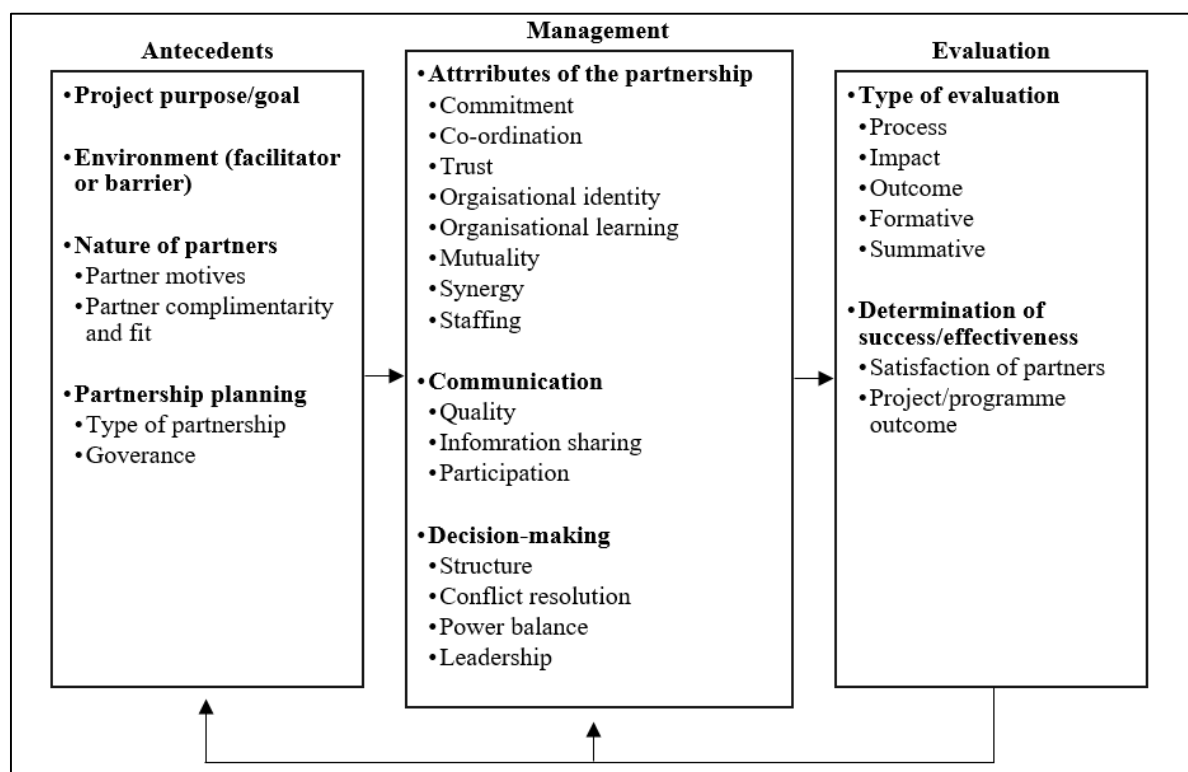


Figure 4.2 Parent and Harvey's (2009) partnership model: antecedents, management and evaluation

partnership, the perceived level of complementarity between both partners, and the planning and governance of decisions made within the partnership. Management is concerned with the

attributes of the partnership, communication and the decision-making process. This component examines the perceived level of trust and commitment between partners, the level of co-ordination, synergy and mutual benefit between partners, the impact of staffing on the partnership, how the processes and strategies employed by the respective partners complement one another, and how the stakeholders have learned from the process of going through the research. It is also concerned with the perceived quality of communication and level of information sharing, how stakeholders participate in communication and decision-making structures within the partnership, conflict between partners, and the overall balance of power and leadership within the partnership. Finally, the evaluation component aims to determine the effectiveness of the partnership overall. It is concerned with the process (or ongoing evaluation of results), impact (evaluation of short-term programme effects), outcome (whether or not the partnership has achieved its goals), formative (immediate feedback provided during activity) and summative (results at the end of a programme) appraisals of the partnership. Collectively these components explore whether or not stakeholders felt that both partners fulfilled their respective roles, and whether the original aims of the partnership were met.

Whilst there has been a lack of partnership research in P.E. context, some researchers have used the Parent and Harvey (2009) to examine partnerships in bordering research domains. Nine variables influencing physical activity programme implementation were identified by Lucidarme et al. (2014), who used the model to define the key factors of effective evidence-based policy implementation between partners. Personal contact was deemed the most powerful variable, as its presence typically resulted in implementation success and its absence typically resulted in failed implementation. Additional variables associated with effective programme implementation included political support from partners, and commitment and willingness to exert effort on behalf of the partnership and quality of staff. Contributors to ineffective implementation included absence of merger effects (for example

personnel, geographical constitution of the working area), exposure motives (such as pursuing media attention, rather than working towards partnership success), absence of formal agreements, and dispersed leadership. The model has also been used to assess a cross-sector sports partnership programme in disadvantaged Belgian communities (Marlier et al., 2015), with trust and process evaluation identified as hallmarks of effective partnerships. Process evaluations facilitate the navigation of unforeseen programme via ongoing programme evaluations. Whilst the production of tangible results, which may be presented in outcome or summative evaluations, are an obvious indicator of partnership success, it must be appreciated that the production of such results requires time (Sydow, 2004). Whilst these examples are not explicitly concerned with the primary school P.E. context, the findings have implications for the partnership between the university and PLCF, as trust and process evaluations can facilitate effective partnerships irrespective of the context.

More recently the model has been used to assess the partnership component of 'Kids in Shape', a community-based youth sport for development programme for children (Parent & Harvey, 2016). Although a physical activity initiative, 'Kids in Shape' bears striking similarities to the partnership between the university and PLCF. The programme was launched by the University of Ottawa, with a target cohort of 6-12 year-olds from disadvantaged backgrounds. The researcher's recommendation to provide greater role definition prior to the partnership and embrace informal roles during the partnership were highly relevant in the context of this research study, as will be evidenced in the findings and discussion sections. With respect to planning, it was suggested that appropriate conditions need to be found before, during and after such partnerships are created to achieve success. Furthermore, careful planning and continued support from the outset and throughout the partnership can be complemented by adopting a bottom-up decision-making approach. According to Boutin and Le Cren (2004), there are three types of decision-making power structure, bottom-up, top-down, and

intermediate. Bottom-up involves decisions being made by those involved at the lower level of a hierarchical structure (for example programme delivery staff). Top-down involves decisions being made by those at the top of a hierarchical structure (for example management). Intermediate is a combination of both. Depending on the context, and the roles of the respective partners, different decision-making structures should be applied where appropriate. However, when advocating a bottom-up decision-making approach, Parent and Harvey (2017) fail to acknowledge that existing organisational structures may mediate the effectiveness of this decision-making process, particularly if lower level staff are not used to having such autonomy. Therefore, in this partnership, the Parent and Harvey (2009) model is employed to examine the relationship between PLCF management and staff coaches, specifically within the management (Section 4.3.4.9.2) and evaluation (Section 4.3.4.9.3) components of the partnership.

Based on the review of studies that adopted Parent and Harvey's (2009) model, there is an opportunity to use the model to examine the partnership between a university and community football organisation. Parnell et al. (2016) explored the role of professional football clubs in delivering P.E. in England, concluding that quality coaching contributed to strong partnerships between community football organisations and schools. Ultimately, quality partnerships were grounded in sustainability, with the community coaches acting as mediators and brokers within the partnership. Parnell et al. (2016) noted that future partnership evaluations between professional football clubs and schools would enhance the understanding of partnership effectiveness in the area, prompting improvements in the delivery of P.E. However, in the present research context, the intention is to examine the relationship between the university and PLCF. This will provide an insight into the reality of the relationship between the university and PLCF when working to implement a collaborative project, in the form of a primary school P.E. life skills programme, which has clear implications for the schools. More generally, this phase can provide potential collaborating organisations with an

understanding of the factors that mediate partnership effectiveness between a research-orientated organisation and a charitable organisation. The Parent and Harvey (2009) model will be used to assess the antecedents, management, and evaluation components of the partnership, from the perspective of PLCF management and coaches actively involved in the partnership, to address this gap in the literature.

The proposed partnership evaluation will also benefit from the Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach adopted for the project generally. The ongoing process evaluation (see Marlier et al., 2015) which took place during this study is closely aligned with PAR, as it facilitates change in plans to ensure partnership success. The usefulness of a PAR approach in partnership research has also been highlighted in conclusions drawn by MacIntosh, Couture and Spence (2015), who suggested that an insight into programme design and operations can be used to inform better practice. The researchers suggested further research is needed to understand the conditions required to ensure positive outcomes from sport development programmes, which is the intention of this phase. This will be complemented by the qualitative data collection methods used. Kay (2009) suggested that qualitative methods can gather rich descriptions, which capture individuals' points of view and the experience within the constraints of daily life. Furthermore, Nicholls, Giles and Sethna (2011) concluded that qualitative data sources can serve as a voice for those 'on the inside' (PLCF staff) to describe the intricate processes found within sport for development programmes, ultimately resulting in the co-production of knowledge. Given the evidence presented in this section, I argue that the Parent and Harvey (2009) model is appropriate to examine the partnership between the university and PLCF. Furthermore, the research presented highlights the need for the examination of the relationship between a community football organisation and an academic institution, given the dearth of literature surrounding such partnerships at present. Therefore one of the objectives of this phase is to use the Parent and Harvey (2009) as a framework to examine

the antecedent, management and evaluation components of the partnership between the university and PLCF. This framework will serve to detail a living theory of partnership effectiveness between the university and PLCF, and generate practical recommendations for future partnership stakeholders in the P.E. and sporting context.

4.3.4.4 Theoretical underpinnings of this study

At this juncture, it is necessary to reiterate the three primary theoretical concepts that underpin this study, so that the findings can be comprehensively understood. These concepts are living theory, the generative transformational nature of living systems and ecological systems theory (see Section 3.1.2.4-3.1.2.6). This phase uses the Parent and Harvey (2009) sports partnership management model to examine the partnership between the university and PLCF. This examination is considered across three components: partnership antecedents, partnership management, and partnership evaluation. The section offers a detailed examination of the effectiveness of the partnership from the perspective of PLCF management and coaches involved in the project. The detail is the living theory of partnership effectiveness between the university and PLCF. The generative transformational nature of this research phase is evident in how the antecedents, management, and evaluation components are related, and also in how ecological influences that preceded the partnership impacted its success. Finally, within this phase, the ecological influences of note are related to partnership planning, prior coach education, the role of PAR in facilitating coach engagement, and the contextual barriers which prevented coaches from fully engaging the partnership.

4.3.4.5 Method

The research partnership between the university and PLCF involved the design and implementation of a Life Skills Coach Development Programme. Using a PAR approach, the Coach Development Programme aimed to enhance coach knowledge of life skill development, and enable coaches to embed life skills teachings in their lessons. The university provided a

lead researcher and supervisory team, and were responsible for the academic aspects of the partnership (for example obtaining ethics and data storage). PLCF provided a project management team and were responsible for ensuring access to participants and data collection sites (for example primary schools and interview sites). The research was match-funded by both organisations.

Responding to the aforementioned calls for research in the area of sports partnerships (Parent & Harvey, 2016), a case study was conducted in the final months of the partnership to examine the effectiveness of the partnership from the perspective of PLCF management and coaches. Whilst the PLCF management participants did not work in schools on a day-to-day basis, their professional responsibilities included the management of coaches delivering P.E. lessons in primary schools. The PLCF primary school P.E. coaches worked in this context day-to-day, as well as fulfilling attentional supplementary roles for PLCF outside of school hours (for example pre-academy football programme coach). Semi-structured interviews were conducted to garner a rich description of the partnership, incorporating the perspectives of four PLCF stakeholders. This approach allowed the researcher to understand participant's experiences of operating within this partnership on a daily basis (Kay, 2009). This approach gave a voice to those 'on the inside' to describe potentially complex and multifaceted processes, and to co-create knowledge (Nicholls et al., 2011).

4.3.4.6 Participants

As outlined in Section 3.1.6.2, participants were recruited using purposive sampling. As in Mackintosh's (2011) investigation into County Sports Partnerships in England, four participants were interviewed. The participant sample included one representative from the PLCF senior management team (henceforth known as John), one departmental programme manager (henceforth known as Kevin), one randomly selected coach from Cohort 1 (Coach Alex) and one randomly selected coach from Cohort 2 (Coach Robyn) (see Section 3.1.6.3).

Data were collected from participants via semi-structured interviews (see Section 3.1.7.1). It should be noted that Kevin also served as the project line manager for PLCF.

John had an active role throughout entire partnership, including initiating the partnership and negotiating stakeholder responsibilities prior to partnership initiation. John's role within the partnership was to oversee the research and communicate updates and outcomes to PLCF's senior management team at regular intervals. Kevin was not involved in the partnership from the outset, but was appointed project line manager 18 months after the project

Table 4.9 Participant information

Participant Name	Role at PLCF	Duration of employment at PLCF at time of study	Duration of direct involvement in the partnership
John	Senior manager	6 years	36 months
Kevin	Programme manager Life skills programme line manager	2.5 years	18 months
Coach Alex	Primary school P.E. coach	20 years	32 months
Coach Robyn	Primary school P.E. coach	2 years	18 months

began due to staff turnover. Kevin was also tasked with ensuring a smooth handover from the researcher to PLCF, following its conclusion. Kevin's responsibilities within the partnership included logistical management, such as booking facilities for presentations and workshops, and monitoring the level of participation in the research by the coaches. Coach Alex was a full-time primary school P.E. coach from Cohort 1. Coach Robyn was a full-time primary school P.E. coach from Cohort 2. As indicated in Section 3.1.6.3, Coach Alex and Coach Robyn were recruited as participants in February 2017 and February 2018 respectively. These four participants were recruited to collect a variety of perspectives and methodologically triangulate the data (Cohen et al., 2018).

4.3.4.7 Data collection

One semi-structured interview was conducted with each participant. Four separate interview schedules (see Appendices 10-13) were developed based on the Parent and Harvey (2009) model, and were modified to ask questions relative to the participants roles within PLCF and the partnership. The researcher developed the initial interview guides, which were reviewed by research supervisors before being modified. Example questions include ‘What was your perception of how the research was planned?’ (antecedents). ‘Describe the decision-making process within the partnership.’ (management). ‘How would you evaluate the success/effectiveness of the partnership?’ (evaluation). The aim of the interviews was to gain an understanding of the four stakeholders’ perceptions of the antecedents, management and evaluation of the partnership between the university and PLCF. To avoid differing meanings and interpretations, and to ensure that each participant had the same understanding of the term ‘partnership’, the lead researcher provided a definition and explanation of the term according to Boutin and Le Cren (2004) before the interview. Average interview duration was 60 minutes and interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim (Braun & Clarke, 2006), resulting in 59 pages of single-spaced transcribed raw data.

4.3.4.8 Data analysis

The data were organised using Nvivo, which is qualitative data analysis software (QSR International, 2020). As outlined in Section 3.1.8, a modified form of thematic analysis based on Braun & Clarke's (2006) six levels (Table 3.7) was used to analyse the interview transcripts. Data analysis combined deductive and inductive approaches. This was based on previous research in the area (Marlier et al., 2015; Rainer et al., 2012). A codebook was developed based on the Parent and Harvey (2009) model, which was used to general initial codes (see Table 4.10). Using Nvivo, nodes were coded to their corresponding node in the codebook. When additional elements recurred in several interviews, new nodes were inductively added. This

combination of inductive and deductive approaches enabled the researchers to harness the richness of existing literature and theory, and subsequently extend both with new elements derived from the data collected from the four PLCF stakeholders (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2008). By detailing clear data collection and analysis methods, and presenting data with honesty and integrity, trustworthiness was enhanced (Polkinghorne, 2005). Moreover, the data collection and analysis sections serve to generate a living theory of partnership effectiveness between the university and PLCF.

4.3.4.9 Findings

The partnership evaluation between the university and PLCF elicited numerous inductive sub-themes resulting in three deductive themes, as presented in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10 Deductive themes & inductive themes from thematic analysis

Theme	Sub-theme
Antecedents	Prior coach education
	Planning with schools
	Primary school P.E. context norms
Management	Communication and information sharing between partners
	Communication and information sharing within PLCF
	Engaging in PAR in a primary school P.E. context
	Barriers to PAR implementation
	Tangible support from the university
Evaluation	Short-term effects of partnership (impact evaluation)
	Ongoing evaluation of partnership outcomes (process evaluation)
	Partnership successes and shortcomings

4.3.4.9.1 Antecedents

The antecedents theme, adopted from Parent and Harvey (2009), included sub-themes related to the project's purpose, environment, nature of the partners and partnership planning. The three sub-themes included: prior coach education, planning with schools, and primary school P.E. context norms.

4.3.4.9.1.1 Prior coach education

Data analysis revealed that the different coach education experiences that participants had before their involvement in the partnership mediated their capacity to embed life skills in lessons:

... although The F.A. model suggests there are psychological and social corners in the model, from my experience of being on courses and going through The F.A. setup and training, there's no support or training in this side of the model at all. So coaches were just fudging it really. Ah, making it up, you know? And then, so that meant that young players, young people, were not getting that side of the teaching methods [John, Interview, 05/02/2019].

John recognised that whilst all PLCF coaches were exposed to the same content during F.A. coaching courses, there is a primary focus on technical and physical development. Kevin reinforced this view, suggesting it was unsurprising:

So we know in The F.A. courses that I've been on and other people have been on, that they don't focus on those corners anywhere near as much as they do physical and technical. That's from my experience. So I wasn't completely surprised [Kevin, Interview, 25/02/2019].

Although developing coaches who can promote life skill development is not a stated aim of the F.A. coaching qualifications, both Kevin and John noted that related concepts such as social and psychological development were not addressed in detail on the courses.

4.3.4.9.1.2 Planning with schools

The lack of consultation between PLCF management and the associated primary schools during the planning stages of the partnership was cited as a factor that adversely affected the partnership for its duration:

I think the only thing that I maybe would have thought about is going into the school and putting a presentation together to the Head Teacher or the staff.... Because some staff question it, I think, a little bit. But then they realise it's fine after a while... maybe just going into the school and saying 'This is what we want to do. This is how we're going to do it.' might have been alright really, might have worked better, might have got them on board quicker so I don't have to answer the questions like 'Why is this important?' [Robyn, Interview, 26/02/2019].

The data suggests that because the schools were not briefed on the partnership and its aims, PLCF coaches had difficulty justifying changes in their coaching behaviours. This is despite

the intention that the schools, and specifically their pupils, would ultimately be the main beneficiaries of the partnership.

4.3.4.9.1.3 Primary school P.E. context norms

Data analysis revealed that, unbeknownst to PLCF management, the partner schools were undermining their contract with PLCF by placing excessive professional demands on the participant coaches.

So the schools one is interesting. Because now, coming out, it looks like our coaches are... [treated] less favourably than if you're a fully qualified teacher. It looks like, speaking to a few of them, that there's no time for planning, that they have to teach most days, but also look after a lunch club, afterschool club. So it looks as though value for money, they [the schools] see 'Right, we're paying for his service, so we're going to batter the coach.' effectively and just give him as many sessions [as possible] [John, Interview, 15/02/2019].

John notes that the coaches are being 'battered' with an excessive number of sessions and resultant lack of planning time. Interpretation of this extract suggests that such norms limited the participant coaches' capacity to make a full contribution to the partnership, as schools did not afford them the working conditions to do so.

4.3.4.9.2 Management

The management theme (Table 4.10) included sub-themes related to the partnership attributes (commitment, coordination, trust, organizational identity, mutuality, synergy, and staffing), communication, and decision-making factors within the partnership (Parent & Harvey, 2009). Data analysis produced five sub-themes: communication and information sharing between partners, communication and information sharing within PLCF, engaging in PAR in a primary school P.E. context, barriers to PAR implementation, and tangible support from the university.

4.3.4.9.2.1 Communication and information sharing between partners

John perceived the relationship between partners to be at ‘arms-length’ and stated his desire for an increase in the quality and frequency of communication with members of the research team at PLCF:

Well there was months where we hadn’t met, you know? And we’re just relying on getting feedback from you, when really you should be getting feedback from the overall [team]. Because we’re giving, you know, a lot of money towards the project, so I would have liked a bit more discussions around how that money was being spent and what you were getting out of it and were they happy with you? [John, Interview, 15/02/2019]

Whilst John perceived this level of communication negatively, Kevin articulated why he perceived the level of communication as a positive partnership feature:

I struggle to find ways that they could have helped more I suppose. Like, I’m not sure. Maybe there could have been a bit more communication, maybe. But I think generally it’s been fine. I think the reason it hasn’t been much communication is because, am, there hasn’t needed to be... I think there would have been more communication had it been a lot worse. Um, which you know, shows for the majority of it that it was going well [Kevin, Interview, 25/02/2019].

These extracts highlight a difference in the partnership communication expectations amongst PLCF management staff. It appears that in this partnership, an agreed level and pathway of communication between stakeholders did not occur.

4.3.4.9.2.2 Communication and information sharing within PLCF

The communication, or lack thereof, between PLCF staff and participant coaches about the partnership and its purpose meant that some participant coaches did not understand the full scope of the project. Even towards the end of the project, Robyn remarked that “... I don’t really know like the full details as much as I probably should” [Robyn, Interview, 26/02/2019], indicating that information about the project had not been adequately communicated from PLCF management to coaches. This perceived lack of communication between PLCF staff and coaches was a source of frustration for the coach participants:

Like I said, Darren, they’ve had nothing to do with it. I’ll be straight with you, I’ve only dealt with you. No one has actually pulled me aside and spent ten minutes talking to me about your research. They haven’t. Kevin might say ‘How are you

doing?’ And that’s it ‘How are you doing?’ And I say ‘Yeah I’m doing great, I’m enjoying it.’ You know? But there’s no like... ‘Tell me about this side of it, tell me about that side of it.’ They’re not asking me questions like that. They’re just asking me how am I finding it? [Alex, Interview, 20/02/2019]

As the extract illustrates, Alex perceived the lack of interaction between PLCF management and the participant coaches as a lack of support. This lack of communication resulted in the coaches not having an understanding of the partnership and its purpose and, which then negatively affected coach engagement in the partnership.

4.3.4.9.2.3 Engaging in PAR in a primary school P.E. context

Both PLCF management and coaches noted that from the outset of the partnership, PAR facilitated the adaptation of the content being delivered to coaches as part of the Coach Development Programme:

So I suppose where we were at the beginning, we didn’t think we’d have to be as prescriptive in our methods as you have been. You know, you really had to lay it on a plate for the coaches really. For them to move forward and deliver these sessions [John, Interview, 15/02/2019].

You see what you’re working with and you adapt, especially for me anyway. It’s my personal view, you adapted [it] to help me. So you knew I didn’t understand it, I didn’t want to tell you, and you’ve put together a package that I do understand, that I can understand now [Alex, Interview, 20/02/2019].

PAR allowed the researcher to respond to the needs of the participants, with the intention of facilitating improved ongoing engagement. This is particularly relevant in light of Robyn’s admission that he had “never really been involved in anything like this” [Robyn, Interview, 20/02/2019]. Moreover, the adaptive nature of PAR facilitated participant engagement and aided the development of contextualised Life Skills Coaching Resource (see Appendix 2):

The [coaching resource] sort of adapted. It sort of felt like you were going along with the journey as well, and as a coach you were contributing to it. I think that I mentioned tick-box at the beginning of the year and I think we’ve ended up with tick-box, so I thought that was wicked, yeah, that suits me down to the ground [Robyn, Interview, 26/02/2019].

Kevin recalled conversations he had with coaches:

... getting the feedback from the coaches. Seeing how they're doing the research and then taking that on board having a look at it and then developing the resource that they're using even further, I think that's benefitted them as well. And knowing that they're actually being listened to and not just, you know, what you see sometimes with projects is, you know, you ask for feedback but then there's not actually a lot done. Um, that's not happened in this case which is good... I think that's been really positive [Kevin, Interview, 25/02/2019].

It is evident that the coaches valued being active contributors within the partnership. Extract interpretation suggests that over time participant coach engagement in PAR improved. This was due to the coaches' ever-increasing knowledge of the topic and continued input into the development of the resource, both of which underscored the coaches' significant contribution to the partnership.

4.3.4.9.2.4 Barriers to PAR implementation

Throughout the partnership, several tangible and intangible barriers made it difficult for the participant coaches to actively engage in PAR and implement the ongoing research findings:

It would have been nice to have had a bit more buy-in from the schools. To have embraced the study more. To have an understanding of what you're trying to do. And then that would sell is the topic that 'Look, we're trying to improve your pupils in this area of work, which is such a valuable piece. You should be embracing it and at least trying to get your head around it' [John, Interview, 15/02/2019].

Given Section 4.3.4.9.1.2 highlighted how schools were not involved in the planning stages of the partnership, the lack of buy-in perceived by John may seem unsurprising. However, the data suggests that despite the partnership planning, PLCF management did not anticipate a lack of support from the schools, leading to frustration on behalf of PLCF. This lack of support and buy-in was, Robyn felt, personified by long-serving teachers in the school:

From what my experience is anyway in my school, is that the teachers that are the long-serving teachers and that are the older teachers tend to teach up KS2. And I find that they can be stuck in their ways as well and it's difficult to get them to think about the bigger picture really [Robyn, Interview, 26/02/2019].

This apparent reticence of ‘older teachers’ to ‘think about the bigger picture’ was interpreted by Robyn as a PAR implementation barrier, as it was perceived as a lack of support from senior colleagues within the school. Additionally, participants noted the repeated urge to justify their use of novel coaching methods when delivering lessons. This often resulted in participant coaches planning and delivering more ‘traditional’ lessons, focusing on the technical and physical elements of sport, when working alongside colleagues.

Restricted planning time was also cited as a PAR engagement barrier, preventing coaches from working towards the collective aims of the partnership (for example developing coach resources and/or the alteration of coaching behaviours):

But it’s the time that’s always the big thing... I’d like an hour a week in a school or something at least... I think that would be a really good... I think the staff would appreciate that as well you know... Even in that hour you can just do what you want, but then it’s your fault if you don’t plan kind of thing... I think it would up the standard of all lessons as well to be honest [Robyn, Interview, 26/02/2019].

Robyn recognised it is necessary to take adequate time to plan lessons in which life skills are embedded to effectively engage in PAR. More globally however, these extracts collectively indicate that inadequate partnership planning undermined the application of PAR to some degree in the research context, which was manifested in the barriers discussed.

4.3.4.9.2.5 Tangible support from the university

The support provided to participant coaches by university staff involved in the project during the partnership contributed to an effective PAR process:

I think having Nora come and present to the coaches, with the new cohort and the older cohort as well, cohorts one and two being there, I think that was great for the engagement levels. I think that even some of the cohort one coaches that had already been doing it for a year, or however long they had been doing it for, had kind of lost interest maybe a little bit at that point, or were really struggling to grasp the concept of it, why they were doing it [Kevin, Interview, 25/02/2019].

The contention that Nora’s presentation reinvigorated participant engagement was reinforced by Alex:

She came down and when she spoke, I understood every word she said. I'm not being funny, when you were speaking I didn't understand... She's the one that made me think 'Hold it, you've actually told me what you're doing.' And she made it sound quite basic and 'Oh, I know what you're doing now.'... Like simple little things. It's so simple and I thought 'F**king hell. Come on Darren' [Alex, Interview, 20/02/2019].

Data interpretation suggests that the additional support offered by the university improved coaches' understanding of life skill development. This then increased coach engagement in the PAR process, and thus the partnership itself, as the additional support provided by the university served to present content in an alternative (and potentially more digestible) manner and clarify possible misunderstandings.

4.3.4.9.3 Evaluation

The evaluation theme contained sub-themes related to the different types of partnership evaluations (Boutin & Le Cren, 2004), and evaluating the general effectiveness of the partnership. Sub-themes included: short-term effects of partnership (impact evaluation), ongoing evaluation of partnership outcomes (process evaluation), and partnership successes and shortcomings.

4.3.4.9.3.1 Short-term effects of partnership (impact evaluation)

John noted the positive short-term effects of the partnership, citing a perceived behavioural change on behalf of many coaches:

I've seen some change in some of the coaches. So Jamie in particular is probably one, [and] Alex. Big changes in their approach and what coaching and P.E. lessons are about. It's not about physical and technical... I've seen a big improvement in their overall outlook on how to deliver a session and how there's other outcomes that you can make from a P.E. or football session. That it's not all about the star player, the high technical ability [John, Interview, 15/02/2019].

John's perception that the coaches placed a greater emphasis on life skill development, which is a goal of this research, indicates satisfaction with the short-term outcomes. Moreover, Kevin mooted the prospect of future collaboration with the university:

the partnership has been really good overall. I think it's been great. So yeah, I think if [the university] came to us with another project again, as long as it fitted in with, you know, our goals and our programmes, and we could work out a way of developing it, I can't see any reason why we wouldn't [Kevin, Interview, 25/02/2019].

Kevin's positive response to the partnership outcomes is indicative of stakeholder satisfaction on behalf of PLCF management, which reflects positively on the work done by both the university and PLCF throughout. The expression of PLCF management that they would be interested in further research collaborations with PLCF in the future is a notable short-term outcome of this partnership.

4.3.4.9.3.2 Ongoing evaluation of partnership outcomes (process evaluation)

Coaches reflected on how their coaching practice was continually changing as a result of their involvement in the partnership:

It's almost like each lesson is getting better with it, I think that's the thing... there's a lot more to it that you don't sort of realise... it's basically shown me that don't teach everything at once, because you'll only get basic information from it. Like, the kids will just see [you] scraping the surface instead of the real detail of the life skill and how you can apply it and how it can be transferred. So I've sort of gone with that approach, I feel like as I've gone more and more throughout the research [Robyn, Interview, 26/02/2019].

In fairness to all the kids, they are good, and I think it's the way I've changed the teaching. I don't stand there and talk to them, and tell them what to do anymore. They don't enjoy P.E. that way [Alex, Interview, 20/02/2019].

The coaches' shared perception that their ever-improving coaching behaviours were associated with sustained engagement in the research partnership highlights the benefits active participation in the partnership.

The ongoing evaluation of data within the partnership, and open communication with the researcher, allowed Kevin to recognise knowledge gaps amongst the participant coaches.

I think one of the first and foremost things... it's been so key to realise that coaches didn't really have a clue what the social and psychological corners were. And, you know, they'd heard of them, they kind of knew a little bit about them, but they couldn't tell you. They could talk about the physical and technical side of it for

hours on end, but could probably not scrape five minutes on the other two [Kevin, Interview, 25/02/2019].

It is evident that PLCF management were not aware of this knowledge gap prior to the initiation of the partnership, and may explain the level of partnership planning detailed in Section 4.3.4.9.1.

4.3.4.9.3.3 Partnership successes and shortcomings

An indicator of partnership success was PLCF's decision to create a new full-time Coach Development Manager role within the organisation to create a sustainable partnership legacy:

Well the motivation was over your study. The coaches were saying they liked you coming out to view their sessions. They liked the fact that you were the conduit between the foundation, the school and them. So there... was a lot of 'We feel isolated.' you know? So I felt if I could find an opportunity to gain funding, I wanted to try and get someone who could join up and make those coaches feel unified with the foundation and supported [John, Interview, 15/02/2019].

This appointment, intended to act as a support and development mechanism for coaches, indicates that PLCF management recognised the positive intra-organisational changes associated with the partnership and invested to maintain such changes. Furthermore, PLCF management expressed a desire to share what they had learned from the partnership with other organisations:

Um yeah, we've definitely learned from it. It's something we can't [wait] to continue. The Coach Development Manager, again, will spend a bit of time getting his head around what you're doing. I'll also be pushing that we continue with this work when you've left. Um, take that learning into the football industry. Ah, maybe speak to other governing bodies or other clubs about the learning that we've got from it, so everyone can continue to look at that [John, Interview, 15/02/2019].

The creation of the new role, the value that PLCF derived from the partnership, and their newfound understanding of how to facilitate positive developmental change through life skill development, prompted a desire to disseminate what was learned on their behalf.

As a coach, Alex explained how he felt the partnership had successfully achieved its goal by altering his coaching practice:

Yeah, it's achieved its goal, because we had this discussion when you first came up about the way we used to teach in... rather than be standing and telling them all the time what to do, they would sometimes get bored and they would sometimes gain nothing from it. And sometimes I would gain nothing from it. And the reason I'm saying that is because the way I've changed my teaching now, I give them ownership [Alex, Interview, 20/02/2019].

Alex's awareness of his altered coaching practice, which may be complemented by future support from the Coach Development Manager, coalesce to illustrate the two primary successes of the partnership, which are behavioural change and organisational change within PLCF.

Despite PLCF recognising the issue towards the end of the partnership, participant coaches expressed dissatisfaction with the isolation they felt in their schools throughout the partnership:

Well I'm still not happy about the fact that we've not got to watch each other work. That's one of the main things there... but I'm not in contact [with other coaches], I'm not working with them, am I? I'm working by myself. In the last year I've wanted us to go observe each other, but we haven't done that... I haven't got a group that I talk to about what I'm doing. It's just me... [Alex, Interview, 20/02/2019].

Alex expressed a desire on behalf of the coaches to belong to a community of practice within PLCF, whereby coach collaboration and knowledge sharing is facilitated by the organisation. From this, it could be suggested that contributing to this partnership was more difficult without peer support.

Overall, these findings provide an interesting reflection of how active stakeholders within the partnership perceived the planning, management and outcomes of the partnership. Whilst the deductive themes are divided into sub-themes, this does not suggest a formulaic explanation of the phenomena under examination. The reciprocity between sub-themes and contradictions presented are essential in communicating stakeholders' perceptions accurately, in what is a messy reality.

4.3.4.9.4 Findings summary

The findings section details how PLCF staff perceived the effectiveness of the partnership for its duration, using the Parent and Harvey (2009) model evaluate this effectiveness. Data collection took place at the end of the partnership, allowing participants to provide a retrospective account of their partnership experiences. The presentation of the findings across three sections highlights the factors necessary for an adaptive partnership, before, during and after stakeholders chose to work together in this context. The antecedents section details how prior coach education, PLCF planning with schools, and the norms in a primary school P.E. context impacted the partnership. It highlights how coach knowledge, and the presence of a facilitative working environment cannot be assumed by stakeholders. The management section details how communication between partners, communication within PLCF, implementing PAR in a primary school P.E. context, the barriers to PAR, and tangible support from the university influenced the partnership. It highlights the necessity for intra- and inter-organisational communication, the facilitative role of PAR (despite the implementation barriers that exist), and how support from the university enhances engagement in the partnership. The evaluation section details the short-term effects of the partnership, an ongoing evaluation of the partnership, and the successes and shortcomings of the partnership. It highlights how coaches positively adapted their behaviours, how coaches now continually strive to improve their practice, and some of the successes and shortcomings of the partnership. Overall, the findings detail the factors necessary to build a successful partnership in a live research context.

4.3.4.10 Discussion

English professional football clubs, via community organisations like PLCF, have formally worked in local communities for over three decades (Breitbath & Harris, 2006). This phase explores an example of such work, examining the partnership between PLCF and the

university from the viewpoint of PLCF staff members. Based on the approach taken by Parnell, Stratton, Drust and Richardson (2013), examining the effectiveness of this partnership from the perspective of active PLCF participants was appropriate. The findings detail participants' perceptions of the antecedents, management and evaluation components of the partnership, and serve as a living theory of partnership effectiveness between the university and PLCF. It must be acknowledged that experiences and resultant themes are relative to the partnership between a community football organisation and a university, with partnerships in other contexts likely to experience different challenges. However, these findings can be applied in other contexts via naturalistic generalisability or transferability (Smith, 2017), whereby the research presented resonates with the life of the reader, and the onus is placed on them to apply the findings elsewhere (Chenail, 2010). Furthermore, it is necessary to reiterate that whilst data is segmented into themes and sub-themes, when examining of the complex partnership reality, they interlink and therefore display generative transformational nature of living systems (McNiff, 2002; McNiff & Whitehead, 2011). For example, the antecedent sub-themes explain what happened prior to the partnership, which then impact how the partnership was managed and maintained, which ultimately influence participants' evaluation of the partnership. It is notable that whilst inconsistent in this partnership, the findings mirror prior research, illustrating the need for antecedents such as formal agreements (Lucidarme et al., 2014) and proper governance structures (Parent & Harvey, 2016) to facilitate a successful partnership involving community-based organisations. However, perhaps the most notable findings relate to the requirement for organisations such as PLCF to consider the individual and collective needs of the coaches within the partnership, by planning adequately with schools and providing support via open communication with management. A notable applied outcome of this research is the creation of the Coach Development Manager role to support coaches to maintain behaviour change.

Ultimately, interventions in research settings will be unable to reach and impact an intended population if different policy processes fail to implement them properly (Rutten, 2012). Thus, within a partnership, good process management by primary stakeholders determines the successful implementation of any intervention, irrespective on the context. Co-ordination, or the set of tasks that each stakeholder expects the other to perform, is indicative of successful partnerships (Mohr & Spekman, 1994). Yet if policy processes are unclear or poorly implemented, which at times was evident in the partnership between PLCF and the university, they can serve as a mesosystem-level issues that destabilises co-ordination and prevents the achievement of successful partnership outcomes. To avoid negative outcomes, Marlier et al. (2015) cited the need for interdependence between stakeholders, and to build support from policy through the use of objective metrics to prove stakeholder value. Yet this objective determination of success is downplayed by Chalip (2006), who concluded that determination of effectiveness of interventions is not sufficient, and that the examination of the characteristics which mediate intervention effectiveness are essential. Furthermore, Parnell et al.'s (2013) examination of the effectiveness of a community football scheme in promoting healthful behaviour change in children showed that ineffective working practices of coaches can have negate intervention effectiveness. Therefore, an examination of the factors that mediate the success of the present partnership and its associated intervention can be facilitated using the Parent and Harvey (2009) model, and a living theory of the partnership effectiveness can be communicated.

4.3.4.10.1 Impact of planning and school support on initial coach engagement

During the planning stages of any partnership, consultation with secondary stakeholders is essential to support those engaging in behaviour change and facilitate partnership success. Within primary schools, increased strategic planning and use of resources to support staff implementing P.E. policy is indicative of a greater commitment to P.E.

provision by Head Teachers (Rainer et al., 2012). Moreover, to allow coaches to transfer knowledge from training to applied contexts, organisations must plan immediate opportunities for participants to practice what they have learned (Burns et al., 2017). However, within this partnership, the lack of interaction between PLCF management and schools during planning undermined potential strategic planning, resulting in a lack of support for coaches and opportunities to apply their life skills knowledge during P.E. lessons. This lack of interaction created a microsystem level issue for coaches, as the lack of support they received in schools made it difficult for them to contribute to the partnership at times. Yet imprecise planning is not the central reason for the lack of in-school support received by PLCF coaches. Sloan (2010) concluded that whilst external specialist P.E. support is welcomed, primary school P.E. teachers often resent being placed on the periphery of P.E. This is despite a potential lack of personal subject knowledge on their behalf affecting the quality of P.E. provision. It is therefore unsurprising that the poor planning and lack of support from teachers combined to create microsystem level issues for the coaches and served as project participation barriers for the coaches. This is despite Hepworth's (1999) contention that organisations working together in an educational context should promote a two-way system of continuity and progression. In this instance, such a collaborative effort can serve to support coaches in the primary school P.E. context.

The lack of interaction between PLCF management and the associated schools prior to the partnership was an exosystem level factor that affected the level of support that participant coaches received in schools. This support, or lack thereof, therefore mediated partnership success. As Sloan (2010) found, the majority of class teachers enjoy delivering P.E., wish to maintain a leading role in its delivery, and resent being pushed to the periphery by external providers. Given primary school teachers were not briefed about the partnership and the associated aims, their lack of support is expected. Unfortunately for the partnership and its

stakeholders, peer and authentic institutional support have been cited as a key predictors of behaviour change and improved results in coach training and development (Burns et al., 2017). This lack of collegial support may also have been exacerbated by the school's failure to prioritise P.E. Aligning with previous research findings (Morgan & Hansen, 2007; Rainer et al., 2012), both PLCF management and coaches indicated that a focus on literacy and numeracy, which is a macrolevel issue, meant that P.E. was not prioritised in schools. Add to these factors the limited follow up support provided by PLCF management to coaches, which Harris, Cale and Musson (2012) cited as necessary in ensuring effective primary school P.E. delivery, it appears the conditions for passive coach engagement in the partnership *at the outset* were unintentionally created. The lack of individualised support from both primary and secondary stakeholders resulted in reduced coach engagement at the partnership outset. This is despite all participant coaches sharing similar coaching experiences and holding the same coaching qualifications.

4.3.4.10.2 Impact of prior coach education on initial coach engagement

The focus of traditional coach education programmes on physical and technical skill development (Gould et al., 2006; Trottier & Robitaille, 2014) acted as a macrosystem level influence, contributing to a lack of understanding about life skill development amongst coaches at the beginning of the partnership (see Phase 1). Evidence of differences between declarative and procedural knowledge are cited as a factor which further compromised active engagement in the partnership. The manner in which content and information was communicated to coaches at the partnership outset may have been inappropriate, given the majority of coaches delivering youth sport programmes are not trained to facilitate youth development (Petitpas et al., 2005). This is despite the existence of The F.A. four corner model (The Football Association, 2015), a holistic coaching model which emphasises the development of physical, technical, social and psychological skills, which coaches were introduced to as part of their formative coach

education. Compounding ecological influences that help to explain low coach engagement at the outset of the partnership include under-informed partnership planning, a lack of support given to coaches by PLCF management, and the researcher's assumption that coaches had an understanding of life skill development. Moreover, this combination of factors was generative and transformational, as they influenced the management of the partnership for its duration.

4.3.4.10.3 Using PAR to facilitate coach engagement

Adopting a PAR approach for this research project, which facilitated tangible input from both PLCF coaches and the university, served to enhance coach participant engagement in the partnership following the slow start. Throughout the project, PAR was used to engage the community members as co-researchers who grounded each aspect of the partnership in the local context (Blodgett et al., 2011). This enhanced engagement was facilitated in a number of ways, not least of all by the flexibility it afforded to the primary researcher throughout the partnership. PAR and the associated flexibility in the research plan equalised power relations with the participant coaches by giving them a choice in what was happening (Frisby et al., 2005), which simultaneously facilitated a highly contextualised exploration of the partnership and its associated outcomes (Spaaij et al., 2018). The presentation given by Nora to the participants was also indicative of such flexibility, and enhanced partnership engagement, by clarifying information that the coaches previously misunderstood, which helped to resolve a microsystem level issue surrounding knowledge implementation. This presentation served as an opportunity for the coach learners and the researcher to work collaboratively and facilitate understanding of the partnership applied to coaching practice (Vella et al., 2013). In adopting PAR, such one-off instances were complemented by the ongoing Coach Development Programme throughout the partnership. PAR's capacity to cater for changes in the research plan also ensured that the needs of the coaches were not ignored, therefore increasing coach engagement in the partnership over time.

Utilising PAR allowed coaches to situate their learning in an applied coaching setting, which enhanced their engagement. Learning by doing is associated with positive learning experiences, as it allows the learner to apply and make sense of new knowledge (Mallett et al., 2009). Researchers have long-since criticised a rational approach to coach education and development, with the delivery of decontextualised content resulting in coaches' inability to adapt to the dynamic human context (Jones, 2000; Turner & Martinek, 1995). The prior coach education programmes attended by the participant coaches are guilty of this decontextualisation, and this cultural issue served as a macrosystem level influence in this context, as the coaches were not used to being active contributors to their own development. Being asked to actively contribute to the partnership was not something that the coaches could readily do before they had been engaged in the PAR process. In their evaluation of physical activity-based PYD programme, Iachini, Beets, Ball and Lohman (2014) cited how implementation support via phone, e-mail, in-person meetings and site visits, facilitated programme implementation. Moreover, coach competence, attitude and behaviours are all critical in facilitating coaches' capacity to facilitate life skill development (Gould & Carson, 2008a). In this partnership, PAR facilitated individualised coach support to improve coach competence, attitude and behaviours, allowing for minor adjustments to meet the needs of each coach and improve their engagement in the partnership. Similar to the conclusion reached by Ahlberg, Mallett and Tinning (2008), PLCF coaches subsequently developed a level of autonomy in their practice, altered their coaching behaviours, and ultimately engaged more in the partnership, all of which was facilitated by PAR. According to Frisby, Crawford and Dorer (1997), PAR serves to engage participants in the co-creation of knowledge, which can then provide the basis for action plans, as iteratively happened during this partnership. Moreover, researchers have concluded that the knowledge of those delivering programmes on the ground level (such as coaches) should be prioritised to understand how such programmes actually

function (Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010). These factors combined to promote more active coach engagement in the partnership as time progressed, illustrating the generative nature of the project. Yet, as evidenced, PAR cannot account for the many unseen implementation barriers in a primary school P.E. context.

4.3.4.10.4 Implementation barriers and perceived lack of employer support

Within the primary school P.E. context, participants noted the presence of microsystem level barriers such as lack of school buy-in and inadequate planning time, which compromised their engagement in the partnership. When examining the challenges of county sports partnerships in England, Mackintosh (2011) cited partner buy-in to sharing a vision, organisational aims and strategic direction as central determinants of partnership success. However, such buy-in from schools in this research context was never likely, as they were not briefed on the programme vision, aims or direction by PLCF prior to the partnership. The lack of buy-in, irrespective of its cause, prevented both organisations from fitting their complementary skills (Marlier et al., 2015), resulting in a lack of support for the participant coaches from both the schools and PLCF management. Furthermore, because schools were not informed about the partnership and its aims, they did not allocate sufficient time to coaches to plan lessons, which is a significant microsystem level factor that negatively impacted coach engagement in the partnership and the Coach Development Programme. Session planning time is essential for quality P.E. delivery (Sloan, 2010), whilst coaches need to deliberately plan lessons if life skills are to be successfully developed (Gould & Carson, 2008a; Hellison, 2011). In failing to allocate coaches this planning time, the coaches could not always plan lessons in which life skills were embedded, and therefore could not consistently contribute to the partnership. This macrosystem level issue, whereby the school expected coaches to teach lesson after lesson without planning, meant that the coaches did not always engage in the PAR process. Instead, the coaches simply focused on getting the P.E. lessons done. The negative

influence of these barriers is accentuated by the perceived lack of support coaches felt from PLCF management during the partnership, which was typified by Alex in his final interview when he stated “I don’t have no dialogue from them guys” [Alex, Interview, 20/02/2019]. This is significant for the partnership, as administrative support is key tenet of successful in-service P.E. provision (Morgan & Bourke, 2005; Ward, Doutis, & Evans, 1999). Whilst PAR facilitated flexible and largely successful management of the partnership, minimal school buy-in, inadequate planning time and a perceived lack of employer support combined as series of ecological barriers that prevented the partnership from achieving its full potential.

Although the management of this partnership was imperfect, adopting a PAR approach enhanced participant coach engagement. PAR facilitated both flexibility and individualisation, which enhanced participant coach engagement throughout the project. Furthermore, by situating learning in an applied context, it allowed the participants to become more autonomous in how they embedded life skills in their lessons (Lyle, 2010), subsequently heightening their contribution to the partnership. Whilst the combined influence of unforeseen implementation barriers and a perceived lack of support participant coaches felt from PLCF management did have a negative impact on engagement, the positive outcomes associated with PAR vastly outweigh the negatives, meaning the participants viewed the partnership as a success.

4.3.4.10.5 Partnership successes

The perceived changes in coach behaviours and the creation of the Coach Development Manager role are two major short-term and ongoing successes identified within the partnership. The alterations in coach behaviours cited by PLCF management are caused by a combination of factors, including support from the lead researcher. Whilst regular face-to-face interaction was not always possible, the researcher reinforced the key messages via phone and e-mail throughout the partnership, which helped to facilitate professional behaviour change (Vella et al., 2013). During these correspondences, information was focused on helping participants to

reduce their perceived micro-, meso-, exo- and macrosystem level barriers to change, allowing them to develop contingencies to overcome such barriers (Grant, 2010; Grant & Franklin, 2007). The findings also highlight that although initial partnership engagement was low, behaviour change amongst participant coaches was evident at its cessation. These behaviour modifications were preceded by a change in attitude on behalf of the participants, because they recognised the value of partnership engagement over time. In Grant's (2010) examination of workplace coaching programmes, parallels exist, as the perceived cons of behaviour change remained high for at least six months and stunted change, which helps to explain low partnership engagement at the outset. Furthermore, research examining CPD training for P.E. teachers has long-since cited the need for an adequate amount of time to facilitate effective in-service education (Ward et al., 1999). Therefore, the gradual increase in the coaches' contribution to the partnership may simply be explained by their continued exposure to the Coach Development Programme.

4.3.4.10.6 Partnership shortcomings

The absence of a community of practice amongst coaches was identified as a mesosystem level factor which negatively impacted the partnership, as coaches working in different schools did not get the opportunity to collaborate. Whilst coaches explicitly expressed a desire to work with their peers, PLCF management and the schools could not collaborate to facilitate the creation of a community of practice. Communities of practice facilitate peer support and behaviour change, and are associated with ongoing learning following the cessation of formal training (Burns et al., 2017). The absence of a community of practice in this partnership may have reduced the likelihood of coaches becoming reflective practitioners and inadvertently made them less responsible for their own learning (Camiré et al., 2014). Additionally, despite participant requests and the merits associated with peer observation (Bell & Mladenovic, 2008; Hendry & Oliver, 2012; Siddiqui, Jonas-Dwyer, & Carr, 2007), coaches

were not given the opportunity to observe one another, further stunting the development of a community of practice. In an effort to develop a post-partnership community of practice, the Coach Development Manager role was created. The creation of the Coach Development Manager role is a macrosystem level influence, as it signals a cultural and administrative change in how PLCF work to support their coaches. A future responsibility of the Coach Development Manager is to serve as a peer leader (Gilbert et al., 2009) and fill the void left by the primary researcher, again evidencing the generative transformational nature of the project. By developing a formal community of practice, the Coach Development Manager can prevent old coaching practices from becoming the norm again once the partnership has formally ceased (Culver, Trudel, & Werthner, 2009; Gallimore et al., 2009), and continually work with coaches to improve their practice.

4.3.4.11 Conclusion, limitations and future research

The detail provided in this phase is illustrative of a living theory of partnership effectiveness between the university and PLCF, as it evidences the factors that facilitate and obstruct the fruitfulness of this partnership. The most notable outcomes associated with this partnership are the perceived changes in coach behaviours and the creation of the Coach Development Manager role. As microsystem and macrosystem level factors respectively, these factors will contribute towards sustaining behaviour change amongst PLCF primary school P.E. coaches. However, additional findings are noteworthy. The lack of planning with schools and subsequent support from class teachers were factors that reduced partnership effectiveness. Schools did not buy-in to the project, meaning that they and PLCF could not fully match their complementary skills to support coaches (Marlier et al., 2015). Furthermore, the limited individualised support coaches received reduced their engagement in the partnership, particularly at the outset. The assumption that coach participants held a certain level of understanding about life skills, which they did not, exacerbated low engagement at the

beginning. Yet PAR facilitated the alteration of coach support mechanisms, ensuring that low engagement was not sustained throughout the partnership (Spaaij et al., 2018). Minor mesosystem level influences, including phone calls e-mail, in-person meeting and site visits from the lead researcher improved coach engagement in the partnership (Iachini et al., 2014), despite the lack of a community of practice. Although negatives exist, the positive outcomes associated with the partnership far outweigh the negatives and serve to inform future practice.

Recommendations for developing a successful partnership are alluded to throughout this discussion. When initiating partnerships like this, future researchers/primary stakeholders should consult with secondary stakeholders (such as schools) before a research study, as it is necessary if the partnership is to achieve its potential. By involving secondary stakeholders in the planning stages, they will have the information necessary to develop a comprehensive understanding of the partnership aims, and reduce the negative influence of micro-, meso-, exo- and macrosystem level factors for coaches. This will allow secondary stakeholders to actively support and facilitate behaviour change amongst primary stakeholders, such as coaches. Researchers are also encouraged to apply PAR in similar contexts in future. As the evidence presented suggests, PAR can expedite flexibility in the research methods whilst simultaneously enhancing participant engagement in partnerships. In a primary school context, this could involve the inclusion of teachers and parents/guardians. Moreover, additional PAR studies could serve to communicate alternative living theories of practice, and proactively inform researchers about the factors that impact the effectiveness of partnerships in similar contexts. A final recommendation for both researchers and stakeholders, which is evident in this partnership, is to explore the possibility of creating new roles within organisations to facilitate sustained change. For example, the designation of a peer leader who facilitates the development and maintains a community of practice post-partnership could be a significant macrosystem level change. This would also support the generative and transformational nature of the

partnership, as the people in these new roles could build on the successes of the partnership. From a practical standpoint, organisations such as PLCF are encouraged to take measures (for example adequately organise coach timetabling, and facilitate regular group meetings and peer observations) to aid in the development of a community of practice. This will ensure that the knowledge and behaviour changes prompted by the partnership are maintained following its formal cessation.

The limitations of this phase must also be acknowledged. Whilst it would not have been possible to interview all coaches due to some leaving PLCF during the partnership, of the eleven coaches actively engaged in the partnership, two were interviewed for this phase. Coach participants were recruited in two cohorts, with Alex and Robyn in Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 respectively. The rationale for their inclusion was to provide a representation of coach perceptions from each respective cohort. Furthermore, it was deemed impractical to recruit other participant coaches for this phase, as many of them participated in up to three interviews in throughout the project and did not have the time for additional data collection sessions during a busy school term. Nonetheless, the inclusion of more PLCF coaches as participants would have been desirable. The potential for confirmation bias on behalf of PLCF management participants is also acknowledged. To justify the financial investment from PLCF in the partnership, Kevin and John may have exaggerated their perceptions of behaviour change amongst the coaches. It is also important to consider the impact of researcher bias on data interpretation. Due to the length of the partnership, the researcher developed personal relationships with some participants. To minimise the impact of such bias, a reflexive diary was kept during data collection and analysis (see Section 3.1.7.3).

Finally, the project-wide use of PAR should be addressed. Whilst an inherent strength of PAR is its capacity to develop contextually-grounded knowledge, Spaaij et al. (2018) cited this as a factor which compromises the generalisability of the findings. Yet, as mentioned in

Section 3.1.8.4, to apply a post-positivist thought process to qualitative research is to miss the point (Lewis et al., 2014; Smith, 2017). Determining good quality qualitative research lies in the ability of the reader to identify similarities between their reality and that presented in this study, and apply findings which resonate with them. Furthermore, it has been noted that evidence of long-term outcomes, such as improvements in coach behaviours for example, are speculative. This is because PAR is concerned with integrated and systematic policy improvement through social learning, rather than implementation of a more typical project style intervention (Ison, 2008). However, this opens PAR up to the criticism that the problem-solving may not last following the conclusion of the study.

4.3.4.12 Phase 4 summary

Given the partnership stakeholders fulfil different roles, one being a community football organisation and the other an academic institution, it was necessary to examine the effectiveness of the partnership. One objective of this phase was to explore the contextual factors that impacted partnership success. The Parent and Harvey (2009) provided a framework to examine factors related to partnership success, before, during and after the fact. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to understand the experiences of the partnership from the perspective of four PLCF staff members engaged in the partnership, and working within the research context on a day-to-day basis (Kay, 2009). Critically, the issue was considered from the perspective of those directly involved in it (Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013). The findings fulfil both empirical and applied functions, and provides new knowledge which is useful for people in their everyday life (Reason & Bradbury, 2008). Significant outcomes associated with the phase include the creation of the Coach Development Manager role, and perceived changes in coach behaviours.

4.3.5 Phase 5

As illustrated in Table 4.1, Phase 5 of the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Phase initiated in April 2019. Phase 5 is related to both project aims (see Page 59). The objective of this phase is to assess the effectiveness of the Coach Development Programme as whole, using Kirkpatrick's (1959, 1976, 1996) training evaluation model. Importantly, it must be noted that in the case of this training evaluation, programme evaluation is considered to be in its infancy. For the purposes of clarity, an overview of the Kirkpatrick (1959, 1976, 1996) training evaluation model is now provided.

4.3.5.1 Kirkpatrick's training evaluation model

The Kirkpatrick (1959, 1976, 1996) training evaluation model is a four level training model that has been employed across a range of industries including higher education (Paull, Whitsed, & Giardi, 2016; Praslova, 2010), healthcare (Beech & Leather, 2006) and management (Lin, Chen, & Chuang, 2011) to determine the effectiveness of training. The model is used to examine the fidelity of the Coach Development Programme in Phase 5 of this study. Millar and Stevens (2012) noted that the model has been dominant in training evaluation since its conception in 1959, allowing researchers to examine the causal relationships between variables. The original model is comprised of four levels; reaction, learning, behaviour and results. Despite long-standing criticism of the model centring on the potential neglect of a systematic view of the relationship between each level (Alliger & Janak, 1989; Baldwin & Ford, 1988; Holton, 1996), the model has maintained relevance. More recently, researchers updated the model to operationalise the original four elements for use in a modern research context in the form the New World Kirkpatrick Model (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, 2016). Akin to the original iteration of the model, this too has been successfully employed across a range of contexts (see Tikhonravova, 2018, p.57). Irrespective of whether researchers utilise the

original or New World version of the model, the four primary levels retain the same basic meaning.

The most up to date conceptualisations of these four levels are provided by Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (2016). The first level is reaction, which is conceptualised as the degree to which participants find their training favourable, engaging and relevant to their profession. Learning, the second level, is the degree to which participant acquire intended knowledge, skills, attitudes, confidence and commitment based on the training they received. The third level is behaviour, and is the degree to which participants apply what the learnings from training in their professional roles. The fourth and final level is results, which is the degree to which targeted outcomes occur in response to the training. Again, whilst it has been acknowledged that early of iterations of the model were subject to criticism (Holton, 1996), leading to a series of revisions and reconceptualisations, its inherent strength lies in its simplicity (Alliger & Janak, 1989; Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, 2016). Given a fundamental function of this research project is to promote behaviour change amongst participant coaches, the original four-level conceptualisation of the model will be used. The four levels provide a coherent framework in which empirical data can be collected and analysed, and easily communicated and understood, ensuring the research outputs can utilised by those who may be unfamiliar with integrative causal models (Falletta, 1998).

4.3.5.2 Method

This phase of the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage assessed the effectiveness of the Coach Development Programme. Semi-structured interviews (see Section 3.1.7.1) were employed alongside unstructured observations, reducing bias through methodological triangulation (Cohen et al., 2018). Again, a reflective diary was kept to supplement the observation and interview data. However, during this phase, diary entries from the entire study were formally analysed. Diary entries allowed the researcher to reflect on personal biases, note

their emotional state (Nadin & Cassell, 2006), reflect on their position within the research partnership (see Section 3.1.7.3), and reflect on significant incidents during the research process.

4.3.5.3 Participants

The participants were those recruited for Phase 1 and 3 (see Section 4.3.1.2). This included ten adult male PLCF primary school P.E. coaches and one adult female PLCF primary school P.E. coach (Mean \pm SD for age and for duration of employment with PLCF = 32 ± 11 y and 3 ± 5 y, respectively).

Table 4.11 Mean lesson duration and participants for Phase 5

Lesson Duration	39 mins
No. of Children	25
Gender split (male:female)	13:12

Table 4.12 Lesson totals for Phase 5

Environment	Indoor hall	30
	Outdoor (artificial grass)	2
	Outdoor (concrete)	18
	Outdoor (grass)	9
Class teacher or Teaching Assistant present	Yes	52
	No	7
Year group	Mixed	2
	1	7
	2	11
	3	7
	4	13
	5	11
	6	8
Sport/Activity	Athletics	13
	Basketball	1
	Circuit Training	1
	Cricket	2
	Football	3
	Golf	2
	Gymnastics	1
	Handball	2
	Hockey	3
	Multi-sports	15
	Netball	1
	Striking & Fielding	5
	Tag Rugby	3
	Throwing & Catching	5
	Volleyball	2

4.3.5.4 Data collection

Data was collected via unstructured observation and interview. Although this phase initiated in April 2019 (see Table 4.1), all observation data which was not analysed in Phase 1 was analysed during this phase.

Fifty nine unstructured observations (see Section 3.1.7.2), lasting an average of 39 minutes, were conducted on site at the participants' respective primary schools. All participants were observed, with ten of eleven participants observed delivering at least four lessons. The fewest number of times a participant was observed was twice (Coach Jessie), due to participant attrition. This resulted in 63 pages of single-spaced raw data being collected. The observations paid particular attention to the third and fourth levels of Kirkpatrick's (1959, 1976, 1996) training evaluation model, examining whether the content delivered as part of the Coach Development Programme was applied by the coaches (Level 3) and whether consistent coaching behaviour change had occurred (Level 4). However, as noted in Section 4.3.5, Level 4 is in its infancy. The descriptive statistics for observations in Phase 5 are illustrated in Tables 4.11 and 4.12.

One semi-structured exit interview (see Section 3.1.7.1 & Appendix 13) was conducted with eight of the eleven participants on-site at their respective primary schools. Three of the participant coaches were not interviewed due to participant attrition (Coach Jessie, Coach Jordan, and Coach Chris). As previously noted, the researcher developed the initial interview guide before consulting with the research supervisors and making minor modifications. The interview schedule was designed around Level 1 and 2 of Kirkpatrick's (1959, 1976, 1996) training evaluation model. Questions examined whether the participants felt the content delivered as part of the Coach Development Programme was relevant and useful (Level 1), and whether coaches were able to accurately recall and articulate the information and content delivered during the programme (Level 2). The interview schedule also contained reflective

questions related to how coaches would modify the Coach Development Programme if it were to be re-started. The average interview duration was 52 minutes. Interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This resulted in 103 pages of single-spaced transcribed raw data being collected.

4.3.5.5 Data Analysis

Data were organised using Nvivo data analysis software (QSR International, 2020). Both inductive and deductive approaches to thematic analysis were used to analyse all data, and Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step approach to thematic analysis was followed. However, in Phase 5 a modified version of thematic analysis combining inductive and deductive approaches was employed (see Section 4.3.4.8). The deductive elements were based the four levels of Kirkpatrick's (1959, 1976, 1996) training evaluation model. This combination of inductive and deductive approaches allowed the researcher to utilise existing research and theory to examine the effectiveness of the Coach Development Programme in a more global sense. As in previous phases, ensuring trustworthiness, rigour and quality was essential (Golafshani, 2003). All interview data was audio recorded and transcribed verbatim, and data triangulation between participants ensured multiple perspectives of shared experiences were considered (Cohen et al., 2018). In Phase 5 observation data was used to supplement participant interview data (Polkinghorne, 2005). Observations were unstructured, with the researcher acting as a complete observer (see Section 3.1.7.2) and noting down what occurred during lessons in real time. A reflexive diary was also kept during data collection, and entries were made following significant events experienced by the researcher. This allowed the researcher to explore methodological issues, supplement interview and observation data, and facilitated researcher reflection across a variety of topics and issues (Nadin & Cassell, 2006) (see Section 3.1.7.3). Unlike prior phases, the contents of the reflective diary were formally analysed in the phase.

4.3.5.6 Findings

Phase 5 examines the fidelity of the Coach Development Programme using the Kirkpatrick (1959, 1976, 1996) model. Themes and sub-themes are presented in Table 4.13.

4.3.5.6.1 Reaction

The reaction theme (Table 4.13), adopted from Kirkpatrick (1959, 1976, 1996), included sub-themes related to whether or not the participants found the programme favourable, engaging and relevant. The two-sub-themes included experience of the Coach Development Programme, and proposed alterations to Coach Development Programme.

Table 4.13 Phase 5 themes and sub-themes

Theme	Sub-theme
Reaction	Experience of the Coach Development Programme
	Proposed alterations to Coach Development Programme
Learning	Understanding of the research project and its purpose
	Understanding of life skill development
Behaviour	Application of new knowledge
	Non-application of new knowledge
	Utilising the life skill lesson resources
Results	Change in coaching behaviours
	P.E. prioritisation and project legacy

4.3.5.6.1.1 Experience of the Coach Development Programme

When asked about their involvement in the Coach Development Programme following its conclusion, participant coaches stated that their initially negative reaction to being involved changed over time. Bailey stated that whilst his initial reaction was “Oh, more work”, he realised after a short period of time that “it’s not an extra load at all” [Bailey, Interview, 12/04/2019]. Similarly, whilst Jamie’s first reaction was “Nah” [Jamie, Interview, 18/04/2019], his interest in understanding life skill development grew as the programme progressed. Although most coaches admitted to reacting negatively to the perceived increase in workload at the programme outset, their continued involvement in the PAR process gave them an appreciation of the wider implications of the research.

The participants also expressed how being involved in a programme applying PAR was a novel and engaging experience for them, and how the feedback they received was different to traditional coach education:

Yeah, I enjoyed it. I thought it was quite refreshing in a sense... I quite enjoyed being given the task of ‘Can you try this through your teaching?’ I quite enjoyed that aspect. And am, yeah, trial and error I suppose, through the sessions. I enjoyed when you came to observe me and I liked when you gave me feedback, because myself and a lot of coaches, I believe, build off a lot of feedback from you. And I do like feedback... to make myself better... I think the overall experience is that I enjoyed it [Jody, Interview, 04/04/2019].

It is evident that utilising PAR to grant participants autonomy within the Coach Development Programme stimulated learning and engagement that is absent during traditional coach certification and qualification courses. Additionally, the feedback the coaches received following lesson observations facilitated improvements in their coaching practice.

4.3.5.6.1.2 Proposed alterations to the Coach Development Programme

Whilst the participants both enjoyed and benefited from the Coach Development Programme, they did identify programme shortcomings. Complementing the findings from earlier phases, Robyn mirrored the sentiments of the majority of participants, stating that before the project PLCF should have had “the conversation with the school about the project and what we’re doing” [Robyn, Interview, 03/04/2019]. Were PLCF to share information about the Coach Development Programme with schools prior to its initiation, schools would be better positioned to facilitate the behaviour change participants were striving towards.

A large quotient of participants also expressed a desire to work alongside their peers more regularly:

I think, am, you had an idea of us getting together. That never materialised. And that’s a brilliant idea, like, getting us together, maybe do peer assessment... watch each other, share some practices and get together more often. It was ideal but it probably wouldn’t have been possible with the schedules [Bailey, Interview, 12/04/2019].

The coaches felt that engaging in peer observation within a community of practice would be beneficial for their development and therefore should be included in the programme. However, as Bailey acknowledged, the practicalities associated with facilitating group practices make it difficult. Yet if PLCF were to engage with schools prior to programme initiation, peer observation and developing a community of practice could be facilitated, as schools may be more willing to afford coaches the time and opportunities to work with their peers in other schools.

4.3.5.6.2 Learning

The learning theme (Table 4.13) included sub-themes which examined the degree to which the participant coaches acquired the intended knowledge, skills, attitudes, confidence and commitment (Kirkpatrick, 1959, 1976, 1996) associated with the programme. The three sub-themes were; understanding of the research project and its purpose, understanding of life skill development, and support from the researcher.

4.3.5.6.2.1 Understanding of the research project and its purpose

Following its conclusion, participants had a more comprehensive understanding of the overall purpose of the research project, why the research was being conducted, and their role within the research process:

So I would say how we're probably teaching the children in our P.E., but not just technically. So it's not just focusing on the technical aspects, not just making sure that the children are able to kick a ball or strike a ball. But it's the skills that they can require from learning that, so your psychological and your social, and interacting with other people. Thinking about themselves and thinking about others. Am, so using sports and the technical side of sports as a vessel, am, to achieve bigger and better things as an individual, or as a group [Lee, Interview, 11/04/2019].

Charlie went on to accurately sum up the essence of the project, suggesting that it was to make "coaching as a whole more rounded" and enable pupils to transfer the life skills they had learned "from the lesson into their life" [Charlie, Interview, 05/04/2019]. This increased awareness of the purpose of the research project is something that, as illustrated in Phase 1,

was not present at the outset of the Coach Development Programme, and is indicative of programme success.

4.3.5.6.2.2 Understanding of life skill development

Participant coaches developed a comprehensive understanding of life skills development by the time the Coach Development Programme ended, which Jody succinctly summed up:

Life skills, I would break down into social and psychological [skills]... I would say social skills are what we use to communicate and interact with other people, and I would say psychological skills are more ourselves, independent in our own minds. So for example, confidence and self-belief. And those are the skills that we generally use through life. So they don't have to be related to sport, they're related to everything, like home and everything [Jody, Interview, 04/04/2019].

When compared to the Phase 1 responses (see Section 4.3.1.5.2) it is clear that the participants' understanding of life skill development improved dramatically.

4.3.5.6.3 Behaviour

The sub-themes within the behaviour theme (Table 4.13) were concerned with the degree to which participants applied the Coach Development Programme learnings in P.E. lessons (Kirkpatrick, 1959, 1976, 1996). The three sub-themes included; application of new knowledge, non-application of new knowledge, and utilising the Life Skills Coaching Resource.

4.3.5.6.3.1 Application of new knowledge

Observation data highlighted a notable change in participant behaviours, with coaches making more explicit attempts to teach life skills in their lessons than at the outset of the Coach Development Programme. Coaches began to include lesson debriefs centred around life skill development, and began to ask pupils more open-ended life skill-related questions. An explanation for the increase in these coaching behaviours was offered by Robyn, who noted how engaging in the programme shifted his coaching priorities away from mainly physical and

technical development, towards holistic development. Additionally, Robyn spoke about how he had become more patient in his practice:

I used to rush... say I'd three activities planned, I used to rush and get through them as quick as I could, and... just so I could get there. Just so I could say I'd done it – 'Boom. Next one.' But now I know I need to take a step back... I need to let the children learn, and actually learn the activity. Because that's when I'm going to see the life skills instead of just whizzing through them [Robyn, Interview, 03/04/2019].

The data shows that prolonged engagement in the Coach Development Programme enabled coaches to place a more explicit focus on life skill development during lessons. This also signals a shift away from the reliance on implicit life skill development evidenced during Phase 1 (Section 4.3.1.5.3).

4.3.5.6.3.2 Non-application of new knowledge

Whilst improvement in the application of explicit life skill coaching behaviours was evident towards the end of the programme, coaches did not always apply this approach. Observation data illustrated how a focus on technical and physical skill development, and a reliance on implicit life skill development, still existed in some lessons:

The kids eventually arrived to the lesson 25 minutes later than scheduled. They're doing a fitness test – how many times can they run up and down the playground in 12 minutes. 4 minutes in and some kids are walking. No life skills explicitly mentioned or introduced throughout the lesson [Charlie, Observation, 23/11/2018].

All of Lee's questioning and instructions are centred on the technical elements of gymnastics. There is no explicit reference to any life skills in the lesson, even though it's clear they are present. Lee is relying predominantly on implicit, automatic life skill development [Lee, Observation, 18/09/2018].

These extracts highlight how coaches, despite engaging in the programme, are still susceptible to reverting to old behaviours. One explanation for this regression may be a lack of planning on behalf of the coaches, of which there were many instances. In some cases, coaches were completing lesson plans during lessons. As illustrated in earlier phases, time constraints made planning lessons difficult for coaches. This lack of planning, and lack of support from those in the schools, may have contributed to a reversion to old coaching behaviours. At times, this

resulted in an absence of explicit life skill focus in lessons, despite the improvement coaches had made in this area over the course of the Coach Development Programme.

4.3.5.6.3.3 Utilising the Life Skills Coaching Resource

As part of the PAR approach, coaches contributed towards the ongoing development of a coaching resource throughout the Coach Development Programme (see Phase 2 & Appendix 2). Utilising this resource to plan and deliver lessons helped coaches to embed life skills in their lessons and ultimately change their practice. Jody suggested that the resource was what helped him to change his practice the most. He detailed how the resource allowed him to individualise his lesson plans, and focus on specific life skills that met the needs of the different classes and year groups. Jody's opinion mirrors that of the other participant coaches, who felt that the reason the resource was so helpful was because it contained a list of life skills around which they could plan lessons. As illustrated in Phase 1 (Section 4.3.1.5.3 and 4.3.1.5.5), coaches did not explicitly embed life skills in lessons prior to the programme, and resource served to support coaches as they intentionally altered their practice.

One specific reason that the resource was so useful was because it evolved alongside the coaches throughout the programme, making it more user-friendly for the coaches. Robyn explained how the resource “grew with the project... and then it just got sort of simpler” [Robyn, Interview, 03/04/2019]. The PAR approach facilitated the ongoing refinement of the resource, ensuring it was contextually grounded. This contextualisation enabled coaches to adapt their practice to meet the needs of the pupils they were coaching. Moreover, the resource is the antithesis of those introduced in traditional coach education programmes (such as The F.A. four corner model), which remain the same from the outset, throughout and after coach education processes.

4.3.5.6.4 Results

The final theme, results (Table 4.13), was concerned with the degree to which the Coach Development Programme was successful (Kirkpatrick, 1959, 1976, 1996). Sub-themes included change in coaching behaviours, and threats to project legacy.

4.3.5.6.4.1 Change in coaching behaviours

Data analysis revealed how coaching behaviours promoting life skill development markedly improved following the Coach Development Programme. Coaches felt that they were now capable of embedding life skills in their lessons, which was aided by consistently planning lessons:

I've learned to incorporate [life skills] into my session plans from the start. I don't think you can go into a lesson – because I've tried and it doesn't work – I don't think you can go into a lesson and think 'Oh I'm going to work on teamwork and team cohesion today' when they're walking into the room. It needs to be pre-planned and it needs to be thought out properly. So, not that my intention was to do that anyway, my intention was were to plan it, but some days you don't get the opportunity to plan it, and you're thinking 'Oh I'm going to do this' and it doesn't work, and it's half-hearted and you know that they've walked out the room knowing they haven't done anything of that. So I've made sure to learn that I plan it properly [Jody, Interview, 04/04/2019].

It is evident that the Coach Development Programme emphasised the importance of lesson planning to the coaches, but also provided them with the knowledge and tools to adequately plan sessions in which life skills were embedded. Whilst not all coaches exhibited the capacity to plan lessons in which life skills were embedded, or where life skill transfer was a focus, some coaches were attempting to facilitate transfer towards the end of the project. The differences between coaches may be explained by the stratified participant recruitment process. Given participants in Cohort 2 had been engaged in the Coach Development Programme for 12 months less than their Cohort 1 colleagues, they had yet to develop comprehensive understanding of the final two stages of Bean et al.'s (2018) implicit-explicit continuum by the

project end. Therefore, Cohort 2 coaches simply had less time to develop coaching behaviours which promote life skill transfer.

4.3.5.6.4.2 P.E. prioritisation and project legacy

Following the cessation of the Coach Development Programme, coaches were acutely aware of the positive impact the programme had on their coaching behaviours. However, observation data showed that because schools were not prioritising P.E., the lasting impact of the programme may be threatened:

Charlie has just told me that P.E. today is going to be delayed by 15 minutes because of singing practice. Kids will also have to leave P.E. early to do an interactive online lesson about ‘Dr. Who?’ Charlie said that this often happens, that P.E. gets moved down the priority list in place of other activities, which in this case is the Christmas show [Charlie, Observation, 23/11/2018].

The class teacher brought the class in late and said they were late because they had to ‘finish their work’ and that because they were Year 6 they were ‘very lucky to be getting P.E.’ [Robyn, Observation, 06/11/2018].

Additionally, pupils were often late for P.E. or taken from classes to do SATS revision. Lee described December as “a killer” as he would generally only teach “one session in a week” [Lee, Interview, 11/04/2019]. Similar to the findings in Phase 1 (Section 4.3.1.5.4), the emphasis schools placed on primary subjects, such as English and Mathematics, meant that less time was allocated to P.E. In the context of this study’s legacy, this creates a two-fold problem. The first is that coaches are not allocated adequate time to further develop their coaching practice by delivering lessons. The second is that children are not exposed to these coaches enough, and therefore will not develop life skills. Akin to findings in previous phases, increased interaction and co-operative planning between PLCF management and schools is required to sustain the positive impact of the Coach Development Programme over time.

4.3.5.7 Discussion

4.3.5.7.1 Coach recommendations to enhance the Coach Development Programme

Whilst the introduction of the Coach Development Programme was met with some hesitation by participant coaches, the PAR approach ultimately facilitated their engagement. Within this context, PLCF primary school P.E. coaches were considered experts in their daily lives and activities (Holt et al., 2013), and were therefore tasked with embedding life skills in their lessons in the manner they deemed most appropriate. Both formal and informal learning approaches were combined within the Coach Development Programme to dispel the notion amongst coaches that teaching life skills is an arduous process which represented a greater professional burden (Santos et al., 2017). The PAR approach granted participants the autonomy to embed life skills in lessons as they deemed appropriate, which facilitated engagement in the programme. Furthermore, the focus of action research is to enhance educational practice. By sharing project ownership with PLCF coaches, the practical value of the results have higher value (Tekin & Kotaman, 2013). The coach engagement that PAR facilitated was complemented by the strong professional relationship that the researcher had developed with coaches during the needs analysis, which is important in the early stages of such projects (Fletcher, 2003). Yet participants felt that the Coach Development Programme could improve if factors such as increased planning with schools (exosystem), and the creation of a community of practice within PLCF (mesosystem) were considered.

Aligning with the findings from earlier phases, participants felt that a greater level of interaction between PLCF management and the schools prior to the partnership would benefit the Coach Development Programme. This interaction would enable school staff to understand and support coaches when changing their coaching behaviours. More pertinently however, the participants suggested that the development of a community of practice amongst PLCF coaches would benefit the programme. Santos et al. (2017) noted that a substantial proportion of

learning on coaching courses occurs when coaches speak with one another and reflect on other coaches shared experiences, highlighting the necessity for coach interaction in the context of this programme. Within this study, the increased facilitation of coach interaction within a community of practice would allow coaches to become further responsible for their own learning, stimulating reflection on meaningful topics (Camiré et al., 2014), and serve as a considerable mesosystem level influence for a group of coaches seeking to change their behaviours. This approach is at odds with what researchers have unfavourably termed the ‘train and certify’ approach that is typical of coach education generally (Trudel & Gilbert, 2006; Trudel et al., 2010). This train and certify approach has been criticised as being de-contextualised, with coaches suggesting that day-to-day learning experiences are the most valuable method for coach development. Given their previous coach education experiences, the participants’ desire to create meaningful mesosystem level change through a community of practice is merited, as it should allow them to work through real dilemmas with colleagues who share their professional context (Gilbert et al., 2009). As is illustrated in Section 4.3.5.7.4, one way to ensure a community of practice is developed and sustained within PLCF is by implementing peer observation. Such measures would also address the Coach Development Programme shortcomings identified by the participant coaches. The input from the coaches in this section also helps to ground the living theory of practice in the primary school P.E. context, which is necessary if future researchers and practitioners are to apply the findings in similar contexts.

4.3.5.7.2 Coaches’ enhanced understanding of research study and explicit life skill development

Data analysis highlighted that, in stark contrast to the outset of the research study, coaches possessed a comprehensive understanding of the research, its purpose, and life skill development, following participation in the Coach Development Programme. Given that the

main source of coaching knowledge amongst youth sport coaches is prior athletic experience (Lemyre et al., 2007), the finding that coaches did not understand life skill development at the beginning of the programme was not surprising. However, akin to previous research findings (Camiré et al., 2012; Santos et al., 2017), most participants understood the importance of embedding life skills in their lessons following programme participation. Additionally, coaches were able to provide more accurate conceptual definitions of life skills, and specific life skills such as teamwork and confidence, which is indicative of successful coach programming (Bowley et al., 2018; Kendellen & Camiré, 2017). Participation in the programme also allowed participants to recognise that life skills can be taught alongside physical and technical skills in P.E. lessons. This illustrates that coaches may have addressed the microsystem level factors associated with time, and no longer viewed time for planning and integrating life skills into lessons as the barrier it was perceived to be at the beginning of the programme (Bean & Forneris, 2017). Such advances in life skill development and coaching knowledge highlight how, by actively participating in the Coach Development Programme, the coaches enhanced their understanding of life skill development. This experience allowed coaches to address microsystem level influences in their immediate context, which had previously negatively impacted their capacity to embed life skills in lessons. This PAR approach also allowed the researcher to adapt the programme content where appropriate, further facilitating this understanding.

PAR allowed the researcher to alter the programme on an ongoing basis, incorporating more comprehensible language as time progressed (Johnston et al., 2012). By doing this, and by tailoring the content of the workshops to the primary school P.E. context, the researcher underlined the immediate value of the content to the coaches (Zakrajsek & Zizzi, 2008). PAR also allowed the researcher to assimilate the local knowledge of the coaches, which is critical when developing an informed understanding of a research context (Spaaij et al., 2018). This

also aided the development of Life Skills Coaching Resource (see Phase 2), which enabled participants to alter their coaching behaviours. The decision to use PAR to actively engage coaches in the creation of new knowledge was made in response researchers who noted that much life skills research has prioritised the voices of those in leadership positions (Whitley et al., 2016). In this instance, PAR prioritised the voices of the coaches, who have the best perspective of how life skills would be embedded in primary school P.E. lessons (Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010). It is also another example of how coach input was used to contextualise the living theory of practice this study produced. The coaches showed an increased understanding of life skill development and how best to embed life skills in lessons, which is reflective of enhanced interpersonal and intrapersonal knowledge (Côté & Gilbert, 2009). Such findings highlight how alterations at a mesosystem level facilitated a more collaborative approach to coach development and education, which is a marked improvement on traditional approaches, especially where life skill development is concerned.

As stated previously, traditional coach education focuses on performance enhancement, technical and tactical knowledge, and injury prevention, with little focus on life skill development (Bean & Forneris, 2017; Santos et al., 2017). The Coach Development Programme presented is intended to improve these traditional approaches, and the pervading macrosystem level oversight of social and psychological development, as it allowed coaches to integrate life skills alongside traditional content, therefore enhancing their understanding of life skill development. However, the coaches' enhanced level of understanding cannot be solely attributed to the programme content and associated interactive sessions. It is also due to the increased level of interaction that coaches had with one another during the Coach Development Programme, which provided them with the opportunity to discuss their practice. Such informal learning experiences are arguably more useful than the programme content for coaches, given experiential learning and peer interaction is preferred to formal coach education (Erickson et

al., 2008; Nelson et al., 2006). By identifying the deficiencies of traditional coach education programmes, and intentionally structuring the Coach Development Programme to afford the participants time (albeit limited) to speak with one another, coach knowledge grew. The coaches' increased knowledge was visible in their improved understanding of implicit and explicit approaches to life skill development, following the conclusion of the programme.

Bean and Forneris (2017) noted that research is required to understand the implicit/explicit life skill continuum, and explore strategies that coaches can adopt to incorporate an explicit approach to life skill development in youth sport. Utilising Bean et al.'s (2018) continuum to inform the Coach Development Programme and the resource developed in Phase 2, this phase provides an insight into how coaches explicitly embedded life skills in P.E. lessons. Reinforcing previous findings, the participant coaches came to recognise the value of intentionally teaching life skills. This is despite current youth sport programming failing to prioritise explicit life skill development (Bean & Forneris, 2017). By emphasising learning by doing (Mallett et al., 2009), the coaches were encouraged to trial teaching strategies they devised themselves, which allowed them to develop the skills required to knowledgeably and efficiently teach life skills in lessons (Erickson et al., 2008; Wright et al., 2007). This allowed coaches to develop individualised strategies to deal with the microsystem level factors that impacted their capacity to teach life skills in their individual schools (for example, allocating a specific number of minutes each day towards lesson planning). Within sport and P.E., a minimal amount of life skill development and transfer takes place automatically. To ensure the maximal level of life skill development, an explicit approach is required. Like other study participants, the coaches initially believed that life skill development happened automatically (Bean & Forneris, 2017; Camiré & Trudel, 2010; Jones & Lavallee, 2009b; Trottier & Robitaille, 2014). Yet over time, the coaches began to recognise the requirement for an explicit approach to both life skill development and transfer (Bean et al., 2018; Gould & Carson,

2008a), rather than simply hoping it would happen after P.E. lessons. The coaches also acknowledged the importance of intentionally planning lessons in which life skills are embedded (Bean & Forneris, 2016; Gould & Carson, 2008a; Gould et al., 2007; Kendellen et al., 2017); another microsystem level factor change. Effectively the coaches began to understand Bean et al.'s (2018) implicit/explicit continuum, which underpinned the programme and associated resource. This increased understanding is evidence of a more informed participant cohort.

Coach knowledge of life skill development and transfer improved considerably following programme participation. Akin to the findings reported by Bowley et al. (2018) in their examination of a life skills development programme for youth football coaches, after the programme, PLCF coaches viewed life skills as integral to their role as a coach, and reported enhanced knowledge and understanding of life skill development and transfer. This increased understanding allowed coaches to adopt new coaching behaviours, as evidenced in Section 4.3.5.7.3, to positively influence the microsystem level that was the primary school P.E. context. Moreover, this enhanced knowledge and understanding also allows coaches to promote life skill development for all children, not simply those with a sporting habitus (Bourdieu, 1984). The findings signal a move towards what Camiré et al. (2014, p.2) termed “competent and knowledgeable coaches” within PLCF. Such evidence shows a marked contrast to that in Phase 1, where coaching knowledge and behaviours related to life skill development were limited.

4.3.5.7.3 Knowledge application and resource usage by coaches

As well as enhancing their understanding of life skill development, the coaches went on to apply coaching behaviours that, if employed consistently, would have the potential to facilitate life skill development during lessons. Interview and observation data analysis showed coaches taking a more deliberate approach to life skill development, involving planning,

delivery and reflection. Such improvements are attributed to the situated learning approach that the Coach Development Programme was based on. According to Lyle (2010), situated learning is more suitable than traditional approaches to coach education, particularly if the aim is to teach coaches how to effectively apply knowledge in an applied situation over a longer period of time. As evidenced in the findings, such an approach induced behaviour change amongst PLCF coaches. The disparity in coaching practice between the beginning and end of the study is a product of the participants' commitment to the PAR process and the Coach Development Programme generally. Despite the primary school P.E. context being ripe for life skill development, untrained coaches cannot be expected to explicitly embed life skills in lessons (Camiré & Santos, 2019). The gradual change in coaching practice can be explained by acknowledging that coaching is a complex social process, whereby the coaches required time to integrate various sources of knowledge, and understand the context in which they operate to facilitate youth development (Camiré et al., 2014; Gilbert & Côté, 2009). The deliberate focus on life skill development was complemented by increased lesson planning, a microsystem level factor that is essential if life skills are to be successfully embedded in lessons, (Danish, 2002; Gould et al., 2007). In sports psychology, Zakrajsek and Zizzi (2008) concluded that planning is a key skill to transfer learning from workshops to practice by increasing commitment and strengthening the link between intentions and behaviour. As evidenced in the findings, the same intention-behaviour link was evidenced amongst PLCF coaches following participation in the Coach Development Programme. The planning moved the coaches' focus from physical and technical skill development, to include life skill development, which is a significant change in their coaching approach.

Consistent with previous findings, the participants remarked how prior coach education experiences they had been exposed to were directed at the technical, tactical, and physical aspects of coaching, with minimal focus on life skill development (Bean & Forneris, 2017;

Santos et al., 2017; Vella et al., 2013; Zakrajsek et al., 2017). Although life skill development is not the focus of traditional coach education programmes, prior coach education is a macrosystem level influence that resulted in coaches placing minimal focus on life skill development during lessons before the Coach Development Programme began. This type of coach education experience is common, as courses typically reinforce the image of the coach as a technician who transmits knowledge simply and uncritically (Cushion et al., 2003). Yet participation in the Coach Development Programme helped PLCF coaches reposition themselves as more holistic practitioners, by embedding life skills in their practice. Similar to participants in Koh et al.'s (2014) study of P.E. teachers, PLCF primary school P.E. coaches shifted their focus to balance technical skills and life skills during the lessons. Furthermore, and in contrast to the conclusions drawn by Vella et al. (2013), coaches did not need to be shown how to apply this new knowledge. Rather, by trialling their new knowledge and behaviours in an applied context, the coaches developed individualised approaches to teaching life skills.

This exploratory application also allowed them to make sense of the content, rather than viewing it as something abstract (Burns et al., 2017; Mallett et al., 2009). The trialling of such knowledge and behaviours was facilitated by PAR, a mesosystem level influence that increased the responsibility and motivation of the coaches to engage in better teaching by actively involving them in the process (Tekin & Kotaman, 2013). PLCF coaches also gave pupils the opportunity to practice specific life skills during the lessons, in line with good practice recommendations (Bean et al., 2018). Such deliberate practice is associated with the internalisation of skills (Pierce et al., 2017), and is indicative of microsystem level change on behalf of the coaches, who altered their behaviours in their immediate context. By investing in more than technical and tactical coaching, the coaches can claim to be having a more impactful and sustained influence on the development of youth (Camiré et al., 2012). Through the

increased application of explicit life skill teaching techniques, PLCF coaches began to give pupils a better opportunity to develop life skills in P.E. lessons.

As their participation in the Coach Development Programme continued, the PLCF coaches began to exhibit a more deliberate approach to teaching life skills. Their behaviours mirrored those of the coaches in Whitley et al.'s (2016) study, as they taught life skills alongside physical and technical skills, gave children the opportunity to exhibit life skills in lessons, and included life skill discussions in lesson debriefs. The behaviour changes on behalf of PLCF coaches contrasted with the more traditional focus on sport-specific skill development, whereby the coach does not discuss or afford participants the opportunity to practice life skills (Bean & Forneris, 2016). The alteration in coach behaviours prompted a shift from implicit to explicit life skill development across the organisation's primary school P.E. programme, to a point where the coaches explicitly taught life skills in lessons. However, given the time and financial constraints faced by PLCF, it could be argued that the implicit approach to life skill development may be more appropriate in certain instances, as it does not require significant planning, training, and implementation resources (Turnnidge et al., 2014). That said, as evidenced in the findings, demand on resources needed for planning, training and implementing explicit approaches can be ameliorated by applying a PAR approach. In recognising and addressing these microsystem level influences, the Coach Development Programme enacted both individual and organisational change, resulting in life skills being integrated into all P.E. lessons.

The coaches' capacity to integrate life skills, physical skills, and technical skills into their lessons is indicative of the desired approach to developing life skills amongst pupils. It also highlights the effectiveness of the Coach Development Programme, which emphasised the importance of teaching life skills alongside physical and technical skills, rather than teaching them separately (Bean & Forneris, 2016, 2017; Camiré & Santos, 2019; Carson Sackett &

Gano-Overway, 2017; Kendellen et al., 2017). Whilst the Coach Development Programme contained content that showed coaches how life skills could be integrated alongside sports skills (Bean & Forneris, 2017; Bean et al., 2016b), the PAR approach granted coaches the autonomy to explore what worked for them in their individual context. The alteration of coach behaviours highlighted in the findings provide support for such individualised, contextually grounded learning strategies, and a change in the apparent macrosystem level view that coaches are physical and technical trainers. The change in behaviour also saw coaches emphasise life skill transfer more regularly, which shows considerable change in their practice from the beginning of the study.

Aligning with prior findings, the PLCF coaches recognised that P.E contexts can be used to facilitate the explicit transfer of these skills to other contexts (Turnnidge et al., 2014). As a result of programme participation, many coaches began to explicitly address life skill transfer in lessons, thereby embodying the microsystem level change the programme aimed to facilitate. Towards the end of lessons, many coaches discussed the transfer of life skills to different contexts, which is an effective explicit teaching strategy (Bean et al., 2018; Camiré, Trudel, & Bernard, 2013). Transfer was promoted by relating the life skills to other contexts, encouraging pupils to apply life skills in other contexts, and following up on these skills in later sessions (Bodey & Zakrajsek, 2012). Session debriefs, which many of the coaches conducted, are necessary to summarise the life skills learned and facilitate transfer to additional contexts (Bean et al., 2016b, 2018; Gould & Carson, 2008a; Weiss et al., 2013). By implementing these explicit strategies, the coaches were creating the conditions to facilitate life skill development in pupils (Bean et al., 2018). This facilitation of transfer has been shown to positively impact youth in other research (Allen et al., 2015; Bean et al., 2016b; Weiss et al., 2013). These newly acquired and deliberate coaching behaviours represent optimal practice when explicitly teaching life skills to through sport and P.E (Bean et al., 2018; Kendellen et al., 2017; Pierce

et al., 2018), and are indicative of programme success. The behaviours are also indicative of a change in macrosystem level thinking, whereby physical and technical skill development are no longer considered the sole priorities for coaches. Other explicit techniques, such as key words, peer evaluations, and taking advantage of teachable moments (Bowley et al., 2018; Camiré et al., 2012), were also displayed by coaches as time progressed.

When coaches integrated life skills into lessons, it was not always planned or systematic. Coaches often took advantage of spontaneous or teachable moments, using unplanned situations to teach life skills, which do not add to the P.E. lesson time (Trottier & Robitaille, 2014). Camiré, Forneris, Trudel and Bernard (2011) noted how youth sport participants may not be mature enough to understand how life skills learned in sport can be applied elsewhere, and that coaches needed to take advantage of teachable moments to highlight the links between contexts. Consistent with previous findings, PLCF coaches implemented good practice; teaching life skills alongside physical and technical skills when an unplanned opportunity arose (Carson Sackett & Gano-Overway, 2017; Choi et al., 2015). Such instances involved coaches reinforcing positive behaviours, rather than simply correcting negative behaviours (Bean & Forneris, 2017), and engaging pupils with questions, rather than treating them as passive receptors through lecturing (Whitley et al., 2016). These behavioural changes illustrate yet more programme-related success, as the coaches began to exhibit behaviours that addressed microsystem level influences, such as the unpredictability of a P.E. lesson. The use of the Life Skills Coaching Resource also complemented the coaches' ability to identify teachable moments, and teach life skills explicitly.

Easily accessible resources, such as that developed in Phase 2 are needed to highlight to coaches the parallels between traditional coaching behaviours and those which elicit life skills (Carson Sackett & Gano-Overway, 2017). The resource developed during Phase 2 meets the call by researchers to develop more pedagogical tools the aid in promoting holistic

development in sport and P.E. contexts (Bean & Forneris, 2017; Strachan et al., 2016), and is illustrative of the generative transformational nature of this project. As the findings evidence, the resource aided coaches to embed life skills in their lessons more readily, reducing the negative impact of microsystem level influences such as limited planning time, and the lack of colleague support in schools. Moreover, the resource enabled coaches to improve their engagement in reflective practice, which has been shown to facilitate coach development (Cropley, Miles, & Peel, 2012; Gilbert & Trudel, 2005). The improvement on behalf of the coaches is consistent with previous research findings, whereby coaching practice has been improved through the development and use of resources (Bell & Mladenovic, 2008). Yet, whilst coaches exhibited a capacity to explicitly embed life skills in lesson, promote transfer, and effectively utilise the resource, their practice remained inconsistent.

Coaches experienced numerous ecological influences in the primary school P.E. context which impacted their capacity to consistently apply new life skills knowledge and teaching strategies. Akin to the coaches in Camiré and Trudel's (2014) study, significant investments of time and energy were required to integrate life skills into their coaching practice at the outset. However, this was not just a factor at the programme outset, as participants cited time constraints as an ongoing microsystem level barrier to explicitly embedding life skills in lessons throughout. However, the lack of time afforded to coaches to plan and deliver lessons is indicative of how schools fail to acknowledge the importance of P.E. in the primary school curriculum, which is a macrosystem level issue. The coaches' struggles to consistently teach life skills in an explicit manner are not exceptional, as time constraints have been identified by coaches as a barrier to embedding life skills in lessons in the past (Bean & Forneris, 2017; Camiré & Trudel, 2014). This lack of time is as a microsystem level factor that contributed to the coaches' inconsistent behaviours. However, it must also be acknowledged that behaviour change takes time, and as noted by Gould, Damarjian and Medbery (1999), the length of a

study may not be long enough to record consistent behaviour change. Therefore, the differing degrees of behaviour change, and behavioural inconsistencies between participant coaches throughout the study can be viewed as an unavoidable shortcoming associated with the project having a pre-determined end point.

Despite the inconsistencies and ecological implementation barriers discussed, a move towards what Côté and Gilbert (2009) deemed coaching effectiveness is visible amongst the coaches. This is the process whereby coaches integrate professional, interpersonal, and intrapersonal knowledge, to improve the competence and confidence of pupils in their lessons. The coaches' inconsistency serves as a contrast to those in Gould et al.'s (2007) study, who continually reemphasised and reinforced life skill development strategies throughout sessions. However, this is not to suggest that the coaches in Gould et al.'s (2007) study are any better than those in this study. Rather, it serves to highlight how different coaches, in different contexts, working with different pupils, share different experiences of life skill development. Furthermore, in applied contexts such as this, a gradual manifestation of new coaching behaviours is expected. The Coach Development Programme also addresses what Camiré and Santos (2019, p.30) termed the “enduring dilemma” of coach education courses by equipping coaches with the skills to explicitly teach life skills in a manner which addresses coaches' contextual needs. When compared the early stages of the programme, the consistency with which participants embed life skills in their lessons is far greater, and indicative of a successful developmental programme (Gilbert & Trudel, 1999; Gootman, 2002). This behaviour change is also evidence of how the Coach Development Programme served as a mesosystem level influence, which enabled coaches to embed life skills in lessons more readily.

Unlike the CPD programmes cited by Borko (2004), the Coach Development Programme was integrated into the coaches' day-to-day work, which proved highly beneficial. Because PLCF coaches were encouraged to embed life skills in their lessons as they saw fit,

rather than being instructed how to do so, they learned how to effectively apply their new knowledge in unpredictable situations (Gilbert et al., 2009). By actively managing microsystem level influences, rather than the hypothetical scenarios which may be presented in a traditional coach education course, the coaches had a more meaningful learning experience (Lemyre et al., 2007; Vargas-Tonsing, 2007). PAR provided a framework within which coaches could provide practice-based recommendations, and answer Ahlberg, Mallett and Tinning's (2008) call to use PAR to benefit coach development. The PAR approach also allowed coaches to recognise that when life skills are appropriately embedded in lessons, life skills are not learned at the expense of learning sport skills, and that children can actually improve their physical and technical skill proficiency by applying the life skills they have been taught (Papacharisis et al., 2005). It is evident that by the end of Phase 5, PLCF coaches acknowledged that a life skills focus did not compromise sport-specific skill development. The coaches placed a deliberate focus on life skill development in all lessons, again dispelling the macrosystem level assumption that coaches should focus on physical and technical skill development only. By diversifying pupils' learning experiences through the introduction of life skills, the coaches moved towards increasing perceived competence, motivation for continued participation, performance, and personal development amongst pupils (Bruner, Strachan, & Côté, 2011), laying the foundations for positive lifelong engagement in sport- and P.E.-related activities. Ultimately, participating in the Coach Development Programme allowed the coaches to enhance their repertoire of pedagogical strategies to facilitate life skill development through P.E. (Camiré et al., 2011; Koh et al., 2014).

4.3.5.7.4 Behaviour change and its sustenance amongst coaches

As the preceding sections illustrate, despite their initially hesitant reaction to the Coach Development Programme, PLCF coaches' understanding of and capacity to embed life skills in lessons grew following participation. However, to understand the lasting impact of the

programme, it is necessary to examine the ecological factors that may impact programme outcome sustainability. A criticism of The F.A. coaching qualifications is that they fail to consider or promote lasting behaviour change (Cope et al., 2016; Stodter & Cushion, 2014). However, in the case of this programme, lasting behaviour change is essential, and will ultimately be determined by a series of micro-, meso-, exo- and macrosystem level influences that impact the coach following programme cessation. Of particular relevance to this research, it has been deemed necessary to account for how the contextual factors of learning environments which promote life skill development are created (Bowley et al., 2018; Partington, Cushion, Cope, & Harvey, 2015). To maintain the changes elucidated by the Coach Development Programme, deliberate contingencies must be put in place. The most immediate factors that must be addressed is the need for a stronger professional relationship between PLCF and the associated schools, which is a exosystem level influence.

As in other studies (Morgan & Hansen, 2007; Rainer et al., 2012; Sloan, 2010), PLCF coaches found themselves in in a predicament, in that schools prioritised other subjects over P.E. Generally speaking, an emphasis on pupil achievement has seen a decrease in the time allocated to P.E. within the curriculum (Mandigo et al., 2004), and is representative of the macrosystem level belief that P.E. is not an important subject. In this context, the time coaches spend with pupils in lessons needs to be prioritised in the future if coaches are going to be able to embed life skills in lessons (Vella et al., 2013). To combat this, and to ensure sustained programme impact, PLCF must take deliberate action to communicate to Head Teachers how P.E. is a primary component of holistic youth development, which warrants significant allocation of time in pupil timetables. At present however, the lack of communication between PLCF management and schools serves as a negative exosystem influence for the coaches delivering P.E. in the schools, as schools appear unaware of the importance of both P.E. and life skill development. As evidenced in both Phase 4, this lack of communication means that

schools failed to provide support for the coaches as they endeavour to embed life skills in their lessons. Therefore in the future, schools must take greater responsibility for sustaining programme impact. However, they must be helped to do so by PLCF.

Along with PLCF management and the coaches themselves, sustaining coaching behaviour change must be a responsibility which is shared with schools. Taking Rainer et al.'s (2012) recommendation, Head Teachers must play a role in the provision of quality training and development opportunities for teachers in the future. To do so, open lines of communication must be established between the schools and PLCF management, with the onus on the latter to initiate this communication. Moreover, the South London primary schools in which PLCF coaches deliver arguably stand to benefit the most from this study in the long-term, as their pupils will ultimately develop life skills under the tutelage of PLCF coaches. This benefit should be highlighted during interactions with schools. As detailed in Phase 4, the lack of support PLCF coaches received in schools can be attributed to poor partnership planning. In this context, that the poor planning may have been compounded by a lack of depth of sport and P.E. expertise, knowledge and understanding of behalf of the school teachers, whose confidence teaching P.E. is typically low (Kirk, 2012). This combination of exosystem level influences resulted in low levels of professional support for PLCF coaches in schools. Furthermore, without adequate funding, facilities and equipment, youth sport programmes are unlikely to be impactful or sustainable (Jones et al., 2016). Given the facilities and equipment in schools were generally of low quality, they served as microsystem level factors that compounded an already unsupportive working context for PLCF coaches. Therefore, to sustain the impact of the Coach Development Programme, it is necessary for PLCF to work with schools to develop realistic support mechanisms for coaches in schools, ensuring they can teach life skills to children using inadequate facilities. To complement this, PLCF must also develop

intra-organisational support mechanisms for coaches for coaches delivering primary school P.E.

To promote social skill development in P.E., Vidoni and Ulman (2012) suggested that participant behaviours need to be continuously reinforced, followed by intermittent reinforcement, and finally a withdrawal of reinforcement once the behaviours become natural. During the Coach Development Programme, similar principles of support were implemented, whereby the researcher naturally provided less support to the coaches as time progressed. Following the cessation of this research project however, the Coach Development Manager will assume this supporting role, providing additional intermittent support to coaches, and withdrawing it if appropriate. This recommendation is evidence of the generative transformational nature of living systems, whereby the research project serves as a precursor to the creation of a collective philosophy of holistic P.E. coaching at PLCF. The role of the Coach Development Manager in overseeing this transition cannot be understated, as without leadership, old behaviours become the norm once again (Culver et al., 2009; Gallimore et al., 2009). By striving to create and maintain an organisational culture that centres on holistic development, the Coach Development Manager can help sustain the coach behaviours that were displayed throughout the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage (Larsen et al., 2014). Considering the recommendations made by Petitpas, Van Raalte, Cornelius and Presbury (2004), the Coach Development Manager should encourage and support coaches to embed life skills in lessons, and focus on enhancing the skills the pupils already possess. However, to ensure that the Coach Development Manager is not the only individual supporting coaches, it is necessary to create a community of practice amongst PLCF coaches.

As noted in Section 4.3.3.6.1, the absence of a community of practice was a mesosystem level factor that impacted coaches' readiness to engage in the project. However, the absence of a community of practice also meant that during the programme, the coaches' primary support

mechanism was the researcher. Gilbert et al. (2009) concluded that adopting a learning community approach requires challenging and ultimately changing everyday coaching routines, with the intention of changing the organisational culture. However, the researchers also cited the need to consider the balance between what is possible and what is practical for practitioners. Commitment from peer leaders is a mesosystem level factor that can contribute to the development of a sustainable community of practice (Gilbert et al., 2009). The creation of the Coach Development Manager role helps to address this factor. Yet relying on one individual to create a sustainable community of practice is unrealistic. The rationale for developing a sustainable learning community is that coaches will become responsible for their own learning and reflection (Camiré et al., 2014), which is necessary for coach development (Cropley et al., 2012). It is necessary to involve all PLCF primary school P.E. coaches in the community of practice to facilitate ongoing learning (Burns et al., 2017), and sustain behaviour change even more. To create a community of practice, PLCF management and schools should work together to organise peer observation. Despite PLCF management failing to sanction the coaches' request to engage in peer observation during the Coach Development Programme, peer observation within a community of practice could serve as a mesosystem level factor that positively influences the sustainability of coach behaviours.

Peer observation is a “collaborative, developmental activity in which professionals offer mutual support by observing each other teach; explaining and discussing what was observed; sharing ideas about teaching; gathering student feedback on teaching effectiveness; reflecting on understandings, feelings, actions and feedback and trying out new ideas” (Bell, 2005, p.3). It is the process of observing colleagues with the aim of improving ones practice, and thus a mesosystem level influence which can serve to enhance the capacity of PLCF coaches to embed life skills in lessons. Peer observation can contribute to creating a sustainable community of practice, transforming educational perspectives, promoting collegiality, and

increasing respect for the practice of peers (Bell, 2005; Quinlan & Akerlind, 2000). Hendry and Oliver (2012) highlighted its benefits within a community of practice, concluding that most participants learned new teaching strategies from watching their colleagues and through feedback, and that watching colleagues exhibit similar behaviours to themselves enhanced their self-efficacy. However, openness to receiving this feedback differed based on the rapport the staff had with their observers, with some admitting that they were nervous. Thus it is evident that the relationship between colleagues within a community of practice mitigates the level of benefit one can hope to extract from it. To sustain the coaching behaviour changes evidenced, PLCF must ensure that coaches are provided with the both formal and informal opportunity to develop positive professional relationships with one another if peer observation is to be used. PLCF must allocate coaches the time to speak with one another following observations, as it is not observation itself that improves teaching, but rather the debriefing and feedback from peers (Siddiqui et al., 2007). It has been found that participants want both expert and peer feedback on their teaching (Bell & Mladenovic, 2008). As PLCF coaches are identified as experts in their professional environment (Blodgett et al., 2011; Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013), they fulfil the role of both expert and peer within the community of practice, and can adequately support their peers. Fundamentally, it is necessary for PLCF to promote and facilitate such peer support as a mesosystem level support structure, as it promotes ongoing learning and is a key predictor of behaviour change following the cessation of training (Burns et al., 2017).

As in Parnell et al.'s (2016) study, the present findings highlight the necessity of programmes such as this as vehicles for upskilling coaches, to ensure sustainable improvement and development on their behalf. Whilst it is too early to fully assess whether sustainable change has come from implementing a PAR approach (Reason & Bradbury, 2008), the more immediate outcomes, most importantly coach behaviour change, are indicative of programme success. As noted previously, coaches who invest in more than the development of technical

and tactical skills can have a lasting influence on youth development (Camiré et al., 2012). Embodying the essence of PAR, PLCF coaches must be encouraged to continue to share their experiences with their colleagues going forward (Tekin & Kotaman, 2013), to ensure that the generative transformational legacy of the project is positive. Furthermore, coaches must be encouraged to further innovate their pedagogy, and continue to promote the development of life skills and sport skills simultaneously (Camiré & Santos, 2019).

4.3.5.8 Phase 5 summary

Phase 5 examines the fidelity of the Coach Development Programme using the Kirkpatrick (1959, 1976, 1996) training evaluation model across four levels: reaction, learning, behaviour and results. Within the reaction level, it is evident that Coach Development Programme participation was facilitated through PAR, as participants were given the autonomy to embed life skills in lessons as they saw fit. Yet to improve further, there is a need to make mesosystem level changes, such as the creation of a community of practice amongst PLCF coaches, which must be facilitated by the Coach Development Manager and PLCF management staff.

The learning level highlights an increased understanding of life skill development and research aims on behalf of the participants, following programme participation. The PAR approach facilitated this enhanced understanding, as content was tailored to the coaches' needs and they had the autonomy to apply it as they saw fit. Moreover, programme participation gave coaches the opportunity to interact with one another more than before, increasing collective understanding through informal learning. Furthermore, an enhanced understanding of explicit approaches to life skill development was evident amongst coaches, and in comparison to Phase 1, a more comprehensive understanding of the main study components was displayed.

Addressing coaching practice, the behaviour level highlights a more deliberate focus on life skill development by PLCF coaches. This improvement is attributed to the contextually based learning the coaches experienced, as well as the increased level of planning coaches undertook. As a result, coaches began to promote life skill development to the same degree as physical or technical development, showing improvement from the early phases of the project. Life skill development is now a primary focus in lessons, and is not considered as supplementary. Whilst a deliberate approach to life skill development can be time and labour intensive, the PAR approach and coaching resource ameliorated this drain on resources, as coaches were granted the autonomy to embed life skills as they saw fit. The explicit transfer techniques that coaches now employ will promote developmental outcomes for primary school P.E. pupils, and is indicative of programme success. Programme success is also visible in the coaches' increased capacity to take advantage of teachable moments. Whilst their practice remains inconsistent, it is to be expected given the differences between coaches and microsystem level influences they have to contend with in schools.

The results level is primarily concerned with lasting coach behaviour change. As evidenced across the first three levels, the programme has been successful in the short term. To sustain this success, PLCF and the associated schools must work together to create support mechanisms for coaches. Moreover, increased communication and planning on behalf of both stakeholders is required. The Coach Development Manager must also take deliberate steps to support coaches to support the maintenance of new behaviours amongst coaches. A community of practice and opportunities for peer observation, which could serve as two positive mesosystem level influences, also need to be formally implemented to sustain behaviour change amongst the coaches. Whilst the programme is viewed as successful, it is too early to determine long-term behaviour change on behalf of the coaches. However, by implementing the recommendations outlined, the chances of sustaining coach behaviour change are enhanced.

Collectively, the findings from each level contribute to the living theory of practice by detailing how coaches would improve the programme, coaches' improved understanding of the study and explicit life skill development, how coaches applied the new knowledge in context, and finally the factors which need to be considered to sustain this behaviour change.

4.3.6 Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage Summary

Commenting on Walker and Leary's (2009) problem-based learning meta-analysis, Gilbert et al. (2009) suggested that typical coach certification workshops focus on short-term knowledge retention, and are only useful if the primary goal is to help participants score well on a standardised test. Scoring well on a standardised test however, is the antithesis of this project's aim. Whilst coaching does require recognition and retention of professional knowledge, one's ability to apply such knowledge in active environments separates effective coaches from those with the ability to simply recall content (Côté & Gilbert, 2009). Thus, this project ultimately seeks to develop effective coaches who can apply life skills knowledge in a primary school P.E. context, following active participation in the Coach Development Programme. By presenting the findings and discussions in phases, a chronological account of programme development, implementation and analysis is evidenced, and a living theory of practice is detailed. It must be acknowledged that these findings are related to the experiences of those engaged in a primary school P.E. context, and thus may not have implications for coaches or coach education experts in elite or performance-orientated contexts for example. However, the findings may be applicable to practitioners in participation-oriented or developmental contexts, governing bodies designing coach education and development pathways, or those wishing to address the shortcomings associated with traditional coach education and certification programmes. Furthermore, whilst the findings are presented across five phases, this does not mean that they should be considered in isolation. Rather, acknowledging the influence that each phase has on the next is necessary, as the relationship

between phases is central to the living theory of primary school P.E. coach development produced. Moreover, the interaction between phases is evidence of the generative transformational nature of living systems, whereby the factors different phases influence one another. The Phase 5 finding, which highlights how programme engagement enabled participant coaches to embed life skills in their sessions more readily, and place a greater emphasis on life skill development, evidences this interaction between phases.

As evidenced in Section 4.1.1, traditional coach education programmes do not facilitate the development of effective coaches. To address this, there is a need to develop and implement integrated developmental programmes that combine both formal and informal learning opportunities, and situate programme learning in applied contexts to facilitate experiential learning. Researchers in educational and P.E. contexts have long-since highlighted the tenets of successful professional development and in-service education programmes. These include collegiality; practicality; adequate time for change; recognition of participants as active learners; granting participants ownership; and recognising participants as adult learners (Birman, Desimone, Porter, & Garet, 2000; Doolittle & Schwager, 1989; Ward et al., 1999). In the United States, high school and university coaches spend over 1,000 hours annually on coaching duties (such as training, competition, and administration), and only spend 10 hours annually participating in formal coach education (Gilbert, Côté, & Mallett, 2006; Gilbert, Lichktenwaldt, Gilbert, Zelezny, & Côté, 2009). Whilst not exactly representative of the participant sample in this study, such evidence helps to rationalise the need for integrated coach development programmes that allow coaches to develop as they deliver, and address the significant macrosystem level issue of decontextualised coach education programmes. An integrated approach also situates learning in a practical environment, increasing the capacity for the coach and coach educator to work collaboratively and facilitate increased understanding of how programme content can be applied in context (Vella et al., 2013). Finally, a

contextually-situated programme can satisfy coaches' desires to apply theoretical principles learned during their education (Vargas-Tonsing, 2007; Wiersma & Sherman, 2006). The present Coach Development Programme was based on these principles.

Collectively, the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage charts story of the Coach Development Programme. Phase 1 details the needs analysis prior to its development, Phase 2 details the development of a Life Skills Coaching Resource, Phase 3 assesses coach 'readiness' to engage in the programme, Phase 4 utilises the Parent and Harvey (2009) model to assess the partnership between the university and PLCF, and Phase 5 assess the effectiveness of the programme itself, using Kirkpatrick's (1959, 1976, 1996) model. The presentation of the five phases provides a coherent structure in which the need for the programme, the development of the resource, the experiences of programme participants, the partnership between stakeholders, and the immediate impact of the programme can be appraised and understood. Combined, the five phases serve to illustrate a living theory of practice of primary school P.E. coach development. Moreover, the five-phase process shows praxis, by detailing how evidence informed practice over the course of the study (McNiff & Whitehead, 2011). It is evident that the Coach Development Programme, despite the shortcomings highlighted, had a positive impact on the participant coaches and their capacity to integrate life skill development into their practice.

4.4 Conclusion Stage

As detailed in Table 4.1, the Conclusion Stage is the final stage in this study. The six-month stage, running from April 2019 to September 2019, represents the final portion of the research project. As in the Introduction and Planning Stage, no data collection or analysis occurred during this stage. Instead, the focus of the stage was to formally finalise the project

with both PLCF coaches and management staff. During this stage I conducted the last of nine research update meetings with the participant coaches, and shared the. I also chaired the final stakeholder meeting in September 2019, during which PLCF management and the PhD supervisory met to discuss the next steps in the research process, such as PhD thesis submission and research dissemination. This meeting signalled the formal cessation of the project.

Chapter 5

Discussion

5.1 Key findings

The purpose of this research project was to examine the influences on primary school P.E. coaches' ability to embed life skills in lessons. The Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach adopted facilitated changes in the project's direction and methods, and it is this contextual responsiveness that is an inherent strength of the research presented. As the project progressed, examining the contextual factors that influenced coaching practice and addressing the coaches' needs became known through PAR, placing these coaches' needs at the centre of the investigation. To achieve the project aims, it was necessary to understand the professional context in which the Premier League Football Club Community Foundation (PLCF) primary school P.E. coaches worked, and how the context impacted their capacity to change their coaching behaviours. It was also necessary to work with the coaches to develop innovative and somewhat individualised strategies that helped them to change their practice, whilst continuing to work in a dynamic and demanding professional context.

The project aims were achieved throughout the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage of the main study in Chapter 4. Phase 1 examined PLCF coaches' existing life skill knowledge and practice, Phase 2 developed a Life Skills Coaching Resource using PAR, Phase 3 examined coach readiness to engage in the Coach Development Programme, Phase 4 explored how the partnership impacted the coaches' capacity to change their behaviours, and Phase 5 examined the fidelity of a Coach Development Programme. This study produced several novel and key findings that advance both scholarship and practice in the areas of life skill development and coach development/education. The ecological influences that impacted coach behaviour change over the course of the research project are illustrated in Figure 5.1. This figure illustrates the various micro-, meso-, exo- and macrosystem influences that impacted coach development. The influences which are discussed throughout this thesis are presented in bold red text. The influences presented in black text are present across the various levels, but are not discussed in

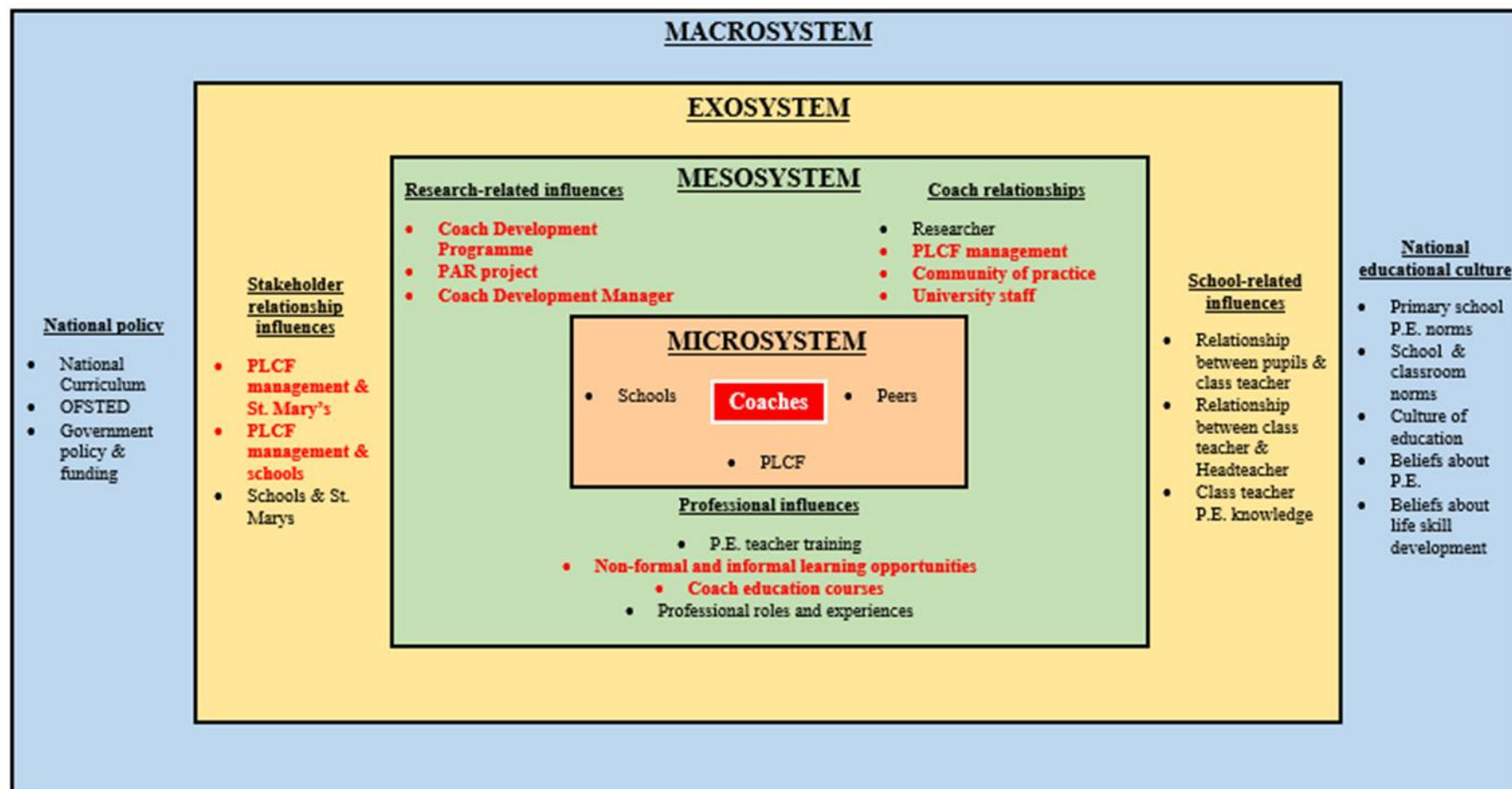


Figure 5.1 Ecological influences in the primary school P.E. context

this thesis as they are not the subject focus. It is also important to acknowledge that the figure does not contain every possible ecological influence across the various levels that impacted coach behaviours, as the number of potential influences is exponential. Rather, those included are the ecological influences that are most relevant to this research context. Moreover, the figure is representative of the influences for the entire cohort, rather than individual coaches, as the presence and impact of each influence differs between coaches.

Findings from Phase 1 of the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage illustrated how prior coach education experiences had an inadvertently negative impact on behavioural change. The main outcome from Phase 2 is the Life Skills Coaching Resource that was produced collaboratively between the coaches and the researcher. As noted throughout the study, the resource enabled coaches to embed life skills in their lessons over time and change their practice. Amongst other findings, Phase 3 detailed how the isolation coaches felt in schools negatively impacted their project engagement. Phase 4 reiterated how prior experience of coach education and development experiences inhibited PLCF coaches' capacity to embed life skills in lessons, and the failure to involve schools in the partnership planning inhibited coaches' capacity to engage as research participants. It was also found that PLCF coaches needed encouragement and practical support from PLCF management, although the creation of the Coach Development Manager role during the project reflected PLCF's commitment to providing this encouragement and support. Finally, Phase 5 showed that the coaches' understanding of life skill development, and their application of that understanding markedly improved following participation in the Coach Development Programme. These findings produced novel and key insights related to the coaches' capacity to engage in the project, the facilitation of behavioural change amongst the coaches, and the engagement of primary and secondary stakeholders during project planning. These findings will be discussed throughout this chapter. Following the discussion of these themes, a reflective epilogue is presented to

detail my professional development over the course of the PhD process. Finally, applied implications of the research, project limitations, and future research directions are discussed

5.1.1 Coaches' capacity to engage in the project

Central factors that constrained behavioural change amongst coaches included the low prioritisation of P.E. in primary school contexts, and the many minor contextual influences that were beyond coaches' control in schools. Phase 4 highlighted the excessive demands that coaches were under in schools, and how this pressure was compounded by the failure of schools to allocate lesson planning time to coaches. As seen in Siddiqui et al.'s (2007) publication on peer observation in teaching, time constraints and busy workloads can inhibit the participation in new behaviours. Over burdening of staff is also identified as a barrier to providing high quality P.E. lessons in primary schools (Rainer et al., 2012). To enable coaches to transfer knowledge from training to applied contexts, organisations must plan immediate opportunities for coaches to do so (Burns et al., 2017). However, because coaches had not delivered lessons in which life skills were embedded before this research project, and planning time for these lessons was not integrated into the coaches' working day by schools, behavioural change was impeded. Therefore, it is imperative that organisations who provide P.E. coaching for primary schools broker an agreement with schools to ensure coaches have the necessary time to plan, deliver, and reflect on high quality lessons. As evidenced throughout the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage, the impact of the excessive workload and time pressure on behavioural change were exacerbated by the lack of colleague support that PLCF coaches received from teachers and other staff members within schools, which again was preceded by poor project planning. It has been shown that following professional development opportunities, P.E. teachers have benefited from sharing experiences with colleagues in their school (Harris et al., 2012). Unfortunately, PLCF coaches rarely had this opportunity.

The lack of engagement between PLCF coaches and their school-based colleagues may be explained by Sloan's (2010) contention that primary school P.E. teachers resent being placed on the periphery of P.E. lessons when external providers are delivering. However, it appears more likely that the generally low prioritisation of P.E. in primary schools, and the school's lack of awareness of the life skills project, are factors that combined to create a working environment in which PLCF coaches were not supported to change their coaching behaviours. According to Burns et al. (2017), the participants who benefit most from coach development opportunities are those who believe that what they are learning is important and can be developed in the appropriate context. These researchers also suggested that coaches' attitudes towards behavioural change are improved by authentic institutional support, alongside reward and recognition for behavioural change. Yet because the schools were unaware of the project, they could not create an environment where the coaches felt that their new knowledge and behaviour was of value. This value-vacuum is a critical influence on coach behavioural change, as the agency of coaches delivering P.E. is enhanced if they feel supported and valued as staff members (Whitlam, 2014). Moreover, it appears the prevailing internal view of coaches within schools is that they are hired to provide cover and give class teachers a 'break', rather than enhance the quality of P.E. provision in said school, which reaffirms the need to involve schools in project planning. These influences combined to create an environment in schools that was not conducive to coach behavioural change. Therefore, the degree to which coaches actively sought to change their coaching practice was diminished. From a life skills perspective, it also is largely unreasonable to expect coaches to create an autonomy-supportive environment for pupils, if the coaches themselves work in such a constrained environment. These findings both highlight the contextual demands that coaches in a primary school P.E. context contend with when trying to change their practice, and reaffirm the place of P.E. as a low priority subject in the primary school curriculum.

The low prioritisation of P.E. is reflected in the quality of the schools' P.E. facilities. For example, of the 13 schools that data collection took place in, six had no grass field for P.E. Coach Jamie bemoaned the poor facilities during an interview, stating "we haven't got the space to do what we want to do" [Jamie, Interview, 07/07/2017]. In the context of this research, the low-quality facilities meant that PLCF coaches were limited in the type and quality of lessons that they could plan. Often the state of the facilities meant that coaches simply prioritised getting lessons completed, rather than embedding life skills in lessons. Therefore, because they were inconsistently applying new coaching knowledge and behaviours, behavioural change was slow. Moreover, although P.E. was regularly timetabled, this did not necessarily mean that coaches had the opportunity to deliver planned lessons in their entirety. The poor facilities and lack of time allocated to P.E. delivery mirror past research findings, whereby poor facilities and the prioritisation of other subjects often result in P.E. being suspended or truncated (Haydn-Davies et al., 2007; National Association of Head Teachers, 1999). Whilst investigating the challenges faced when delivering primary school P.E., Head Teachers in Rainer et al.'s (2012) study cited poor facilities, low staff-pupil ratio, and availability of time following core subject focus as reasons the two hour P.E. provision guideline is often not met. Moreover, study participants noted that access to indoor facilities was compromised, as they doubled as dining halls, whilst similar norms existed in the 13 schools involved in this project. Prior investigations (Morgan & Hansen, 2007; Rainer et al., 2012; Sloan, 2010) illustrate that P.E. does not get the same recognition or priority as other subjects, which indicates that it is not a subject of first concern in primary schools. Collectively, these issues surrounding P.E. facilities and the low prioritisation of the subject made engaging in meaningful behavioural change difficult for the coaches. Moreover, because many of the barriers within the primary school context were outside the coaches' control, behavioural

change became more difficult. These barriers were then compounded by the lack of support the coaches received from PLCF management.

The limited support coaches received from PLCF management impacted engagement in the project, which subsequently affected behavioural change throughout. Support during training is a key predictor of reactions and learning (Burns et al., 2017), and whilst the lead researcher provided it during the Coach Development Programme, a notable shortcoming on behalf of PLCF management was their failure to do so. Their absence as a support mechanism is particularly evident in Phases 3, 4 and 5 of the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage, during which PLCF coaches spoke of the lack of interaction they had with management regarding life skill development and behavioural change. Yet because this type of project was a new experience for PLCF management too, their failure to adequately support the coaches cannot be considered an oversight on their behalf alone. Rather, the researcher should have done more to actively engage PLCF management in a supporting role for coaches, by assigning them an administrative role during the Coach Development Programme in particular. Assigning these administrative roles may have supported the coaches in changing their coaching behaviours more readily. Additionally, if organisations like PLCF want employees to change their coaching behaviours, it is incumbent upon them to design resources to ensure that coaches are supported to do so. It is not enough to ask the coaches to change their behaviours, and encourage them to do so by simply explaining the benefits of change. Tangible organisational change is required. Therefore, in this context, the Coach Development Manager should help coaches to maintain and further their behaviour change following the conclusion of this research. Such support is beneficial not only for the coaches' efforts to sustain behavioural change, but also to maintain P.E. delivery standards generally, as comprehensive in-service and administrative support are necessary for quality P.E. provision (Durlack & DuPre, 2008; Iachini et al., 2014; Morgan & Bourke, 2005). As previously mentioned, to ensure consistently

high quality P.E. provision, coaches need to feel supported and valued as staff members (Whitlam, 2014). Whilst the absence of these factors served as impediments to behavioural change during this project, the Coach Development Manager role should rectify this once this research study has formally concluded.

In national sporting organisations, those who receive support in the work environment tend to apply knowledge and skills learned in training programmes more consistently (Cromwell & Kolb, 2004). Additionally, in the area of workplace coaching, Grant (2010) suggested that those who have completed training programmes may need support in the months after it if they are to persevere through the initial coaching behaviour adjustment period. Within this context, the Coach Development Manager role should fulfil the support needs of the coaches post-project, and facilitate behavioural change. Although management support such as this is necessary to support behavioural change, the resource produced during Phase 2 will also help to make coaches more autonomous in their attempts to consistently embed life skills into P.E. lessons. Moreover, the creation of a community of practice (Vella et al., 2013), as advocated throughout Section 4.3, would help to create an organisational ethos amongst coaches in which life skill development is a central tenet of P.E. class delivery. These tangible measures can help to mitigate against the shortcomings of the traditional coach education that PLCF coaches have received, which clearly impacted upon their expectations and capacity to change their coaching behaviours.

Throughout the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage, it was evident that the general failure of prior coach education to address life skill development negatively impacted coaches' attempts to change their behaviours. Existing coach education programmes are deemed as being fine in theory, but divorced from the thorny reality of practice (Jones, 2007). Unlike traditional coach education experiences (Paquette & Trudel, 2018), the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage highlights how the Coach Development Programme represented real world

problems, as it was embedded in the context it was designed for. This approach was different to any previous coach education experiences the coaches had, which typically used other adult coaches as players and were not contextualised. The Coach Development Programme also gave coaches the autonomy to implement the new behaviours and knowledge as they saw fit, which is absent in traditional coach education programmes (Vella & Perlman, 2014). The contrast between traditional coach education and the methods employed during the Coach Development Programme can help to explain why behavioural change amongst the coaches took so long, and illustrates how this project was far outside their comfort zone. To benefit from coach education courses, coaches need to possess the confidence and motivation to learn new skills (Burns et al., 2017; Mallett et al., 2009), which in this instance was lacking at the beginning of the project. Yet the behavioural change that has been observed underlines the strength of the PAR approach adopted, as in contrast to prior coach education experiences, the information coaches received was tailored to their needs to enhance confidence and facilitate behavioural change.

The issue with traditional, one-off coach education courses is that they tend to communicate as much information to coaches in as little time as possible. However, because the information is presented out of context, it is assumed that coaches will autonomously integrate it into other contexts (Gilbert, Gallimore, et al., 2009). As evidenced across research project, this is simply not the case, especially when content related to life skill development had “just been breezed over” [Bailey, Interview, 01/08/2018]. The coaches relied on implicit life skill development, rather than placing an explicit focus on psychosocial development. Yet this is to be expected, as researchers have suggested that within coach education there is too much emphasis on technical and tactical knowledge, and sports science, and a need to integrate areas such as sports psychology, or mental and emotional skills (Cassidy, Potrac, & McKenzie, 2006; Nelson et al., 2006; Zakrajsek et al., 2017; Zakrajsek & Zizzi, 2008). Specific to this study, research shows that coach education programmes focus primarily on physical and

technical skill development (Gould et al., 2006; Trottier & Robitaille, 2014), with a lack of content related to life skill development (Bean & Forneris, 2017; Gould & Carson, 2008a; Santos et al., 2017). Generally, coach education needs to be adjusted to prioritise holistic development. Moreover, if life skill development is not emphasised during coach training, it is unreasonable to expect coaches to apply an explicit approach to life skill development immediately after being introduced to the concept. Ultimately, the lack of underpinning life skills knowledge meant that coaches could not meaningfully engage in the project from the outset, which helps to explain the varied and, in certain cases, limited behavioural change observed amongst PLCF coaches throughout the study. Yet this slow behavioural change was also impacted by the coaches' initially negative perceptions of the project.

As evidenced in Phase 5 of the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage, rather than an eagerness to embed life skills in lessons, the coaches' initial response to the Coach Development Programme was that it would add to their workload. Because they were unaware of the parallels that exist between the strategies used to teach physical and technical skills and life skills (Carson Sackett & Gano-Overway, 2017; Martens, 2012), the coaches' perceived increase in workload resulted in negative attitudes towards the project as a whole, compromising attitudes towards behavioural change. It is evident in the initial stages of the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage that coaches did not see the importance of behavioural change, which meant it was unlikely to happen (Passmore, 2007). Regarding the value of life skills, coaches seemed unaware that those who focus on more than technical and physical skill development have a powerful and sustained impact on youth development (Camiré et al., 2012). Collectively, the coaches' motivation to apply the new knowledge was low. If this motivation to transfer knowledge is missing, coach education programmes will not be effective as the coaches' practice will not change (Millar & Stevens, 2012). However, as the project progressed and coaches became more involved in the project, their attitudes changed, and

meaningful behavioural change occurred throughout the participant cohort. Much like the participants in Koh, Ong and Camiré's (2014) P.E. coach study on values training in P.E., evidence presented throughout Section 4.3 shows the coaches' session focus changed from physical and technical development before the Coach Development Programme, to a more holistic approach afterwards. After displaying hesitancy in the opening months of the project, coaches began to view their participation in the project as a novel and enjoyable experience, in which their views as practitioners were considered. This experience of being involved and heard within the context of coach development is at odds with any prior programmes in which coaches had participated, which were primarily didactic and focused on physical and technical skill development. Coaches described how it was the first time that they were asked for their input on how they should deliver lessons. Over time, they became much more comfortable in their role as co-researchers, and ultimately helped to design a highly contextualised resource that was central in helping them to change their practice. Based on the success of the project, coach education programmes should be repositioned as coach development opportunities where possible. These coach development opportunities should be designed to actively seek input from the coaches to co-create knowledge rather than delivering entirely pre-determined content, and should also integrate a situated learning component, thereby enhancing coach learning.

5.1.2 Facilitating coach behavioural change in a primary school P.E. context

A central factor in facilitating coach behaviour change in this context is ensuring that the content presented to coaches is appropriate for their level of understanding of the topic. If coaches cannot understand content, they are not going to be able to apply it. Based on their prior coach education experiences, the coaches had a firm grasp of physical and technical skill development. However, as evidenced in the early phases of the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage, the coaches' understanding of life skill development was limited. As such, the content

delivered to coaches had to be altered to ensure they understood it, and could attempt to meaningfully change their behaviours. PAR allowed the material to be altered to meet the coaches' needs. Although the primary school P.E. context is an ideal environment to promote life skill development (see Section 1.2.1), coaches who lack knowledge or are untrained cannot be expected to take advantage of the context (Camiré & Santos, 2019). For youth sport coaches, the main source of knowledge is not coach education courses, but rather prior sporting experience (Lemyre et al., 2007). Moreover, research has shown that the standardised F.A. coach education programmes in which these coaches had previously participated do not result in changes to coaching practice (Stodter & Cushion, 2014). Traditional coach education has also been criticised for its rationality, which results in decontextualised content being delivered. Additionally, researchers, argue that it produces two-dimensional coaches, who cannot adapt to the dynamic human context (Jones, 2000). By recognising these influences on coach learning, and making adjustments to the life skills content discussed and language used during meetings with coaches in response, the coaches' understanding of the life skills material grew. The adaptation of the content delivered to coaches allowed them to become more competent and knowledgeable (Camiré et al., 2014), which resulted in pronounced changes in the coaches' life skills coaching behaviours. It was acknowledged, as Langan, Blake and Lonsdale (2013) suggested, that passive participation in the project may have prompted behavioural change initially. However, the Coach Development Programme was a collaborative process of development that coaches needed to actively invest time and effort into to meaningfully change their behaviours. The behavioural change shows how the researcher responded to the needs of the coaches and facilitated ongoing engagement and promote behavioural change.

According to Vella et al. (2013), a positive relationship between the learner and those delivering content is necessary to facilitate programme content application. After it became clear that the coaches were unfamiliar with life skill development, the researcher made a

concerted decision to incorporate more comprehensible language to enhance their understanding (Johnston et al., 2012). As evidenced in Phase 3 and Phase 5 of the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage, by using more accessible language during interactions with the coaches, the researcher enabled coaches to advance their understanding of life skill development. It appears that the integration of familiar language made the content more accessible for the coaches, resulting in greater project engagement from them. The use of accessible language is particularly relevant those working within coach development, who must consider the relevance of the content they are delivering, and the situation of learning in environments which represent the coaches' professional reality. As well as altering the manner in which coaches received content, the shift from the development of a checklist to a coaching resource in Phase 2 is a representation of how the project adapted in response to the needs of the coaches. Because the coaches' understanding of life skill development was low, and they did not know how to embed life skills in lessons, the phase objective changed. This scope for flexibility, and revision of the objectives and methods in response to the context, is a defining feature of successful PAR (Mackenzie et al., 2012). Furthermore, the resource development process reflects the reciprocal relationship between the researcher and participants in a PAR project, as both benefited from the production of the resource (Kemmis et al., 2013). In the context of coach behaviour change, the resource played a fundamental role, as it prompted coaches to plan the use of behaviours that had previously been unfamiliar to them. Ultimately, for the coaches, the PAR approach allowed them to shift from a position where they were told, and then asked to do certain tasks by the lead researcher, to a position where, as co-researchers, their input influenced the project direction and outcomes. The resource produced during Phase 2 is evidence of this. This collaborative experience changed coach perceptions of the programme over time, giving them a greater appreciation of the wider implications of the research.

Bean and Forneris (2017) called for more collaboration between researchers and coaches to integrate life skill development into regular sporting practices, which this research addresses. Whilst collaboration within coach education is primarily concerned with developing practical understanding (Vella et al., 2013), this research also allowed the coaches to establish theoretical understanding of life skills development, making sustained behavioural change more likely. The coaches' capacity to embed life skills in lessons was facilitated by engaging them as co-researchers, rather than treating them as passive receptors of declarative life skills knowledge. Their role as co-researchers also made for a more impactful learning experience, as the coaches had to consider how to integrate life skills into their practice in their own way, rather than being told how to do so, and also contributed to the design of the resource, rather than using a ready-made alternative. The research findings show how both PLCF management and coaches believed that the collaborative research plan engaged the coaches, and promoted behavioural change within them. The PAR approach facilitated input from the coaches throughout the project, engaging them as co-researchers and ensuring that the outcomes were grounded in the context (Blodgett et al., 2011). PAR also altered power relations between the researcher and coaches (Frisby et al., 2005), which encouraged a more open relationship and the coaches to be more forthcoming with their input as the project progressed. In the latter phases of the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage, coaches were able to see that their feedback was being considered, and that the material being presented to them was adapted accordingly. As evidenced in the findings, the coaches had never been involved in a collaborative project like this before. Therefore, it is reasonable to suggest that they never had the opportunity to discuss their experiences with someone who valued these experiences, and sought to respond to their feedback and address any deficits in preparedness to engage in such a programme. The idea that coaches never discussed their experiences helps to explain the low coach readiness at

the outset of the study, but also why coaches relished their central involvement in Phase 2 whilst developing the resource.

The clearest examples of the coaches' role as co-researchers is exhibited in Phase 2 of the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage, where they had significant influence in relation to the study direction and the study outputs. The phase illustrates the democratisation of the research process, during which community members defined problems and developed solutions (Coughlan & Brannick, 2014; Gillis & Jackson, 2002). The production of the resource is evidence of the coaches' ownership of the research, and a central component of PAR (Coughlan & Brannick, 2014; Mackenzie et al., 2012). Given the successful resource production, which emerged as a consequence of PAR and benefitted from coach input, it would be prudent for future researchers to consider using PAR to produce tangible research outputs or elicit meaningful behavioural change, rather than use action research approaches which may result in measurable improvements in outcomes but which don't require significant co-researcher input. By using the resource in a live context, and on an ongoing basis, the coaches received immediate feedback regarding its usability. In their role as co-researchers, the coaches were then in a position to use this immediate feedback to alter their practice during lessons, and also feed back what they had learned about the resource to the researcher. This feedback ensured that the resource was informed by the coaches' experiences. Moreover, by including the coaches as co-researchers, it also limited any negative impact the researcher's biases may have had on the research process (Reason & Bradbury, 2008) and placed the needs of the coaches at the centre of the investigation. However, doing so proved challenging for several reasons, as outlined below.

An unfortunate reality of engaging community members as co-researchers is their sustained involvement in the research process cannot be guaranteed (Gillis & Jackson, 2002). Within this project, dropout of three coaches illustrated this. Over the course of the research

project, it became apparent that such staff turnover was a normative feature of community sport coaching. Fortunately, this was not a significant barrier to successful research outcomes, as nine coaches remained actively involved for the entire project. Whilst coach turnover did serve as a small challenge that the researcher had to overcome, acknowledging the challenge and thereby reflecting the real world context is a strength of PAR. Rather than viewing active coach involvement as a risk to the integrity of the research, because the coaches were co-researchers who committed to the project, their desire to change their practice was perhaps greater than it would have been had the coaches been passive research participants. This co-construction of knowledge signifies the integrity, quality, and appropriateness of using PAR in this context, as it resulted in the coaches exhibiting a greater degree of ownership over the research than was anticipated at the outset (Spaaij et al., 2018). This ownership empowered the coaches to apply and refine their new knowledge as they worked, using situated learning to change their coaching practices.

The evidence presented in Phase 5 shows how, by applying new knowledge and behaviours in primary school P.E. lessons on an ongoing basis, behavioural change was facilitated amongst the coaches. According to Gilbert et al. (2009) if coach development is going to be successful it must incorporate an experiential learning component. Throughout the project, the researcher and the coaches held discussions about how to apply life skills knowledge in the P.E. context. Moreover, coaches were then encouraged to apply this knowledge almost immediately after it had been discussed. This approach to applying new knowledge represents a progression from traditional formal coach education programmes, which expects coaches to transfer decontextualised knowledge from learning to applied contexts themselves (Gilbert, Gallimore, et al., 2009; Nelson et al., 2006). Throughout the research project, coaches making mistakes was a central component of the developmental process, as errors allowed them to develop a highly personal understanding of how to embed

life skills in lessons. The coaches did not, as, Gilbert and Trudel (1999) warned, attend a coach education programme where content was delivered to them before they returned to vastly different contexts. Rather, due to their feedback and the researcher's familiarity with the context, the information coaches received was immediately relevant to the primary school P.E. environment. The ongoing application of life skills content by coaches ensured that they were able to make sense of the information, rather than viewing it as something abstract (Burns et al., 2017; Mallett et al., 2009). The success of this application is evidenced in Phase 5 of the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage, at which point there was a noticeable improvement in the coaches' capacity to embed life skills in lessons.

Learning by doing allows practitioners to apply and make sense of knowledge (Mallett et al., 2009). In this instance, this approach also contextualised the coaches' learning experience, advancing their capacity to teach life skills through P.E. Over time, coaches developed their own strategies to teach life skills and sports skills simultaneously, which is desirable. To support the coaches to do this, the researcher implemented the recommendations put forth by Iachini et al. (2014), providing individualised support to coaches (phone, e-mail, and on-site visits) between the regular research update meetings within the Coach Development Programme. This support allowed the coaches to demonstrate their evolving practice to the researcher, and gave them a platform to ask questions in an informal manner. Moreover, as this research project illustrates, coaches place a greater value on experiential learning than formal coach development (Trudel & Gilbert, 2006). This coach-centred approach resulted in coaches developing a level of autonomy in their practice, which bodes well for sustained behavioural change in their practice (Ahlberg et al., 2008). It also ensured that the primary school P.E. context was accounted for in the research outcomes.

The findings show how integrated and situated learning is a feasible alternative to traditional coach education and development processes, which do not provide coaches with the

skills they need to be a successful coach (Cushion et al., 2003; Trudel & Gilbert, 2006). Phase 5 evidences the coaches' capacity to enhance their knowledge and change their practice whilst continuing to work in a dynamic and challenging working environment. By situating the learning in primary school P.E. lessons, the coaches became more autonomous in devising and implementing strategies to teach life skills (Lyle, 2010). Unfortunately, however, time was often a barrier for lesson planning and delivery, negatively impacting the coaches' capacity to consistently apply life skills knowledge in context. Time restrictions are significant in the context of this project, as time is a determining factor in P.E. provision quality (Morgan & Bourke, 2008; Rainer et al., 2012; Sloan, 2010), and planning is necessary to facilitate the transfer of coaching knowledge to applied contexts (Zakrajsek & Zizzi, 2008). Yet by the end of Phase 5, coaches exhibited a capacity to take advantage of teachable moments, which illustrates their coaching behaviours were not entirely determined by whether or not they planned lessons. Facilities also had a negative influence, as concerns about their inadequacy led coaches to forget about embedding life skills in lessons. Although not a solution to all the barriers coaches faced, the ease of use of the resource produced in Phase 2 helped to ameliorate some contextual issues such as lesson planning and lesson time constraints, thereby facilitating the application of life skills knowledge and increasing the likelihood of sustained coach behavioural change. Taking a more long-term view, because coaching approaches change over time, experience is central to development. It can take years for coaches to establish developmental philosophies with which they are comfortable (Jenkins, 2010). As such, the coaches' current behaviours should not be viewed as fixed, but rather as a first step towards becoming truly holistic coaches.

5.1.3 Engaging all primary and secondary stakeholders in project planning

The importance of inclusive stakeholder planning in a project such as this cannot be overstated, as it had implications for coach behavioural change for the duration of the project.

Given the positive project outcomes, it appears that the university and PLCF planned the project reasonably well together as primary stakeholders. However, as evidenced in Phase 4 of the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage, both parties failed to recognise the importance of engaging schools during the project planning. By failing to involve the schools during project planning, the coaches did not receive adequate support in schools, and suggested it was a barrier to behavioural change. According to Burns et al. (2017), organisations must grant coaches the opportunity to practice what they have learned elsewhere, if coaches are to transfer knowledge from training to applied contexts. Moreover, this genuine professional support results in improved results from coach training and development, and is a key behavioural change predictor. Yet because the schools were largely unaware of the project, they did not grant coaches the opportunities to implement their growing life skills knowledge. Furthermore, those in schools did not comment on any perceived changes in coach or pupil behaviours, which could have benefitted the research as a whole, but instead represents an opportunity lost. The findings indicate that in some instances, the demands placed on coaches were greater than ever, as they had little time to plan, deliver, and reflect on lessons. To successfully embed life skills in lessons, coaches need adequate time to plan lessons (Bean & Forneris, 2016; Gould et al., 2007; Kendellen et al., 2017). Moreover, time constraints are associated with lower quality P.E. (Morgan & Bourke, 2008; Rainer et al., 2012; Sloan, 2010). However, because the schools were not involved in the planning of the partnership, the time pressure they (un)knowingly created negatively influenced coaches' efforts to embed life skills in lessons. Additional barriers to behavioural change that emerged during the study include high pupil to coach ratios and poor facilities, which could have been accounted for had Head Teachers been given the opportunity to offer context-specific insight.

In research projects where schools are primary or secondary stakeholders, it is imperative that Head Teachers are involved in project planning to ensure that they can manage

school resources appropriately (Talbot, 2007), and provide P.E. coaches with the equipment and spaces they need to deliver lessons in which life skills are embedded. Increased strategic planning and resource availability for staff delivering P.E. represents commitment to P.E. provision by primary school Head Teachers (Rainer et al., 2012). However, because Head Teachers did not contribute to planning, coaches frequently did not have access to the resources they needed to deliver the lessons they had planned, constraining behavioural change efforts. Collectively, Head Teachers may have been able to provide insights on matters that the coaches and PLCF management were unaware of. Within PAR, making changes when relevant partners are not fully engaged is undesirable (Holt et al., 2013). In the case of this research project, the failure to engage Head Teachers is an undoubted shortcoming, as when the project direction pivoted, the schools did not make allowances to ensure that the potentially negative impact of the changes on coaches was minimised. This lack of involvement and support from Head Teachers was compounded by the absence of support that class teachers provided.

The idea that teachers resent being placed on the periphery of P.E. delivery (Sloan, 2010) may have intensified the lack of support the coaches felt. Had schools been involved in planning, they could have given both the coaches and PLCF management an indication of what was realistic within the environment, and what degree of support their staff could provide. Yet once again, this support vacuum existed because these teachers were unaware that the coaches were trying to alter their coaching practice through situated learning. The general lack of project awareness within the school meant that P.E. remained a low priority subject (Rainer et al., 2012), which coaches were not supported to deliver. The low prioritisation of P.E. also meant that staff were even more unlikely to offer support to PLCF coaches because they were not involved in project planning. The schools' lack of project awareness is notable in the context of this project, as support within the work environment results in higher application of knowledge and skills learned during training (Cromwell & Kolb, 2004). This failure to

appreciate the impact school input had on project planning is not only an oversight on behalf of PLCF management, but also on behalf of the researcher. It represents a failure to fully consider Blodgett et al.'s (2011) recommendation that those leading PAR projects need an in depth understanding the project context before the research begins. The difficulties coaches faced reemphasise the importance of involving the schools, or secondary stakeholders generally, in project planning, as the environment that they create has a significant impact on the capacity of coaches to change their behaviour. The coaches themselves suggested as much in Phase 1 and 3 of the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage, stating school involvement would improve the Coach Development Programme. Yet in the case of PLCF, primary stakeholder support from PLCF could have also been improved.

Findings reveal that coaches believed that greater interaction between the schools and PLCF management would have seen coaches supported better. The lack of support in schools was mirrored by the lack of support the coaches felt they received from PLCF management. This expectation of limited support may have prevented coaches from fully committing to behavioural change, given limited support is associated with low delivery confidence (Morgan & Bourke, 2005). The resource produced in Phase 2 helped to address issues such as planning and time constraints within schools, which were caused by a lack of coach support from both PLCF management and the schools. However, it cannot completely negate the negative impact of poor project planning. In future, the Coach Development Manager should manage the relationship between stakeholders to ensure that coaches receive adequate support. Within in physical activity partnerships, the presence of formal agreements can facilitate successful outcomes (Lucidarme et al., 2014), and whilst not directly comparable to this research project, suggests formal involvement from the schools from the project out may have facilitated greater coach behavioural change. Moreover, developing life skills in youth is a collaborative process between stakeholders, rather than the direct of responsibility coaches (Bowley et al., 2018).

Additionally, having a clear consensus with stakeholders has been shown to positively impact adolescent life skill development (Lee et al., 2017). Therefore, if life skill development programmes are going to be truly effective for youth participants, all stakeholders must be involved from the outset to support coaches to make them effective.

5.2 Epilogue

This section will summarise my development as a researcher over the four-year PhD process. According to Sparkes (2000), narratives of the self like this allow individuals to understand and advance knowledge of existing phenomena. This section is not concerned with the application of a pre-determined reflective framework, but rather is concerned with developing self-awareness, which according to Johns (2017) involves an exploration of how a situation affected you, and how you affected a situation. The different environments and scenarios that I experienced during the PhD exposed me to a range of developmental experiences that I otherwise would have missed. It is with the benefit of hindsight that I can look back on some of these specific instances and articulate how they served as professional and personal development catalysts. From a research perspective, this section will detail my shift from a primarily positivist outlook at the beginning of the PhD, to the pragmatic stance that I now take. In doing so, this section will chart my transition from a position where I felt I had to objectively prove behavioural change was occurring, to placing behavioural change and the factors that influence it at the centre of the research. Fundamentally, this section will emphasise how understanding, rather than enacting behavioural change, became the indicator of successful research. This transition is considered across three areas. The first area is project ownership, the second is project scoping and the need for adaptability, and the third is the recognising the place of my research in the lives of others.

As would be expected, the degree of ownership I had over the PhD grew as the project advanced. At the outset of the process I was highly reliant on instruction and feedback from my supervisors to determine the direction and quality of the project. However, by the end of the four-year cycle, the direction of the project was determined almost solely by myself (and the coaches as co-researchers). This transition from a reactive student to a proactive researcher was, in my opinion, accelerated by the many changes that occurred within the research team over the course of the PhD. The research team, which initially consisted of four members, included a PLCF staff member, the PhD supervisors, and myself. The PLCF staff member served as my line manager, and managed the project on a day-to-day basis from PLCF's perspective. It is also important to note that I was based at PLCF offices for one day per week during the project. The PhD supervisory team initially consisted of a main supervisor and a Director of Studies. At the outset, this supervisory team was also supposed to include an external research supervisor. However, for a variety of reasons, the active contribution made by this individual at the outset was minimal. Therefore, it would be inaccurate to suggest that they were part of the research team. As illustrated in Figure 3.2, there were six changes to the research team over the course of the four-year process. Whilst changes to the PhD team are to be expected (Wyn Griffiths, Blakey, & Vardy, 2015), this does not necessarily mean that they are welcomed. On average, this PhD saw a change to the research team every eight months.

By the second summer of the PhD, I was the only member of the original research team still actively working on the project. The original PLCF line manager left the organisation, and was replaced by Kevin (as detailed in Section 4.3.4.6). My main supervisor changed institution after 12-months, and was replaced. However, this original main supervisor stayed on as a secondary supervisor to provide some consistency, prior to going on maternity leave in July 2019. Finally, my original Director of Studies left St. Mary's two years into the PhD, and was replaced. These changes, and the others which occurred within the research team, are illustrated

in Figure 3.2. Whilst from a procedural perspective such changes are managed by the university, the reality is that a PhD is a highly personalised process, with strong interpersonal relationships playing a central role in ones progression through a PhD (Ives & Rowley, 2005). Therefore, it was my responsibility to develop close working relationships with any new members of the research team, and bring them up to date on the project progress and direction when they joined. The changes in the circumstances of others, which either altered or ended their involvement in the project, is mirrored in how the direction of the project changed in response to the context. Because I was the only truly consistent member of the research team who was involved throughout the entire project, it was incumbent upon me to take a considerable proportion of responsibility for the direction of the project. However, given my relative inexperience as a researcher in the early stages of the PhD, this perhaps also helps to explain why the project stalled at times. It took time for me to develop the confidence to trust the data that I was collecting, and pursue avenues of research that were not initially planned. During a supervisory meeting in the latter stages of the PhD, members of the supervisory team agreed that I had grown in confidence from when they initially joined the project. Personally, I believe this is reflected in the increased coach involvement towards the end of the project, where collaborative PAR is clearly evidenced. As I began to take greater ownership of the research, I allowed myself to trust that the coaches' input would enhance the research outcomes, rather than diminishing the quality of the research. Yet the quality of the research could have been enhanced further if more comprehensive scoping took place at the outset.

The idea of scoping is concerned with how the project was thought out and planned from its inception, and who was involved in that process. The recruitment advert for this PhD, listed in the Summer of 2016, noted that the project was concerned with enhancing the psychological and social development of primary school children through P.E., and stated that the project was a collaboration between St. Mary's University, Twickenham and PLCF. Whilst

this description was open enough to facilitate any number of research directions, it also implied a degree of expectation on behalf of the university and PLCF as to the direction of the project. Moreover, it is evident that a degree of project planning had taken place before a lead researcher had been recruited, inadvertently making a number of assumptions about the research project that I could not question in my absence, prior to my recruitment. In my opinion, sufficient project scoping had not taken place, and the ambitions that both St. Mary's and PLCF held for the PhD were unrealistic. This lack of scoping became evident after the first round of data collection and analysis (Phase 1), which showed that the participant coaches had little to no understanding of life skill development. There was an assumption on behalf of those who initially co-ordinated the project that PLCF primary school P.E. coaches understood psychological and social skill development because of their F.A. qualifications. Following my recruitment, I accepted this assumption at face value, and expected that all potential participants had an existing understanding of life skill development. However, I was wrong. This meant that the project aims had to be revised, to a point where the focus was put on the factors that influence coach behavioural change, rather than facilitating life skill development in pupils.

Shifting the PhD focus away from pupils' life skill development, and towards coach behavioural change was not a decision that was taken lightly. As a novice researcher, working with an external funder brought a series of challenges, the most significant of which was the pressure I felt to justify PLCF's investment in me. In my experience, this pressure and expectation, imagined or not, can negatively impact the PhD process. Because PLCF had match-funded the research, they had a justifiable case to have input into the direction of the research, and held a certain expectation of the research outcomes (for example, a life skills coaching resource and life skill development amongst pupils). Ultimately however, because the coaches had no prior understanding of life skill development, the direction of the research had to be changed, as the initial aim was unachievable within the time available. For me,

making the decision to alter the research focus was logical. However, communicating this to the Senior Management Team at PLCF was a very stressful experience. From my perspective, because the project was not going as was originally expected, I thought that PLCF may withdraw their half of the funding, and put an abrupt end to this research project and my prospects of attaining a PhD.

Thankfully, following a presentation I made to the Senior Management Team, in which I presented some preliminary data and explained the rationale for changing the study direction, the funding remained in place. Moreover, this presentation served to initiate conversations around integrating life skill development into community coach job specifications and interview questions, illustrating an advancement in how seriously PLCF considered life skill development. Whilst these alterations did not occur, questions surrounding coach involvement in the project were integrated into annual appraisals, signifying belief in the research, irrespective of the change in focus. As a researcher, I felt this experience allowed me to develop, and led me to two significant learnings. The first is that in any research involving an external funder, be it PhD or otherwise, the primary researcher needs to actively contribute to the scoping process to determine what is feasible from a research perspective. This involvement will ensure that the expectations of the external funder are reasonably managed, and remove any sense of obligation the researcher may feel to pursue a potentially fruitless research avenue. The second conclusion to draw is that when conducting research, irrespective of the source of funding, researchers need to be forthright in the decisions they make, and use evidence to justify any deviations from the original research plan to stakeholders involved. Given the outcomes of PAR are not wholly predictable, as this project demonstrates, it is important to manage stakeholder expectations. By grounding deviations from the original research plan in evidence, the stakeholders can fully support the researcher in the new direction. By

communicating clearly with stakeholders, researchers can also begin to understand the position of the research in the stakeholder's lives.

The place of my PhD in my life is simple, it has dominated my life for four years. Any significant (along with many insignificant) professional and personal decisions that have been made over the past four years have been weighed up against the same question; 'How will this affect my PhD?' This is because, quite simply, my PhD is the most important pursuit in my life. However, as I came to learn when conducting this research project, just because something is a priority in my life, does not necessarily mean that it will be a priority in the lives of others. The differences in priorities became evident when the coaches did not respond as I expected in the initial stages of the research. Instead of being excited and energised at the prospect of developing as holistic coaches, and positively impacting the lives of the pupils in their lessons, some viewed project participation as just another professional inconvenience that they had to contend with. From my perspective, their muted response to the Coach Development programme personified the low position of the research on their list of priorities. However, this changed following the presentation made by one of the supervisors in February 2018.

I am not foolish enough to suggest that, following their initial disinterest, the participant coaches became inspired to engage in my PhD following the presentation made by Nora. However, as evidenced in Section 4.3.4.9.2.5, coaches benefitted from a presentation that explained the wider implications of the research. Using accessible language, what Nora successfully communicated to the coaches was that whilst the intention of the project was to enable the coaches to embed life skills in their lessons, that this transition towards holistic coaching was not being done for the sake of this project alone. Rather, coaching as an industry is moving towards a more holistic approach, and that by committing to becoming holistic coaches through their participation in this project, the coaches would be at the forefront of their profession when it came to implementing this approach. The presentation content struck a

chord with the coaches who, following their interviews in Phase 1, realised that the coaching qualifications they had obtained had not addressed life skill development directly. This example also serves to highlight the fundamental role PAR played in getting the coaches to engage as participants, as the presentation was arranged in response to the coaches' lack of participation, rather than being formally planned at the outset. It is also noted that following said presentation, Nora made a point of telling me that the strong rapport that I had evidently developed with the coaches in the early stages of the research project would positively impact coach engagement in the research process. Collectively, this experience taught me that it is important to recognise and accept that my PhD research does not mean as much to others as it does to me, which was often reflected in their commitment to the project. Moreover, it taught me the importance of using accessible language and examples to communicate the 'Big Picture' implications of the research to participants in a long-term project such as this, and to build good personal rapport, which can combine to facilitate participant buy-in.

The PhD process has been, without question, the single greatest challenge of my life. However, up to this point, it has also been the most rewarding pursuit of my life. From a professional perspective, it gives me great pride to present a thesis that I believe to be of high academic quality. However, what arguably gives me more pride is knowing that the coaches who were involved as research participants have changed their practice for the betterment of both themselves, and the pupils they teach. To this day, coaches still contact me with questions about their practice, which is humbling. The idea that the coaches now care more than they did at the beginning is what gives me the most fulfilment. However, this is not to suggest that the PhD process has been a straightforward, infinitely enjoyable process from beginning to end. Irrespective of your research area, there will always be aspects of the PhD process that you cannot account for in the dozens of plans you inevitably make throughout. Having encountered what I did over the past four years, I have come to realise that as a researcher, it is essential to

embrace change, rather than dwell on its potentially negative impact. In this case, this was particularly relevant when it came to my research team, project timeline, and lines of inquiry. I have also learned to accept that individuals in positions of influence often determine the reality of what you can do, compared to what you hope to do. Finally, I have come to appreciate that when working with others, be they participants or members of the research team, that their priorities are unlikely to match mine. I care about my research far more than anyone else does. Inevitably, these learnings stemmed from events which, had the research gone perfectly according to plan, would not have occurred. In hindsight however, these ‘problems’ are what allowed me to develop most as a researcher, as they pushed me outside my comfort zone. Although it may sound clichéd, I know that I am lucky to have had the opportunity deal with these challenges, and ultimately compile this body of work. For that, I am thankful.

5.3 Applied Implications

Given the applied nature of this project, and the PAR approach adopted, this research produced a wide range of applied implications. PAR is concerned with generating applied outcomes that have positive long-term consequences for those involved in the research (Frisby et al., 2005; Mackenzie et al., 2012; Reason & Bradbury, 2008). The two examples that evidence this most clearly are the Life Skills Coaching Resource produced during Phase 2, and the changes in coach behaviours cited in Phase 5. Although PAR served to successfully facilitate behavioural change on behalf of the coaches, and the benefits of PAR will be discussed, not all applied implications in this research project are related to PAR. Other areas where applied implications are considered include project planning, assumption of knowledge, recommendations for PLCF and community football organisations, and finally recommendations for The Football Association and National Sporting Governing Bodies.

5.3.1 Benefits of Participatory Action Research

The benefits of employing a PAR approach, particularly when investigating the influences on coach behaviours, are evidenced throughout this thesis, and do not need to be restated at this point. However, there are several applied recommendations that researchers can take from this project, which are related to the application of PAR in a general sense. Phases 2, 3 and 5 particularly serve as examples of how PAR can be used to engage participants with no prior experience as researchers and limited knowledge of the subject, as co-researchers. These phases serve to underline Kolb's (1984) long-standing point that experience can be a basis for knowing. The findings also illustrate that just because co-researchers may not have what academics may deem a set of research skills, this does not mean that they cannot contribute to the development of new knowledge. Phase 2 specifically, is an example of how participants and the researcher collaborated to create a resource that helped the coaches to change their practice. In future PAR-related coaching research, investigators are encouraged to engage coaches in a similar manner to develop more context-specific resources that allow the coaches to change their coaching behaviours in a situated learning environment.

Another advantage of PAR was that it facilitated the many changes that occurred throughout the research process, which again have been detailed in the relevant sections. Given the exploratory nature of the research, and the integration of the coaches as co-researchers, the study focus and timeframes were often changed. This is to be expected to a degree, as researchers have noted that PAR is time consuming and unpredictable, and that project timelines are often readjusted in response to what is emerging from the context (Kavanagh et al., 2002; Mackenzie et al., 2012). Researchers should therefore use this research as an exemplar of how to successfully apply PAR, and embrace changes to the research plan when working with non-research orientated organisations such as PLCF. Moreover, the research serves to inform researchers working in coach development or education, and life skill

development that traditional approaches to knowledge transmission are suboptimal for coach learning. Rather, by adopting an approach whereby the participants are actively engaged as experts in their field, the situated learning approach that PAR facilitates can elucidate meaningful behavioural change, not simply knowledge retention. Supporting the conclusions drawn by Vella et al. (2013), a collaborative and contextually-grounded approach to coach education is desirable. In research contexts such as this, PAR can facilitate such collaboration.

5.3.2 Project planning

This research project serves to illustrate that the reality of working with multiple research stakeholders is that the research plan does not always go smoothly. When multiple research stakeholders are involved, it is essential to comprehensively plan the research to ensure that all parties are aware of their roles within the research process. Findings illustrate that there was little, if any, consultation with schools as secondary stakeholders within the research process, despite schools being the environment in which coaches were applying their life skills knowledge and trialling their adapted coaching behaviours. If coaches are to embed life skills in lessons successfully, they need to plan lessons (Gould & Carson, 2008a; Hellison, 2011). Moreover lesson planning time is essential for quality P.E. delivery (Sloan, 2010). However, because schools were not engaged in the planning stages of the project, they were unaware of their role in supporting coaches to plan and deliver lessons with a life skills focus. The schools simply did not give the coaches the time to plan and deliver lessons, because they did not know it was required. This finding serves to inform researchers that, when partnering to conduct research in a live context, universities and community sport organisations need to involve secondary stakeholders in the planning stages of the research. Involving secondary stakeholders will ensure they are aware of their role within the research process, and allow them to implement support mechanisms for coaches. Furthermore, given the likelihood of a change in research focus, universities and community sport organisations are encouraged to

maintain regular contact with secondary stakeholders throughout the research process, establishing formal agreements if necessary.

5.3.3 Recommendations for PLCF and community football organisations

As stated by Parnell et al. (2016), little is known about the role that professional football clubs play in the delivery of primary school P.E. and sport. Whilst this research project does not explicitly address the role of PLCF as a primary school P.E. provider, the findings expand the current understanding of the role of coaches in community football organisations within primary schools, and has implications for organisations like PLCF whose community coaches deliver P.E. in primary schools. As evidenced in Phase 4, PLCF management were unaware that the coaches were expected to contend with an overwhelming workload, poor working conditions, and poor facilities whilst engaging in the research process. As evidenced, undertaking a project like this with coaches working under such pressures is not conducive to coach learning and behaviour change. These pressures were not appreciated by all stakeholders, particularly PLCF, prior to the initiation of this project. This lack of awareness on behalf of PLCF management highlights the need for PLCF to establish agreed workloads for coaches with schools at the beginning of each school year, placing coach well-being at the centre of any agreements between parties. In the context of this study, such agreements will ensure that if required to do so, coaches have the capacity to engage in CPD activities, such as the Coach Development Programme. In a P.E. context, adequate time is needed to facilitate effective in-service CPD (Ward et al., 1999). When it comes to life skills, professional development workshops need to provide specific training on life skill development and transfer (Camiré et al., 2014). Therefore in similar scenarios in the future, organisations such as PLCF need to work collaboratively with schools to provide opportunities for coaches to engage in CPD, and support them to do so. Simple formal arrangements, such as agreeing that coaches are allocated lesson planning time during the week (similar to a teacher's PPA), would make a significant

difference to coaches striving to change their practice. Moreover, when organising CPD opportunities, PLCF management are encouraged to ask coaches what they need, rather than assuming they know or telling coaches what they need to develop. This approach will enhance engagement, as seen throughout the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage. Finally, organisations like PLCF also need to ensure that coaches are adequately rewarded for the work they do, and incentivised to improve their practice.

5.3.4 Recommendations for The Football Association, National Sporting Governing Bodies, and Government

Given what this research has revealed about coach knowledge surrounding psychological skill development and social skill development, it is suggested that The F.A. should reconsider how the content on their coaching courses are delivered. Whilst the coaches were exposed to The F.A. four corner model (The Football Association, 2015) during their Level 1 and Level 2 coaching qualifications, the coaches reported that psychological and social corners were not adequately addressed. Moreover, in stark contrast to the physical and technical skills, coaches did not get an opportunity to practice teaching these skills during their qualifications. During these qualifications, the psychological and social development of participants needs to be explicitly addressed in greater depth, and coaches need to be given the opportunity to practice teaching these skills. A major criticism of The F.A. coaching courses is that they do not consider or promote lasting behavioural change (Cope et al., 2016; Stodter & Cushion, 2014). Based on the positive outcomes associated with this research, it is therefore recommended that The F.A. and others shift their focus away from traditional views of coach education and certification (Gilbert, 2006), and towards coach development, which is concerned with taking advantage of formal and informal processes to develop expertise (Mallett et al., 2009). A practical change to make is to introduce situated learning components, in which coaches apply the knowledge in the context they intend to use it. The same

recommendations apply to National Sporting Governing Bodies, who may also overlook the importance of psychological and social skill development.

The findings highlight that P.E. is generally not a priority in primary schools. Researchers have noted how the amount of time spent on P.E. during initial teacher training (Caldecott et al., 2006b, 2006a; Harris et al., 2012), and the emphasis on literacy and numeracy in morning lessons reflects the low prioritisation of P.E. within primary schools (Rainer et al., 2012). Given recent Government correspondence to primary schools, indicating that they need to prioritise core subjects such as phonics and reading, increasing vocabulary, writing, and maths (Department of Education, 2020a) when pupils return to school post-pandemic, it appears that P.E. is inadvertently being moved down the subject priority list. This is despite the recent Government announcement that £320 million will be made available to schools for the P.E. and Sport Premium for the next academic year (Department of Education, 2020b). Given what is known about the positive role P.E. and physical activity play in a child's personal and academic development, it is incumbent upon Government ministers and Head Teachers to ensure that P.E. does not become marginalised further in the pursuit of test scores. These individuals must endeavour to make P.E. a central component of a holistic primary school curriculum, by allocating and enforcing strict minimum time limits for P.E. classes in each Key Stage.

5.4 Limitations

Despite the strengths of this research, there are a series of associated limitations. The primary limitation of this research is associated with the PAR approach taken. Although an inherent strength of the study, in that it facilitated programme malleability, theoretically speaking there is no end for action research, as the new issues that coaches face within the dynamic primary school context will continuously arise. Therefore, whilst PAR ameliorated

issues related to the context at the present moment in time, new issues will arise following the cessation of this research project (Brannick & Coghlan, 2007; Thiollent, 2011), highlighting once more the generative transformational nature of the context.

Another limitation is researcher bias and a desire to confirm behavioural change amongst coaches. May (1999) suggested that within PAR, research is often open to charges of bias, as they may omit whole ranges of data to confirm their pre-existing beliefs. In this instance, bias was reduced through methodological triangulation (Cohen et al., 2018; Patton, 2002). An additional source of potential bias is the relationship the researcher shared with the participants, which developed over the course of research project. PAR requires high personal investment from the researcher, and necessitates close working relationships between the researcher and participants (Mackenzie et al., 2012). Because of this, a close relationship between the researcher and participants developed, and its presence needs to be acknowledged. However, this closeness can also serve as a project strength, as it allows the researcher to get closer to the issues being addressed. A more general shortcoming of the PAR approach is the methods used throughout the project. PAR is concerned with providing workable solutions to immediate problems (Ozanne & Saatcioglu, 2008). However, as evidenced throughout the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage, change within this research context was often slow. Whilst the methods employed are ideal from a research perspective, the exploratory nature of the research meant that understanding may have been prioritised over change, therefore slowing down coach behavioural change. In addition to this, the many changes in the supervisory team is at odds with Blodgett et al.'s (2011) recommendation to maintain a consistent team for the duration of a PAR project. However, this is unfortunately an unavoidable reality during projects of this duration.

Another limitation is the level of support that the coaches received from the researcher during the project. In the absence of adequate support from PLCF management and the schools,

the coaches would have benefitted had they received more support from the researcher. Given that there were eleven coaches and one lead researcher, providing a high degree of support to all coaches was always going to be a challenge. A remedy to this would have been to work more closely with PLCF and schools to match complementary skills (Marlier et al., 2015), and develop a formalised support structure for coaches. This lack of coach support is generally attributed to the research planning, during which secondary stakeholders were uninvolved. More collaborative planning would not only have helped to support the coaches more, but may have led to a greater degree of behavioural change on their behalf. A potential support mechanism may have been the use of ‘project buddies’, or coaches who worked in pairs throughout the project. Whilst this lack of planning and presence of the other limitations discussed are undesirable, they have helped to generate new lines of enquiry. Furthermore, in the vast majority of cases, these limitations can now be accounted for using the recommendations presented here.

5.5 Future research

As well as findings derived from data analysis and methodological review, the limitations identified within this research project have opened up areas for future research. General recommendations for future researchers include extending the use of PAR in coach development and coach education, both within and outside educational environments. Whilst PAR helped to contextualise the living theory of practice produced in this study, researchers should seek to detail the PAR process in other applied contexts, and highlight the messy reality of applying it in similarly uncontrollable environments. This will serve to inform researchers of the pitfalls associated with conducting a PAR study, and how to pre-emptively mitigate against potential implementation barriers. Such research will also serve to highlight to researchers the strengths of PAR, and how it can be used to alter coach behaviours. Given the increased role community football organisations like PLCF are playing in primary school P.E.

delivery (Parnell et al., 2016), and the findings presented in this thesis, researchers are also encouraged to investigate the relationships between schools and external football-based P.E. providers, with a view to optimising the P.E. delivery experience for the coaches. This research avenue will also have benefits for primary school pupils, whose P.E. lessons are being delivered by external coaches. Researchers must also investigate the position of P.E. in the primary school P.E. curriculum, and attempt to explain why it appears to be falling further down the list of priority subjects, despite the funding schools receive via the P.E. and Sport Premium (see Department of Education, 2020b). Alongside these general recommendations, there are a series of specific areas that need to be pursued.

In the case of the Coach Development Programme, future research should aim to assess the long-term success of the programme, and investigate the issues related to programme legacy following the withdrawal of the researcher as a support mechanism. Another area worthy of further examination is an exploration of the knowledge of coaches who have undertaken coaching qualifications that purport to contain material related to social and psychological development. As evidenced in the Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage, despite holding a range of coaching qualifications, PLCF coaches did not have a comprehensive understanding of life skill development before participating in the programme. However, because of the collaborative nature of the research project, a detailed examination of this lack of life skills knowledge was not prioritised.

Based on the findings presented, it is recommended that an advisory paper for researchers who are working collaboratively with community sport organisations be produced. This publication will provide both early career and experienced researchers with the information to plan and sustain a fruitful research partnership with such an organisation. More specifically, because it is difficult for novice researchers to enter the PAR world and immediately make sense of what is going on (McNiff & Whitehead, 2011), there is a need to

produce research which can inform future PhD researchers adopting similar methodologies or investigating similar topics. In addition to this, given that the isolating professional experience of youth sport coaches (Trudel & Gilbert, 2006) was mirrored by PLCF primary school P.E. coaches, researchers should examine the place of external primary school P.E. coaches in schools, the isolation that they experience, and how that impacts their practice. At present, it appears the isolating nature of the coaches' work is the consequence of pragmatic or financial decision, rather than decisions that are based on prioritising pupil learning, or creating positive working conditions for coaches. The research findings also serve as cue to investigate the role of Level 1 and 2 sports coaches who deliver primary school P.E., and the quality and content of lessons they are delivering to pupils. Finally, future researchers are encouraged to develop and employ strategies to evaluate life skill development and transfer, to understand the impact of life skill development programmes on end users, which in this instance are primary school P.E. pupils.

5.6 Conclusion

Given the exploratory nature of research, the findings are relevant across variety of interconnected fields. Primarily, the findings expand the existing understanding of coach behaviour change and life skill development in primary school P.E., which is in its infancy. It also advances understanding of partnerships between universities and community football organisations, and serves as an exemplar of high quality PAR. The strength of this project is evidenced in the change in PLCF coaches' behaviours, who now embed life skills in lessons to enhance the social and psychological well-being of the pupils. Other positive tangible outcomes include the Life Skills Coaching Resource and the creation of the Coach Development Manager role. The research project serves as example of how researchers can integrate input from those working in a particular context to produce both tangible and theoretical contextually-grounded outcomes. It also illustrates the advantages of applying PAR in life skill development and coach

development research, whilst illustrating the challenges of conducting research with external funders and secondary stakeholders. Collectively, the research supports the findings of researchers such as Bowley et al. (2018) and Lee et al. (2017), who noted that life skill development should not be the sole responsibility of the coach, but instead a collective endeavour supported by Head Teachers, class teachers, parents/guardians, and other individuals who have a developmental influence on young people. Such individuals serve to influence primary school children at micro-, meso- and exosystem levels.

This research has produced a raft of learnings for researchers and community football organisations alike. It has illustrated that coaches, irrespective of their understanding of a particular topic, possess the capacity to engage in meaningful behavioural change and have the capability to be high quality co-researchers in a PAR project. It also illustrates the multitude of ecological influences that PLCF coaches had to deal with in schools, which can make P.E. delivery and behavioural change such a struggle. This research also underlines the need for comprehensive planning to be conducted before a research project such as this is initiated, including input from primary and secondary stakeholders, as well as the lead researcher. A clear consensus between stakeholders is required from the outset of the project and throughout. The findings can be applied by universities collaborating with external primary school P.E. providers, whilst the learnings have implications for all Premier League and Football League community foundations, as well as The Football Association, National Sporting Governing Bodies, and Local and National Government. Given the wide range of findings and applied implications presented, this thesis represents a seminal step in the research area, given its originality.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: The Football Association Four Corner Model

TECHNICAL: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ball Mastery• Practice• Group play	PSYCHOLOGICAL: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understanding• Decision making• Confidence
PHYSICAL: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Co-ordination• Conditioning• Challenge	SOCIAL: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communication• Self-esteem• Teamwork

Appendix 2: Life Skills Coaching Resource (Final Version)

Name:

Date:

Year Group:

Sporting Activity:

Discuss Life Skills

- Define life skills.
- Discuss importance of life skills.
- Make children confident about developing life skills.
- Have reflective discussions on what life skills are.



Practice Life Skills

- Deliberately create opportunities to practice life skills in P.E. lessons.
- Get children to reflect on how life skills are used in in P.E. lessons.



Discuss Transfer

- Define transfer.
- Discuss importance of transfer
- Discuss opportunities for and examples of transfer.
- Make children confident about transfer.
- Have reflective discussions on life skill transfer.



Practice Transfer

- Set tasks for life skill transfer away from P.E.
- Have reflective discussions on how life skills were transferred.
- Speak to other teachers and parents about life skills.

Life Skill	Life Skill Definition	In-class Activity	Transfer Discussion Topic	Transfer Task
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

SOCIAL SKILLS						
Have a chat		Being a team		There for you		Take control
Communication		Inclusion		Friendship		Asking for help
Meeting and greeting		Team cohesion		Reliability		Leadership
Negotiation/ refusal skills		Teamwork		Social responsibility		Manage conflict
						Mutual respect
						Respond to people in need

PSYCHOLOGICAL SKILLS						
Yes, I can		Look within		Control the controllables		Work it out
Competence		Confidence		Discipline		Decision-making
Empowerment		Positive thinking		Goal setting		Meeting challenges
Focus		Self-confidence		Planning		Performing under pressure
Independence		Self-efficacy		Responsibility		Morality
Motivation						
Persistence		Self-esteem		Routine		Self-control
Taking initiative		Self-knowledge		Time-management		

Which life skills did I successfully embed?	How did I do that?
1.	
2.	

Which life skills did I struggle to embed?	What was the reason for that?
1.	
2.	

In-class Activity Diagram

How would I adapt this lesson in the future?

Appendix 3: Ethical Approval Letter



23 February 2017

Unique Ref: SMEC_2016-17_064

Darren Nolan (SHAS): 'Enhancing the psychological and social development of primary school children through a Premier League Football "Life Skills" programme'.

Dear Darren

University Ethics Sub-Committee

Thank you for submitting your ethics application for the above research.

I can confirm that your application has been considered by the Ethics Sub-Committee and that ethical approval is granted.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Conor Gissane'.

Prof Conor Gissane

Chair of the Ethics Sub-Committee

Cc Dr Natalie Campbell

Appendix 4: Participant Information Sheet



Participant Information Sheet:

Enhancing the psychological and social development of primary school children through a Premier League Football “Life Skills” programme

Dear Participant,

This study will aim to enhance the psychological and social development of the children involved [Premier League Football Club Community Foundation] (PLCF) physical activity programmes. In order to achieve this, a developmental coaching model will be constructed in collaboration with PLCF coaching staff. You are being invited to partake in this study as a participant. This study is a co-funded Ph.D. programme between PLCF and St. Mary's University, Twickenham. The research will be supervised by Dr. Natalie Campbell and Dr. Ceri Bowley. The results of this study will see the creation of a context-specific developmental coaching model, allowing PLCF coaches to embed psychological and social development teachings into their sessions. Please do not hesitate to contact lead researcher Darren Nolan for additional information.

Those being asked to participate in this study will be a PLCF coach over the age of 18. You have been invited to participate based on meeting these quality criteria. Should you wish, you have the right to refuse participation or to withdraw from this study at any point throughout its duration by e-mailing the lead researcher. If you chose to participate in this study, you will be asked to collaborate with session observations, individual interviews, focus groups discussions and a brief coach education process.

Participation in this study does not pose any major risks, although it is possible that different coaching philosophies will be challenged by participants during the interviews and focus groups. Should you feel discomfort at any point during the observations, interviews and/or focus groups, a stoppage will be permitted upon request. All data collected will remain strictly confidential and will be stored in a password protected database at St Mary's University. Following study completion, all participant information will remain confidential. No personal information will be released to any third party unless permitted by the participant. The results of the study will be compiled and presented as part of a Ph.D. thesis, in both written and oral format to current supervisory staff members at St. Mary's University Twickenham. Portions of the study may also be submitted for peer review journal articles and presented at relevant conferences.

By taking part in this research you will aid in the construction of a developmental coaching model aiming to enhance the psychological and social development of children within PLCF programmes. Benefits of participation include an increased knowledge and understanding of the psychological and social development of school children. You will also be equipped to embed psychological and social development teachings into your sessions. The study will commence in February 2017 and conclude in February 2019.

If you have any queries regarding any aspect of this research, please e-mail darren.nolan@stmarys.ac.uk.

Thank you for your consideration to take part in this study.

Darren Nolan.

Appendix 5: Participant Consent Form



St Mary's
University
Twickenham
London

Name of Participant: _____

Title of the project: Enhancing the psychological and social development of primary school children through a Premier League Football “Life Skills” programme.

Main investigator and contact details: Darren Nolan (darren.nolan@stmarys.ac.uk)

Members of the research team: Dr. Natalie Campbell, Dr. Ceri Bowley, Prof. Conor Gissane.

1. I agree to take part in the above research. I have read the Participant Information Sheet, which is attached to this form. I understand what my role will be in this research, and all my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.
2. I understand that I am free to withdraw from the research at any time, for any reason and without prejudice.
3. I have been informed that the confidentiality of the information I provide will be safeguarded.
4. I am free to ask any questions at any time before and during the study.
5. I have been provided with a copy of this form and the Participant Information Sheet.
6. I agree to give my permission for video/audio recording and note-taking to take place throughout the duration of the interview and focus group sessions.
7. I agree to give my permission for video/audio recording and field note-taking to take place during the observation sessions.

Data Protection: I agree to the University processing personal data which I have supplied. I agree to the processing of such data for any purposes connected with the Research Project as outlined to me.

Name of participant (print).....

Signed.....

Date.....

If you wish to withdraw from the research, please complete the form below and return to the main investigator named above.

Title of Project: Enhancing the psychological and social development of primary school children through a Premier League Football “Life Skills” programme.

I WISH TO WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY

Name: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 6: Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage Phase 1 Interview

Schedule

1. Could you give me an overview of your coaching career to date?
2. If you have one, could you please explain to me your personal coaching philosophy for P.E?
3. What is your understanding of the F.A. Four Corner Model?
4. What is your understanding of 'psychological development' in primary school children?
 - Can you give me any examples of psychological skills?
5. What is your understanding of 'social development' in primary school children?
 - Can you give me any examples of social skills?
6. How do you review session delivery?
7. How do you structure your session delivery in relation to skill development and competition?
8. What do you believe to be the most effective way to physically setup a session (placing of cones, children in lines/grids, etc.)?
9. How would you describe the culture in the foundation in relation to coaching in primary schools?

Appendix 7: Life Skills Coaching Resource (First Version)

Coach name:

Year group:

Sporting topic:

<u>Social Skills</u>		<u>Psychological Skills</u>	
Theme:		Theme:	
Named skill	Corresponding activity	Named skill	Corresponding activity
1.	1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.	3.
4.	4.	4.	4.
		5.	5.
		6.	6.
		7.	7.

SOCIAL SKILLS				
Have a chat	Being a team	There for you	Take control	Those around me
Meet & greet appropriately	Team cohesion	Social responsibility	Receive feedback & benefit from it	Respond to people in need
Negotiation/ refusal skills	Inclusion	Friendship	Help-seeking behaviours	Conflict management
				Mutual respect
Communication	Teamwork	Reliability	Leadership	Empathy

PSYCHOLOGICAL SKILLS					
Yes, I can	Look within	Control the controllables	Work it out	Good choices	Success & Failure
Taking initiative	Positive thinking	Time-management	Meeting challenges	Courage	Handling success
Motivation	Self- knowledge	Routine	Decision-making		
Independence	Self-confidence	Discipline	Performing under pressure	Self-control	Handling failure
Focus	Confidence	Goal setting			
Empowerment					
Persistence	Self-efficacy	Planning	Problem- solving	Morality	
Competence	Self-esteem	Responsibility			

Appendix 8: Observational Checklist Tool (Original Version)

Personal Philosophy		
Identifies emotions, feelings and values of children	Emphasise skill development not standard achievement	Genuine interest in the children
Explains vision, values and philosophy	Positive reinforcement	Player-centred approach
Lesson Construction		
Appropriate supervision	Clear & consistent structure	Skill instruction
Confidence in dealing with professional responsibilities	Uses appropriate coaching techniques	Oral/written communication skills
Leadership	Psychological Safety	Physical safety
Plans sessions	Integrates curriculum content	Assesses children's learning
Positive social norms	Reviews session with class	Works with colleagues
Individualisation		
Emotion identification	Innovation & Adaptability	Support for efficacy
Recognition of life skills for different groups	Recognition of technical skills for different groups	Understands the differences between players
Maintenance and Coping Strategies		
Conflict management	Continuous support	Punish misbehaviour
Role Multiplicity		
Advisor/Mentor	Trainer	Motivator
Understanding of Sport		
Tactical		Technical
Social Skills		
Communication	Conflict management	Positive social norms
Empathy	Empowerment	Friendship
Respond to people in need	Inclusion	Leadership
Negotiation/refusal skills	Team cohesion	Teamwork
Reliability	Mutual respect	Social responsibility
Ability to receive feedback and benefit from it	How to meet and greet appropriately	Help-seeking behaviours
Psychological Skills		
Ability to perform under pressure	Recognition and elimination of destructive behaviour	Risk-taking behaviours
Confidence	Self-progression monitoring	Courage
Decision-making	Discipline	Emotional control
Taking initiative	Focus	Goal setting
Handling success	Handling failure	Morality
Motivation	Persistence	Planning
Positive thinking	Routine	Responsibility
Risk-taking	Self-confidence	Self-control
Time management	Meeting challenges	Problem-solving
Independence	Ownership	Competence
Self-esteem	Reduced anxiety	Self-efficacy
Self-directed learning		Self-knowledge

Coach-Participant Relationship		
Positive relationship with coaches	Sensitivity for players with too much ambition	Shared vision with the participants
Working with children	Has professional relationship with children	Engages, motivates and inspires players
Supportive relationships		Respect
Social Self-awareness		
New friendships	Perceived social acceptance	Positive social norms
Well-being		
Behavioural well-being		Emotional well-being
Auxiliary Outcomes		
Body satisfaction	General health & fitness	Knowledge of P.E
Technical skill development		Tactical skill development

Appendix 9: Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage Phase 3 Interview

Schedule

1. Tell me what you think this research is about.
2. Tell me about your experience of being involved in this research study?
 - What has helped and/or hindered you as a coach?
3. I want you to be very honest with me. How motivated are you to be a part of this research project?
4. How do you think you have committed to the research project in terms of:
 - a) Lesson planning
 - b) Conducting lessons which incorporate life skills when I'm not observing
 - c) Asking me questions about the research
 - d) Providing me with feedback about the research
5. What is the best data collection method (e.g. interviews, empirical testing, questionnaire, observation) to use, in order to get an accurate reflection of what's going on day in, day out?
 - Why through [insert data collection method here]?
6. Could you describe how what I see during my observations compares to the lessons you conduct day in, day out?
7. During previous observations, how has my presence as an observer altered your pre-, during and post-lesson organisation?
8. Could you tell me how my presence as an observer has impacted your pre-, during and post-lesson decision-making?
9. In your opinion, what is the best way (e.g. interview, lesson observation, survey) for me to understand and record your opinions and values as a primary school P.E coach?
 - Why through [insert data collection method here]?

10. In your opinion, what is the best way (e.g. interview, lesson observation, survey) for me to view and record your attitudes and knowledge base as a primary school P.E coach?

- Why through [insert data collection method here]?

11. Going forward, what is a step that you as a coach could take to be more engaged with the research?

- What could you do as a coach to improve the research?

Appendix 10: Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage Phase 4 Cohort 1 Coach

Interview Schedule

Antecedents

1. From your perspective, what was the purpose or goal of this research?
2. What is your perception of success when considering the research?
 - To what extent did the research environment impact this level of success?
3. What was your motive to be involved in the research?
4. What is your perception of how the partners worked together?
5. What was your perception of how the research was planned?
 - Describe your perception of the decision-making process throughout the research process?
 - How did you feel that you had an input on decisions being made?

Management

1. Describe the main attributes of the research.
 - Can you provide examples of when the partners worked together both effectively and ineffectively?
 - How did staffing affect the research?
 - What do you feel that you and the other coaches learned from the research?
 - Was their mutual benefit, in your opinion? In other words, to what extent did both the coaches and St. Mary's benefit?
2. What was communication like between partners?
 - How would you define good quality communication? Based on this definition, was there good quality communication?
 - Did you ever feel out of the loop?

- What could have been altered to ensure better communication?
3. Describe the decision-making process within the partnership.
 - Did you ever perceive there to be any conflict between partners?
 - What was the balance of power like? Who lead the project?

Evaluation

1. What are your thoughts on the ongoing results of the partnership? (Process)
2. Have you seen any short-term impact from the research to date in your practice or that of other coaches? (Impact)
3. What is your perception of what the intended goal of this partnership is?
 - Do you think that the partnership has achieved its goal? (Outcome)
4. Do you feel that the information which emerged throughout the study was beneficial? (Formative)
5. How would you evaluate the success/effectiveness of the partnership?
 - How satisfied are you satisfied that both partners fulfilled their respective roles?
 - How do you feel the original aims of the partnership compare to what has been achieved?

Appendix 11: Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage Phase 4 Cohort 2 Coach

Interview Schedule

Antecedents

1. From your perspective, what was the purpose or goal of this research?
2. What is your perception of success when considering the research?
 - To what extent did the school environment impact this level of success?
3. What was your motive to be involved in the research?
4. What is your perception of how the partners worked together?
5. What was your perception of how the research was planned?
 - Describe your perception of the decision-making process throughout the research process?
 - How did you feel that you had an input on decisions being made?

Management

1. Describe the main attributes of the research.
 - Can you provide examples of when the partners worked together both effectively and ineffectively?
 - How did staffing affect the research?
 - What do you feel that you and the other coaches learned from the research?
 - Was their mutual benefit, in your opinion? In other words, did both the coaches and St. Mary's benefit?
2. What was communication like between partners?
 - How would you define good quality communication? Based on this definition, was there good quality communication?
 - Did you ever feel out of the loop?

- What could have been altered to ensure better communication?
3. Describe the decision-making process within the partnership.
 - Did you ever perceive there to be any conflict between partners?
 - What was the balance of power like? Who lead the project?

Evaluation

1. What are your thoughts on the ongoing results of the partnership? (Process)
2. Have you seen any short-term impact from the research to date in your practice or that of other coaches? (Impact)
3. What is your perception of what the intended goal of this partnership is?
 - Do you think that the partnership has achieved its goal? (Outcome)
4. Do you feel that the information which emerged throughout the study was beneficial? (Formative)
5. How would you evaluate the success/effectiveness of the partnership?
 - How satisfied are you satisfied that both partners fulfilled their respective roles?
 - How do you feel the original aims of the partnership compare to what has been achieved?

Appendix 12: Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage Phase 4 John Interview

Schedule

Antecedents

1. As far as you understand, what was the purpose or goal of this research?
2. What is your perception of success when considering the research?
 - To what extent did the research environment impact this level of success?
3. What was your motive to be involved in the research?
4. What is your perception of how the partners worked together?
5. What was your perception of how the research as planned?
 - Describe your perception of the decision-making process throughout the research process?

Management

1. Describe the main attributes of the research.
 - Can you provide examples of when the partners worked together both effectively and ineffectively?
 - How did staffing affect the research?
 - How have PLCF learned from the research?
2. What was communication like between partners?
 - How would you define good quality communication? Based on this definition, was there good quality communication?
 - Did you ever feel out of the loop?
3. Describe the decision-making process within the partnership.
 - Did you ever perceive there to be any conflict between partners?
 - What was the balance of power like? Who lead the project?

Evaluation

1. What are your thoughts on the ongoing results of the partnership? (Process)
2. Have you seen any short-term impact from the research? (Impact)
3. What is your perception of what the intended goal of this partnership is?
 - Do you think that the partnership has achieved its goal? (Outcome)
4. Do you feel that the information which emerged throughout the study was beneficial?
(Formative)
5. How would you evaluate the success/effectiveness of the partnership?
 - How satisfied are you satisfied that both partners fulfilled their respective roles?
 - How do you feel the original aims of the partnership compare to what has been achieved?

Appendix 13: Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage Phase 4 Kevin

Interview Schedule

Antecedents

1. As far as you understand, what was the purpose or goal of this research?
2. What is your perception of success when considering the research?
 - To what extent did the research environment impact this level of success?
3. What was your motive to be involved in the research?
4. What is your perception of how the partners worked together?
5. What was your perception of how the research as planned?
 - Describe your perception of the decision-making process throughout the research process?

Management

1. Describe the main attributes of the research.
 - Can you provide examples of when the partners worked together both effectively and ineffectively?
 - How did staffing effect the research?
 - How have your department learned from the research?
 - Was their mutual benefit, in your opinion?
2. What was communication like between partners?
 - How would you define good quality communication? Based on this definition, was there good quality communication?
 - Did you ever feel out of the loop?
3. Describe the decision-making process within the partnership.
 - Did you ever perceive there to be any conflict between partners?

- What was the balance of power like? Who lead the project?

Evaluation

1. What are your thoughts on the ongoing results of the partnership? (Process)
2. Have you seen any short-term impact from the research to date in you or your staff?
(Impact)
3. What is your perception of what the intended goal of this partnership is?
 - Do you think that the partnership has achieved its goal? (Outcome)
4. Do you feel that the information which emerged throughout the study was beneficial?
(Formative)
5. How would you evaluate the success/effectiveness of the partnership?
 - How satisfied are you satisfied that both partners fulfilled their respective roles?
 - How do you feel the original aims of the partnership compare to what has been achieved?

Appendix 14: Inquiry, Action and Reflection Stage Phase 5 Interview

Schedule

‘This isn’t a test. We want to hear about your experience whether it’s good or bad.’

1. From your perspective, what do you think the research has been about?

Prompt 1 - What do you think has been the primary aim of this project?

2. Can you please describe your experience of the coach education element of this research?

Note: Explain coach education if they don’t understand.

Prompt 1 - How did you feel about being involved in this project?

Prompt 2 - Have your views on this research changed throughout your involvement?

3. How do you think this research relates to the F.A. four corner player development model?
4. What have you learned from the coach education process?

Prompt 1 - Can you explain to me what life skills are?

Prompt 2 - How does a coach develop life skills in children through primary school P.E?

Prompt 3 - What would be an example of some psychological skills?

Prompt 4 - Could you describe what you think psychological skills are?

Prompt 5 - Could you give me a few examples of social skills?

Prompt 6 - Could you describe what you think social skills are?

Prompt 7 - What has this project required you to do that you previously didn’t do?

5. What has helped you most in participating in the coach education? Could you please explain why?
6. What has hindered you the most in participating in the coach education? Could you please explain why?
7. What did you find challenging about the research and why?
8. What elements, if any, of your coaching practice have changed as a result of the coach education process?

Prompt 1 - Have you noticed any differences in the way you prepare lessons?

Prompt 2 - Are there any differences in the way you deliver lessons?

Prompt 3 - How has the way in which you reflect on lessons changed?

Prompt 4 - Can you recall the last time you altered your practice in a significant way?

9. What has helped you the most in changing your coaching practice? Could you please explain why?
10. What has hindered you the most in changing your coaching practice? Could you please explain why?
11. Have you noticed any difference in the children since you been employing strategies to explicitly teach life skills?
12. If the research were to be re-started, what steps do you believe could be taken to ensure the coach education process was more effective?
13. If the research were to be undertaken again, what steps do you believe could be taken to ensure that behaviour change was facilitated?

Appendix 15: Host Organisation Letter



Dear Sir/Madam,

I hereby grant Darren Nolan, of St Marys University Twickenham; permission to conduct research on behalf of [Premier League Football Club Community Foundation] and to complete the study of his Ph.D.

I also allow permission for him to use [Premier League Football Club Community Foundation] premises, work with [Premier League Football Club Community Foundation] staff, and link in with partners to complete this research.

Any further information need, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely,




PE and School Sport Manager

