Sheffield Hallam University

You wouldn't let your phone run out of battery: An interpretative phenomenological analysis of male professional football coaches' well-being.

HIGHAM, Andrew, NEWMAN, James, RUMBOLD, James
<http://orcid.org/0000-0002-1914-1036> and STONE, Joseph
<http://orcid.org/0000-0002-9861-4443>

This document is the Published Version [VoR]

Citation:

Copyright and re-use policy

You wouldn't let your phone run out of battery: an interpretative phenomenological analysis of male professional football coaches' well-being

Andrew J. Higham, James A. Newman, James L. Rumbold & Joseph A. Stone

Published online: 23 Sep 2023.

Submit your article to this journal ⬈

View related articles ⬈

View Crossmark data ⬈

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

You wouldn't let your phone run out of battery: an interpretative phenomenological analysis of male professional football coaches' well-being

Andrew J. Higham ⬥, James A. Newman ⬥, James L. Rumbold ⬥ and Joseph A. Stone ⬥

Academy of Sport and Physical Activity, Sheffield Hallam University, Sheffield, UK

ABSTRACT

Little is known about how coaches make sense of and experience well-being within their given context as athletes have traditionally been at the forefront of well-being research, which is concerning given coaches are as susceptible to well-being challenges. Considering well-being and coaching comprise of many idiosyncratic and sociocultural interactions, the present study employed a combined bioecological and interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) approach to explore how six professional football coaches make sense of and experience well-being within the context of football clubs. Due to IPA's contextualist position, commitment to the individual, and ability to empower and give voice, two group experiential themes were created: 'The endeavour to comprehend coaches' well-being', and 'Volatility of the football coaching profession: fragmented well-being'. Findings showed that football coaches made sense of their well-being by drawing on past playing experiences and sociocultural interactions, with some coaches comprehending well-being as a physical and mental battery. Additionally, several coaches experienced a fragmentation of self and subsequent well-being due to conflicts within and between their ecological niche. A combined bioecological and IPA approach facilitated and enriched how well-being was contextually made sense of and experienced.

The concept of well-being has been debated across many contexts, including sport (Lundqvist 2011), health (Kiefer 2008), and the workplace (Bone 2015). Despite varying theoretical explanations of well-being some agreement exists that it is a complex, subjective, and multifaceted phenomenon, incorporating hedonic (i.e. subjective) and eudaemonic (i.e. psychosocial) dimensions (Lundqvist 2011). Organisations such as professional sport clubs have considerable interest in promoting staff well-being with reported benefits to health and performance outcomes (Didymus, Rumbold, and Staff 2018). Yet athletes are often prioritised over organisational staff (i.e. coaches), which is of concern given coaches impact their work environment as much as the environment can influence the individual (Didymus, Rumbold, and Staff 2018). Therefore, understanding well-being is not only critical for the coach, but also for the wider impact the coach's well-being might have on the athletes (Potts, Didymus, and Kaiseler 2021). Nevertheless, coaches' well-being has typically been neglected (Kenttä, Olusoga, and Bentzen 2020), which is alarming due to past calls for research to explore what well-being means to coaches (i.e. how they make sense of the construct) and to establish appropriate theoretical frameworks (Norris, Didymus, and Kaiseler 2017).

CONTACT Andrew J. Higham ✉ andrew.higham@shu.ac.uk 🏛 Academy of Sport and Physical Activity, Sheffield Hallam University, Sheffield, UK

Well-being is often addressed when quantitatively examining stressors, coping, and burnout, thus focusing on ill-being whilst overlooking well-being (Kenttä, Olusoga, and Bentzen 2020) and the collective person-context interaction of well-being 'in-the-world' (Sarvimäki 2006). Although qualitative thematic research exploring stress transactions and social support has progressed understanding of the individual-environment relationship (Baldock et al. 2021), it conversely compartmentalises and isolates well-being, ignoring the wider personal-contextual interactions within one's lifeworld. Hence, to holistically understand coaches' well-being, a methodological approach, such as interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) is befitting to explore and make sense of such personal-contextual interactions. Moreover, to explore these interactions and the multi-layered idiosyncrasies of coaches' well-being, Bronfenbrenner's (2005) Bioecological model provides an ideal lens through which psychosocial and sociocultural influences, and the often-complex lived experience of coaches can be qualitatively examined (Higham et al. 2023). Specifically, Bronfenbrenner's Process-Person-Context-Time (PPCT) model which suggests human development is shaped by repeated psychosocial proximal processes, personal characteristics, interrelating nested systems, and temporality (cf. Bronfenbrenner and Morris 2006). Thus, factors which influence well-being ideology (Bone 2015) include but are not limited to the interrelated microsystem (e.g. workplace), mesosystem (e.g. player-colleague relations), exosystem (e.g. trade unions), macrosystem (e.g. organisational culture), and chronosystem (e.g. sociohistorical events).

The primary intent of the Bioecological model is not to claim answers but to offer a framework to advance the discovery of processes and conditions that delineate the scope and limits of human development (Bronfenbrenner 2005). Hence, ecological methodologies should be in 'the discovery' mode rather than the mode of verification suggesting inductive enquiries are better suited to this model than deductive reasoning (Rosa and Tudge 2013, 254). Yet, the more traditional qualitative models of thematic organisation have been criticised as they 'presuppose that these experiences impacting well-being can be neatly separated in the first place' (Ventresca 2019, 180). Given the apparent importance of the various interactional components which contribute to the lived experience of coaches' well-being, researchers must continue to diversify their approach and avoid relying on examinations of these factors in isolation. Here we suggest implementing a combined bioecological and IPA approach as an ecological niche is constituted in a phenomenological field that orients an individual's actions and interactions (cf. Rosa and Tudge 2013). Therefore, considering coaching (Cushion and Jones 2006) and well-being (Kiefer 2008) comprise of idiosyncratic sociocultural interactions, IPA is well suited to provide a detailed, nuanced analysis of coaches' well-being experiences and interpretations within context. For instance, due to IPA's phenomenological, hermeneutic, and idiographic underpinning it enables the participant and researcher to make sense of the interdependent relationship between the 'person' and their 'world' (Smith, Flowers, and Larkin 2022), which is central when addressing the taken-for-granted (e.g. well-being; Seamon 2018). Hence the researcher is concerned with multi-layered contextual analysis, meaning focus is on examining not only different microsystems (e.g. work, home, community) but also interpreting the influences of the individual's experiences between systems (Bone 2015).

A further justification for a combined bioecological and IPA approach surrounds professional football organisations being viewed as total institutions (Goffman 1959) which are closed social systems shaped by sociocultural norms that can cultivate narrow identities and hegemonic beliefs amongst players and coaches (Champ et al. 2020). This is of concern given many coaches and players who transition into coaching, will have been ingrained and influenced by football's culture for significant proportions of their lives. Consequently, person-environment interactions over time can shape horizons (e.g. what one can see or understand) on a given concept or ideology (Gadamer 2013). Insofar a coach's horizon of well-being may be narrowed or widened by sociohistorical (chronosystem) experiences (e.g. past playing career and cultural norms). Therefore, given the life context which surrounds an individual is critical for understanding how they make sense of well-being (Lundqvist 2011), a phenomenological approach can enrich understanding of well-being (Kiefer 2008; Sarvimäki 2006). For instance, rather than capturing

objective measurements based on phenomenon prevalence, phenomenological approaches (e.g. IPA) have proven to be valuable when capturing the essence of football coaches' social worlds, such as sensemaking and experiences of stressors and burnout (Dixon and Turner 2018; Lundkvist et al. 2012).

In sum, this study employs an IPA approach and bioecological framework to further understanding of professional football coaches' well-being. Consequently, the aim of the study is to explore how professional football coaches experience and make sense of well-being within the context of football club environments. By employing a combined IPA and bioecological approach, we intend to enrich the current understanding of coaches' well-being, develop theoretical insight, and contextualise well-being experiences.

Method

Design

This study adopted an interpretivist philosophical paradigm, informed by a social constructionist epistemology (i.e. knowledge of coaches' well-being is constructed via sociocultural interactions), and a relativist ontology (i.e. multiple interpretations of coaches' well-being exist) to comprehend the world from the participants' point of view (Smith and McGannon 2018). Therefore, aligning with the adopted IPA and bioecological underpinnings, a coach's sensemaking (i.e. perceived truth) of well-being may be relative to the various interactions and contexts (i.e. workplace, homelife and culture) they experience. For instance, IPA embraces Gadamer's (2013) concept of horizons (e.g. one's assumptions, beliefs, and cultural background) which shapes an individual's understanding of the world. This understanding compliments the bioecological approach (e.g. PPCT model; Bronfenbrenner 2005) because horizons are not fixed and are constantly shaped due to proximal processes (i.e. reciprocal interactions) within and between one's ecological niche. Thus, a combined bioecological and IPA approach was deemed appropriate as they aim to explore how individuals contextually make sense of their personal and social world (Smith, Flowers, and Larkin 2022; Bronfenbrenner 2005). Moreover, due to the phenomenological essence of well-being, IPA's phenomenological, hermeneutical, and idiographic underpinning (Smith, Flowers, and Larkin 2022) acknowledges well-being lived experiences as subjective, fluid and constructed by coaches, as they interpret and develop their social understanding. Insofar, the coaches' sensemaking was unravelled by the lead author engaging with the double hermeneutic of IPA, whereby they tried to make sense of how football coaches' understood their well-being and personal worlds. Consequently, a detailed idiographic examination of each coach's well-being prior to a tentative cross-case analysis was conducted (Nizza, Farr, and Smith 2021).

Participants

Six male professional football coaches ($M^{age} = 38.2 \pm 5.9$ years; $M^{coaching-experience} = 12 \pm 4.8$ years) were purposively sampled and recruited to obtain a homogenous sample (see Table 1). For context, all coaches were ex-players (three professional and three semi-professional) who had transitioned into coaching. This homogenous sample of professional coaches facilitated a detailed exploration of convergences and divergences within and between coach accounts. Professional coaches were characterised as those who have been employed full-time and worked at a professional football club in the English Premier League (EPL) or English Football League (EFL) at first team or academy level (Higham et al. 2021). Therefore, the inclusion criteria for the study were: (i) the participant identifies as male and can speak fluent English, (ii) they had a minimum of one year's coaching experience working within an EPL (i.e. tier one) or EFL (i.e. tiers two, three, and four) club in the UK.

Table 1. Participant characteristics.

Participant	Age	Coaching experience	Coaching role	Qualifications	Employment status	Club level
Ben	32	14 years	Previously an academy coach and international FA coach educator	**Coaching**: UEFA A License **Academic**: Postgraduate working towards PhD	Unemployed at the time of interview	Previously worked across several tiers
Connor	39	16 years	Academy coach	**Coaching**: UEFA A Licence, FA Advanced Youth Award **Academic**: Undergraduate degree	Paid Full-time	Professional tier one
John	47	14 years	Academy coach	**Coaching**: UEFA A License, Undertaking Pro License **Academic**: No degree	Paid Full-time	Professional tier two
Max	40	7 years	Assistant head coach	**Coaching**: UEFA A License **Academic**: No degree	Paid Full-time	Professional tier four
Michael	40	16 years	Academy coach	**Coaching**: UEFA A License, FA Advanced Youth Award **Academic**: Postgraduate working towards Masters	Paid Full-time	Professional tier three
Will	31	5 years	Goalkeeper coach	**Coaching**: UEFA A License **Academic**: Postgraduate PhD	Paid Full-time	Professional tier one

UEFA = the Union of European Football Associations | FA = Football Association.

Interview guide

Ethics approval was obtained via Sheffield Hallam University's ethics committee. Coaches were then invited to take part in the study via email and supplied with a participant information sheet, an informed consent form, and the opportunity to ask questions prior to participation. A semi-structured interview guide was developed and began by easing participants into recalling familiar descriptive accounts (Smith, Flowers, and Larkin 2022). The opening prompt was 'talk to me about your coaching experiences within football'. Afterwards, more investigative questions were introduced, such as 'in your own opinion, what is well-being?', 'how does it make you feel coaching in football?', and 'how do you personally experience well-being within your role?'. When interviewing, the lead author engaged in active, supportive listening, using prompts and probes to encourage rich discussion and elaboration (Smith, Flowers, and Larkin 2022). The interviews were conducted over phone and online via Zoom, which were audio recorded ($M^{duration} = 91$ min ±24.4 min).

Data analysis

Data were analysed in line with the principles of IPA research (Smith, Flowers, and Larkin 2022), resulting in seven stages: (i) adhering to the idiographic commitment of IPA, the interview audio files were transcribed verbatim and re-read individually by the lead author, allowing them to become immersed in the data and lifeworld of each participant; (ii) the lead author began line-by-line analysis of the first transcript, noting exploratory comments (e.g. either descriptive, linguistic, or conceptual) in the right hand margin of the text. For example, when the coaches used metaphors and analogies; (iii) experiential statements were established in the left margin of text. These statements were grounded in the data but also captured the conceptual, psychological essence of the exploratory notes in a reduced volume of detail; (iv) the experiential statements were then clustered into a logical structure representing similar and differing concepts, which was an iterative and time-consuming process due to regression and progression between stages; (v) once the clustering of experiential statements was agreed upon between all authors, we created a table of personal experiential themes, where each cluster was named to identify the relevant information from all the experiential statements residing under it; (vi) the above process was then repeated for all participants to establish their own personal experiential themes, which

in turn allowed for the identification of similarities and differences between all participants. The final stage resulted in the creation of group experiential themes, which represent the convergences and divergences across the whole sample, allowing for a detailed investigation to take place.

Research quality

We adopted a relativist position which allowed flexibility, ensured sound qualitative practice, and maintained data trustworthiness (Smith and McGannon 2018). Considering the contextual nature of the study, significant efforts were made to understand the 'sensitivity of context' (Yardley 2017). For instance, close attention was given to the sociocultural context within professional football organisations and how it may influence perceptions on well-being. We also acknowledged that those who reside within football are often accustomed to quick journalistic interviews than the proposed in-depth, researcher-led interviews (Roderick 2006). Therefore, to harness depth, trust was of paramount importance in the interview context (Roderick 2006), which is why we explicitly stated that confidentiality and anonymity (e.g. use of pseudonyms and secure storage of data) would be granted.

To provide transparency (Yardley 2017) and align with a reflexive approach, the lead author had previously delivered psychoeducational workshops to U14 and U16 academy players within a professional club environment and is currently undertaking a PhD which explores professional football coaches' well-being. Therefore, from personal experience, the lead author has been exposed to a club's culture and practices, along with well-being literature. The lead author attempted to bracket preconceptions and drew on the co-authors to act as critical friends and theoretical soundboards during the analysis process, to encourage reflexivity on interpretations and opinions (Smith and McGannon 2018). For example, we scheduled challenging but supportive co-author meetings which invited critical discussions on theme formulation and how participants' accounts could be enriched by theoretical interpretation. This was not to establish consensus but to develop the lead author's interpretations (Smith and McGannon 2018). Finally, when conducting the analysis, we were cognisant of Nizza, Farr, and Smith's (2021) four markers for high quality IPA and thus attempted to construct '*a compelling, unfolding narrative*'; conduct a '*close analytic reading of participants' words*'; develop a '*vigorous experiential account*'; and display '*convergence and divergence*' between and within coaches' accounts.

Findings and discussion

Two group experiential themes were identified during the analysis; 'The endeavour to comprehend coaches' well-being', and 'Volatility of the football coaching profession: fragmented well-being', with each comprising of two subordinate themes. The findings are described, interpreted, and discussed in relation to pertinent literature, with a multivocality of coach accounts provided. Bronfenbrenner's (2005) bioecological approach and PPCT model are employed as frameworks to explore well-being experiences and sensemaking.

The endeavour to comprehend coaches' well-being

The word endeavour is used to represent the participants' challenges to understand and make sense of their well-being within context. Coaches' interactions within and between multiple levels of their ecological niche, such as interpersonal interactions and football club culture appeared to shape horizons (Gadamer 2013) of well-being.

Making sense of well-being

This theme captures how coaches navigate their thoughts and contextual experiences to comprehend well-being. Several coaches acknowledged well-being to be individualised and context specific, as discussed by Ben:

> I think, coach [pauses], if I've understood the question correctly. I imagine coach well-being links to tuning in on how is that individual? What's going on in their world? What stresses are they under and how can we support them? And it's not necessarily just stresses that might be related to their role because there's influences outside of their role that we need to be aware of … issues at home.

Ben pausing and querying his understanding of the question suggests uncertainty, which many other coaches expressed when discussing well-being. However, Ben's reference to stress, support systems, and wider contextual demands (i.e. issues at home) illuminates the bioecological nature and person-context interaction of well-being. The issue for Ben was being out of work whilst his wife was pregnant, hence interactions within and between his microsystems (e.g. work and home) shaped his understanding and experience of well-being (Bronfenbrenner and Morris 2006). This highlights how a coach's well-being is not only intertwined within the sporting context, but within their wider world, and more so how simply experiencing 'being-in-the-world', in ordinary everydayness (Sarvimäki 2006) can shape well-being sensemaking. Additionally, despite struggling to comprehend well-being, several coaches made sense of it by using a 'battery' analogy, whereby 'energy' influences physical, behavioural, social, and psychological dimensions of well-being:

> Your energy thing obviously helps you to work more effective. So, I think this energy and battery analogy is quite cool … The spark will jump over to other people around you. So, as much as I think other people … can drain your energy or pull you down. You can also pull other people up by being a positive character and by having good energy in an environment, then again I think this always correlates with well-being. If I've positive energy … feel good … motivated… I think my well-being is on a very different level… Whereas if I feel fatigued … not motivated, or sad … I'm not going to be in a good mental state. (Will)

Will's well-being energy analogy acknowledges the importance of the person (e.g. characteristics) and their proximal processes (e.g. interactions within and between microsystems) in context (Bronfenbrenner and Morris 2006). Insofar, the individual (i.e. coach) and those in their environment (e.g. colleagues) can influence well-being bi-directionally. Therefore, individual well-being appears to be made sense of by acknowledging both intra and interpersonal interactions. Converging with Will, Ben utilised a mobile phone's battery analogy to make sense of well-being:

> What energy levels are [you] running on? So, if you look at like your mobile phone, how much battery has it got? People do of course let their phone go dead or [on] fumes, but you immediately want to charge it up, don't you? How often do we do that with ourselves? Where people just need a charge up, and are we the ones to charge them up?

Physical and mental energy appear to be a core component of well-being for both Will and Ben as they recognise that 'batteries' supply energy and can occasionally die or be low, alluding towards experiences of burnout and fatigue (Kenttä, Olusoga, and Bentzen 2020). Moreover, from our interpretations Ben's questioning of 'are we the ones to charge them up?' implies managing well-being should not solely rest on the individual and that wider support should be offered. One way to increase wider support is for organisations to improve their understanding of what well-being is and to educate themselves and their employees on the concept (Purcell et al. 2022). However, this is made hard due to a lack of understanding of the concept (Norris, Didymus, and Kaiseler 2017). Nonetheless, comprehension and education of coaches' well-being could be aided by comparing it to something tangible and known, such as a phone battery. This simplistic analogy could raise awareness and educate organisations about how thwarted well-being can be detrimental to coaching performance (Potts, Didymus, and Kaiseler 2021).

The person-context component of well-being was reiterated by Connor, an academy coach at a Premier League club and Max, an assistant first team manager at a league two club. The contexts of academy and first team coaches are typically portrayed to significantly differ, yet both make sense of

well-being by its connection with club matchday results. For example, Connor stated 'No one wants to say it, but it's there as the elephant in the room. So literally something that's pretty much out your control [matchday results] is dictating whether you have a good week or not'. The 'elephant in the room' metaphor suggests organisations and their personnel are aware of the effect results have on coaches' well-being, usually because coaches associate winning with perceived job security (Higham et al. 2021). Yet this is an issue for coaches' well-being as results are typically out of their control and are dictated by player performances. This highlights how distal interactions between the microsystem (e.g. team) and exosystem (e.g. opposition) shape well-being sensemaking and experiences. Similarly, Max displayed how matchday results not only affect individual well-being but subsequent behaviours and interactions within wider systems (e.g. home-life):

> [You're] miserable, you're not working out as much . . . you're fretting a bit more about things and you're a little bit more miserable at home, you then get in arguments at home with the wife, or you're not present at home [when losing] . . . But when you win, you're buzzing, 'I am out tonight . . . we're off out for some food tonight', you're naturally a bit more upbeat. But when you get beat, it's like [the] fucking end of the world.

We interpret Max's struggles of 'fretting a bit more' as insecurity, 'not present at home' with immersion in role, and 'like [the] fucking end of the world' as lacking emotional management. However, he displays hedonia and positive behaviours such as socialising with others when winning. Therefore, in addition to living interactions (e.g. social exchanges), coaches' well-being and subsequent behaviours can be shaped by non-living interactions (e.g. matchday results) within their ecological niche (Bronfenbrenner 2005).

Contrastingly, Will, another first team coach, argued that coaches should not allow their 'feelings [to] depend on mere results' as they 'can drag you down quite quickly'. Will may have this alternative outlook due to his postgraduate educational background widening his horizons of understanding (Gadamer 2013), as he is accustomed to learning about and accepting others' views. For instance, his sensemaking of well-being was widened by the views of his experienced colleagues:

> Everybody was like 'yeah don't worry . . . it [the season] is a marathon, not a race' . . . Everybody was so relaxed . . . I was obviously the young coach. I was very driven by these results, so this was the first time where I really started thinking 'alright, I need to get a different mindset towards the results'. . . . It reminded me there's more to what I do as a coach and how I need to feel about it, than just one result or two bad results in a row. So this was one thing that I learned and that helps me feel much better.

The PPCT model expresses how a person's characteristics (e.g. age, past experiences) can influence how individuals will interpret and act (Bronfenbrenner and Morris 2006). Therefore, because Will was young, open-minded, studying a postgraduate degree, and interacting with experienced coaches, the conversational exchanges (i.e. fusion of horizons; Gadamer 2013) widened his perspective about results within his role. It is suggested that coaches who can separate themselves from matchday results can benefit (Lundkvist et al. 2012), which was the case for Will as it made him 'feel much better', effectively facilitating well-being. Consequently, the Bioecological and PPCT models (Bronfenbrenner 2005) are suitable frameworks to aid sensemaking of coaches' well-being as participant accounts aligned with acknowledging the importance of individual characteristics (i.e. person), as well as the proximal processes that interact within and between their ecological niche (i.e. context).

Are they stuck in old ways?

This theme exhibits how the macrosystem (e.g. club culture) and chronosystem (e.g. sociohistorical experiences) can influence how coaches make sense of well-being (Bronfenbrenner 2005). Many coaches claimed that football is outdated, with Michael saying, 'it's traditionally quite an old school, dinosaur, male driven industry . . . you've got to toughen up and gotta get on with it'. The use of the term 'dinosaur' emphasises how he views football's culture as primitive and outdated, where worryingly, prehistoric cultural norms can challenge the evolution and progression of coaching beliefs (Potts, Didymus, and Kaiseler 2021). Connor also claimed that toughening up is expected:

> Probably only recently . . . people started to talk about it [well-being]. It's not, you know, whatever I've done, I got about, 16 years I've been coaching, and you kind of were just expected to toughen up, not show sort of any vulnerability or weakness.

Connor's use of 'expected' signifies the perceived pressure from his club's traditional masculine culture to not display vulnerability. For instance, this may be why many coaches 'toughen up' and suppress their feelings, as the football culture (macrosystem) they interact with promotes masculine norms like the suppression of feelings and health-related concerns (Manley, Roderick, and Parker 2016). This demonstrates how macrosystem (e.g. cultural) interactions can influence a coach (e.g. identity), their microsystem (e.g. organisation; Bronfenbrenner 2005), and well-being sensemaking. Moreover, several coaches drew on past playing experiences (chronosystem) to inform their current horizon of understanding (Gadamer 2013):

> I've never really delved into it [well-being]. I've never really needed to go and educate myself on it. I've never really had those, deep-lying problems that one would have, or those issues. I was a strong character . . . I've never really had the need to go knock on the door and say 'listen, can I have a chat, put your arm around me'. My attitude has always been well, 'I'll show you' . . . that was always my mentality and I carried that on into my coaching and managing so . . . well-being is never something I've really 110% delved into. I've never really had the need to, but I need to broaden my horizons and learn about it. (John)

The oldest coach of the sample John understands and makes sense of well-being from his past playing and coaching experiences, as well as his interactions with traditional football culture. As a result, John appears to perform his gender (Butler 1988) by drawing on his masculine identity to make sense of why he disregards well-being, claiming that he was a 'strong character' who did not need support when he was a player and thus carried this view into his coaching practice. John claiming, he had no 'deep-lying problems', is possibly due to his prolonged exposure to traditional masculine cultural norms. Seemingly exposure to the culture of professional football has narrowed his horizons (Gadamer 2013) on well-being, ingraining a dated psychological outlook. Insofar, John addressed how transitioning from player to coach instilled a perceived 'stigma' around seeking support:

> In football you've got to be a tough guy, mentally strong and all that. There is a stigma attached to it, that I think players genuinely feel uncomfortable to open up, as in it makes them look weak or you're not mentally strong . . . The vast majority of managers and coaches were players, so they came up through that and they've still got the same kind of mentality as in they don't really want to open up or they see it as a bit of a negative to open up.

Here John utilises second- and third-person speech, possibly because he feels uncomfortable discussing his own well-being experiences through fear of being judged. Thus, utilising alternative points of view could be his way of opening up about his well-being without compromising his masculinity (Butler 1988). Moreover, John goes on to say 'never back in my day did we even contemplate . . . You know if somebody mentioned a psychologist, straightaway you'd be thinking I'm not mad [crazy], I don't need to go see [a psychologist]'. John further informs his current horizon of understanding from past experiences, pathologising individuals as mad for seeking psychological support, and associating well-being to mental disorders. This can be described as cultural reproduction (Cushion and Jones 2014), where John's life as a player was instilled with hegemonic beliefs that are hard to change due to legitimised social practices in his environment. Therefore, like how critical moments can impact football players (Nesti et al. 2012), we argue critical interactions and transitions (proximal processes) over time (chronosystem) within a coach's ecological niche (Bronfenbrenner 2005) can contribute significantly to horizons of understanding (Gadamer 2013), such as the development of well-being sensemaking.

Alternatively, Ben who is younger and has a postgraduate degree, attributed such conjecture and perplexity around well-being to a lack of education, 'not once have I ever been on a course where it's [well-being] been covered'. This highlights the insufficient (Higham et al. 2021) and often sporadic nature of education in football and reiterates that organisations should promote and deliver tailored psychoeducation on mental well-being within context (Purcell et al. 2022). Psychoeducation could

promote a fusion of horizons (Gadamer 2013) which may help change the narrative (i.e. stigma) attached to seeking support. However, as Bronfenbrenner (2005) suggests, for critical interactions (e.g. psychoeducation) to be effective it must happen consistently over prolonged periods (e.g. rather than a singular well-being education day). With our sample of coaches lacking regular exposure to well-being education and by informing current understanding with previous playing experiences, it could be assumed that there is a problematic generational lag regarding professional football coaches' well-being. Thus, coaches potentially struggle to comprehend the importance of their own well-being, as significant past experiences and proximal processes within their coaching context narrow present horizons of understanding (Gadamer 2013). However, Ben believes there will eventually be a generational shift in well-being perceptions due to seeing coaches and players actively engaging with contemporary practices:

> It is changing, there is a different influence coming through now within academy coaches in England within the EPPP [Elite Player Performance Plan] who are more educated . . . they are a different generation, they're probably around my age or younger. They've got teaching degrees . . . master's degrees, so they're a lot more educated in life . . . they're different type of people.

Therefore, well-being comprehension and support may improve due to the 'different generation' engaging with the EPPP, possibly because the younger coaches are a 'different type' who are educated and committed to psychologically support players (Champ et al. 2020). Thus, given that many of our participants were ex-players, current players who progress into coaching will become a new generation of key socialising agents, especially given the influential role the macrosystem (e.g. culture; Bronfenbrenner 2005) and cultural reproduction (Cushion and Jones 2014) can play in the football context. For instance, most of our sample had little exposure to psychological support when they were previously players, which legitimised their masculine norms and well-being stigmatisation. However, current players now have access to psychological support on a regular basis (Champ et al. 2020), which is essential for effective change over time (Bronfenbrenner 2005). Therefore, the 'different generation' of players progressing into coaching and existing coaches, should have consistently engaged with psychological support over time. Thus, consistent proximal interactions with psychological support and personnel (i.e. sport psychologists) should widen well-being understanding.

Volatility of the football coaching profession: fragmented well-being

We chose the terms volatility and fragmented as they represent our interpretations that coaches' well-being is continually shattered and reconstructed by the exchanges within their environment. Within this group experiential theme, we highlight how comprehension and sensemaking of coaches' well-being is shaped by perceived available support, identity conflictions, addictive tendencies, and experiences of isolation.

Consumed by the role
This theme portrays how coaches' well-being can become fragmented due to excessive immersion-in-place, resulting in a lived obliviousness as to how individual and relational well-being is influenced (Seamon 2018). Several coaches harnessed a sense of purpose and identity from their coaching role which caused well-being to flourish. Whereas for others their role cultivated obsessive tendencies that thwarted well-being:

> It's [switching off] very, very difficult . . . I've loved football, since I was young. I've lived from football. I eat, sleep, and drink football. That is me. That has been my life and a major part of me, because I love the game so much, and I have that passion for the game. So, I suppose it's very hard to just switch off and just to forget about it . . . I can't and that's just me, that's just my DNA. (John)

John's account displays how he battles to switch off as football is a part of him, within his 'DNA', implying football constitutes his identity (Lundkvist et al. 2012). Strong footballing identities tend to

be cultivated during playing careers (Nesti et al. 2012), which may explain John's unity with his coaching role as he is an ex-player who has been ingrained within football for a significant period of his life (chronosystem; Bronfenbrenner 2005). For example, his referral to 'I eat, sleep, and drink football' not only signifies the role football plays in his development as a person, but also in sustaining well-being. Insofar, Max's well-being and identity was fragmented when he experienced his first dismissal:

> It's all I know. I've been in it since 16, so I don't have anything else to go to. Like I said if I had anything else, I genuinely think I would go to it. I would miss football of course ... [the] constant communication and interaction, all day every day. Now [when fired] I have got no purpose to get up. I would be lying in bed ... I've fucking got no reason to get up.

The phrases 'It's all I know' and 'I don't have anything else to go to' evoke entrapment due to an immersion-in-place (Seamon 2018). Max's longstanding residence within football and the associated proximal processes (e.g. relationships and routines) in that context shaped a large fragment of his identity. For example, Max's removal from his immersive environment fragmented his identity and subsequent well-being due to a perceived lack of purpose (eudaemonia). Given football is part of Max's identity, becoming removed from it left him feeling an unauthentic self (Sarvimäki 2006), thwarting his well-being because of his everyday familiarity collapsing. However, Max further implied that even when employed his well-being was still constrained:

> [Football is] so short-term and there's so much pressure to be successful now. You need to win now, you need to keep us up [avoid league relegation] now. There's so much pressure on it that your focus is just always on that ... opposed to family life ... You don't enjoy your life as much, because your life is consumed by your need to win the next game ... You've got the little man [child to look after], but ... you are trying to think about the next game, or what am I going to do? How can I change things? How can I make things better? So, you are present but not present ... you are there in body but not in mind.

Max's obsessive tendencies and persistent ruminations appeared fuelled due to the short-termism of football, which was exacerbated as he had recently become a father and felt the need to provide for his family. Consequently, this resulted in Max immersing himself in work, which at the time cultivated a lived obliviousness to his surroundings (Seamon 2018). As a result, he engaged in less meaningful familial and home-life exchanges (microsystem; Bronfenbrenner 2005), which caused a fragmentation within his ecological niche and well-being because he had become mentally disassociated from family (Lundkvist et al. 2012). Therefore, organisations could support coaches by allowing them regular time to disassociate from and reflect on their role during a season which may promote greater self-awareness, interpersonal experiences, and well-being management. Furthermore, Max also provided parallels to that of a drug addict:

> It's the winning games ... That's what people thrive off, and it's the same thing that sends them to an early grave. But that's just what they kind of live with ... it's an extreme thing to say but it's a drug ... they get addicted to that adrenaline, that buzz ... it's a ridiculous profession ... but that's what they miss when they're not in [the profession] ... I can guarantee if you were to ask them, they would be like 'oh why am I back in this?', they forget the buzz and adrenaline, because it becomes relief.

It may be assumed common knowledge that positive results are associated with well-being (Baldock et al. 2021), but Max's account illuminates how they are not a stable long-term source for well-being. For instance, Max later claims the 'buzz' of winning wears off and hardship soon ensues. Therefore, like an addict, he craves the high of a substance (winning), but the comedown is abrupt. Connor acknowledged this instability of results, proclaiming 'you can't control the result, so take care of the processes and probably the result will be better than it is'. Thus, coaches should be aware that positive results can provide quick well-being fixes but should place greater importance on well-being sources within their immediate control. Moreover, we emphasise that coaches not only experience tangible addictions, such as alcohol consumption (Roberts et al. 2019), but become addicted to the sport they passionately love and the identity it brings. Consequently, if coaches are voicing addictive analogical accounts, then they must be supported aptly as becoming overly

immersed in their role can be detrimental towards well-being. In sum, we propose that a coach's well-being can become fragmented when their identity revolves around work as it can intensify addiction-like tendencies such as work obsession and persistent rumination.

Sink or swim

This theme attempts to illuminate how perceived isolation, as well as a lack of support and trust can influence experiences of well-being and its management. Ben encapsulated how most coaches experienced well-being challenges within their volatile environments, stating 'from a well-being perspective, you're constantly like, put your head in a tumble dryer and fucking turn it on. That's your head every day'. The reference to one's 'head in a tumble dryer' symbolises how well-being is tormented due to the relentless cycle of football matches and seasons. For instance, various coaches like Michael called football a 'sink or swim' environment, whereby one must keep their head above water to survive. Yet his account is rather nuanced, as initially he states:

> From my point of view, it's [the environment] a real good mix of professional coaches, with a lot of experience and that's why maybe the lens on well-being is less so, because those areas that potentially could develop into an issue for you don't because you've always got people who you've got good relationships with.

Here Michael frames the environment and those within it positively, as individuals who can support and buffer well-being challenges, which is important for mentally healthy environments (Purcell et al. 2022). However, later within the interview, perhaps when Michael becomes more relaxed and acquainted, he appears to open-up. Michael implies, due to a lack of structured support and not wanting to lose his job, he would suppress true feelings and cope alone:

> It's an industry where naturally you understand that you're fortunate to have the opportunity to do what you do . . . you're waking up every day doing something that you've always done, that you've always played, and that you fell in love with as a kid, and you know that there's so many people who would want to be in your position. So . . . when you go back to your well-being topic, you're almost under pressure just to get through and cope with that yourself if you do ever have an issue, because you don't want to lose that opportunity. So, there's no kind of formal structure there to help you if you need help, and you're under this internal pressure to think, well I love my job, and I want to work in football . . . but if I've got these issues, I've just got to deal with it myself, because there is no structure there to support me.

Michael's transformative account represents how reliance on micro-level (Bronfenbrenner 2005), unstructured interpersonal support systems are not enough to solely facilitate well-being. He repeatedly states there's no structured support, suggesting a want or possible need for formalised structured support. His concerns around job insecurity implies structured support would be best provided on a wider exo-level (e.g. union or governing body) as it would separate him from his immediate workplace, maintain anonymity, and improve perceived job-security and trust. Nevertheless, the perceived lack of structured support within his ecological niche fuelled suppression and isolation, which coaches often do to simply survive in their given context (Champ et al. 2020). The fear, doubt and lack of trust at a microsystem level impacted Ben, as he was dismissed by his manager when seeking support:

> He said, 'well look, if you're not happy just fuck off' . . . I was genuinely saying fucking hell I need help . . . I got dismissed. Who can you talk to? . . . I've never worked in an environment where somebody has literally said 'what's going on with you?' Because football typically doesn't afford itself to that . . . In terms of actual well-being within a club environment. I've never had anyone . . . even being remotely aware to the detail of how I'm doing.

Ben's experience demonstrates the disconnect between organisations' and coaches' well-being support, as his statement 'football typically doesn't afford itself to that' is a possible reference to how football's masculine cultural norms thwart sufficient support and displays of help-seeking behaviours. For instance, the football culture our coaches were typically exposed to socially legitimised (Cushion and Jones 2014) toughness and suppression over care and support. We suggest this was because most of our coaches believed they had to perform to their gender (Butler 1988) to feel secure in their role and meet institutional norms (Manley, Roderick, and Parker 2016). Consequently, due to a perceived lack of care, Ben appeared lost:

> There'll be times, where you feel like, real bad, like crap, because you just don't know who to talk to, and it can be very lonely, it can be quite a dark place. Where, you know, you feel like you're on your own and you just don't know what to do.

The use of 'dark place' could symbolise his isolation, but also the torment of his thoughts as he is left to conceal them within himself with no point of release (Roberts et al. 2019). Ben implies the loneliness and isolation which hindered his well-being did not only stem from absence of support, but because he believed he could not reveal his true self (e.g. vulnerabilities) due to fearing dismissal. This further perpetuated the notion that being an unauthentic self can hinder well-being (Sarvimäki 2006). There are suggestions that coaches should develop communication and relationship-building skills for well-being (Potts, Didymus, and Kaiseler 2021). However, we argue that coaches should not be solely held accountable and organisations have a duty to promote and support well-being within house. Yet Connor revealed how his current organisational support systems are not fit for purpose:

> This is going to come as a shock to some of the people in higher positions and that shouldn't be the case, that their fingers are not on the pulse with this stuff [coaches' well-being]. It probably shows you there's a breakdown in communication somewhere or [lacks] a process for people to open up.

Connor stressed that 'typically, in most environments you'd probably go to HR [human resources] and tell them how you're feeling', but due to having no relationship or 'level of trust' with HR he felt he had 'no-one really to talk to'. Consequently, for Connor's well-being to flourish organisational relationships and trust are of upmost importance. Furthermore, Connor's metaphoric 'finger on the pulse' not only represents a lack of organisational awareness of coaches' well-being, but also how some coaches are ahead of their organisations in their thinking. At an exosystem level (Bronfenbrenner 2005), Max was aware that trade unions such as the Professional Footballers' Association and League Managers Association (LMA) can offer support outside of his organisation. Max had previously spoken with a representative from the LMA but claimed 'the biggest problem . . . is when you don't know anyone there. So, there's no relationship . . . you're just phoning a random number and you're getting a random person answering it'. He further argues:

> I think when you've got these [well-being] problems you really need to have a relationship with somebody and actually be comfortable saying these things. You know what I mean? Have trust in that person that they have got a genuine interest in your well-being.

Therefore, Max's well-being appears to thrive when operating within trustworthy, psychologically safe environments, which promote genuine care for well-being and comprise of well-established and authentic relationships (Purcell et al. 2022). Moreover, support networks should be cultivated across micro- (work-life) and exo-levels (governing bodies) because Max believes there could be fatal consequences if proactive well-being support is not in place for coaches:

> Unfortunately, something serious is going to happen, somebody like a [British celebrity who committed suicide] for instance . . . something is going to happen with a manager eventually through a mental state where they commit suicide or something really fucking tragic, and, it's going to have to take that unfortunately before anything happens.

Max's account shifts Connor's previous statement 'finger on the pulse' from a figurative meaning to a literal risk, which is concerning given that football coaches have taken their lives over similar experiences in the past (Roberts et al. 2019). Max's plea for proactive support focused on organisations tackling fan and media abuse, something which he states transitions from 'a work-related matter . . . [to] a life related matter', thus highlighting how work interactions can bleed into personal lives thwarting intra and interpersonal well-being. Consequently, our sample of coaches' thought-provoking accounts signify that well-being sensemaking and experiences are inextricably shaped by interactions within and between various bioecological contexts, such as: the microsystem (organisational support), mesosystem (fan-family relations), exosystem (trade unions), macrosystem (cultural norms), and chronosystem (sociohistorical events).

Strengths and limitations

This study explored how professional football coaches experience and make sense of well-being by utilising a combined bioecological framework and IPA approach, which enabled three distinctive strengths. Firstly, it helped to conceptualise the idiosyncratic and multi-layered dynamic interactions within and between an individual's environment and well-being, something quantifiable and thematic well-being approaches often neglect. Secondly, an IPA approach surpassed surface-level accounts of coaches, enlightening latent, hidden meanings via reflexive interpretation (Smith, Flowers, and Larkin 2022). This also allowed for deeper interpretation and sensemaking of experiences within context, such as how past playing experiences formulated current well-being comprehension. Thirdly, IPA's storytelling element (Nizza, Farr, and Smith 2021) empowered coaches to voice their nuanced well-being experiences and how they make sense of the concept, something which is rarely considered. Despite this, we acknowledge that temporality and change are important aspects of experience (Smith, Flowers, and Larkin 2022) and well-being which were not necessarily captured within our study's singular interviews. Additionally, although we recruited a homogenous IPA sample, a limitation is that we only shared the voices of white male coaches.

Reflections for future research and practice

We offer six reflections: (i) future research should implement a longitudinal IPA approach to capture how interactions within and between one's ecological niche fragment the self and fluctuate subsequent well-being temporally; (ii) the differences between coaches who were and were not previously players should also be explored, as it may elucidate whether past playing experience significantly contributes towards well-being comprehension. An autoethnographic approach could illuminate the intricate nature of coaches' careers and how sociohistorical transitions (i.e. lived experiences) shaped well-being sensemaking; (iii) we advocate innovative, multi-modal IPA approaches as participants' accounts and sensemaking could be enriched by utilising creative data collection methods like journalling and photovoice (Higham et al. 2023); (iv) considering multiple coaches attempted to make sense of their well-being by viewing it as a mobile phone battery, on an applied level the use of such familiar and accessible terminology could be helpful when educating coaches and organisations on what can drain and charge well-being; (v) we encourage organisations to support coaches with their well-being, as reliance on well-being management should not solely rest on the coach. Insofar, organisations could endorse mentally healthy frameworks, deliver psychoeducation on well-being (Purcell et al. 2022), and proactively encourage help-seeking behaviours, such as one-on-one support from a sport psychologist. However, such support and education (proximal processes) within a coach's microsystem, must be provided on a regular basis over extended periods of time to be effective (Bronfenbrenner and Morris 2006). Finally, we advocate the Bioecological and PPCT models as appropriate frameworks for exploring how a person experiences and makes sense of well-being because they holistically account for reciprocal interactions within and between an individual's biophysical, psychological, sociocultural, and contextual conditions. In conclusion, a combined bioecological framework and IPA design enlightened how well-being as a construct is made sense of and experienced within footballing contexts.

Disclosure statement

Funding

Notes on contributors

A. J. Higham, is a Graduate Teaching Associate and PhD student at Sheffield Hallam University within the Sport and Physical Activity Research Centre (SPARC). His current research focuses on exploring the well-being of professional sports coaches', specifically those working within football contexts.

J. A. Newman, is a Senior Lecturer in Sport and Exercise Psychology at Sheffield Hallam University and a Chartered Psychologist with the British Psychological Society (BPS). His main research interests revolve safeguarding and welfare in professional sport, with a specific focus on maltreatment, abuse, and bullying.

J. L. Rumbold, is a Senior Lecturer in Sport and Exercise Psychology within the College of Health, Wellbeing and Life Sciences at Sheffield Hallam University. His research centres around understanding and optimising psychological stress, coping and well-being in sport and occupational contexts.

J. A. Stone, is an Associate Professor in Skill Acquisition and Performance Analysis within the Sport and Physical Activity Research Centre (SPARC) at Sheffield Hallam University. His research focuses on examining sport performance and coaching guided by an ecological dynamic framework.

ORCID

Andrew J. Higham 🆔 http://orcid.org/0000-0003-1087-2593
James A. Newman 🆔 http://orcid.org/0000-0002-4957-836X
James L. Rumbold 🆔 http://orcid.org/0000-0002-1914-1036
Joseph A. Stone 🆔 http://orcid.org/0000-0002-9861-4443

Data availability statement

Due to the nature of this research, participants of this study did not agree for their data to be shared publicly, so supporting data is not available.

References

Baldock, L., B. Cropley, R. Neil, and S. D. Mellalieu. 2021. "Stress and Mental Well-Being Experiences of Professional Football Coaches." *The Sport Psychologist* 35 (2): 108–122. https://doi.org/10.1123/tsp.2020-0087.
Bone, K. D. 2015. "The Bioecological Model: Applications in Holistic Workplace Well-Being Management." *International Journal of Workplace Health Management* 8 (4): 256–271. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJWHM-04-2014-0010.
Bronfenbrenner, U. 2005. *Making Human Beings Human: Bioecological Perspectives on Human Development*. London: Sage.
Bronfenbrenner, U., and P. A. Morris. 2006. "The Bioecological Model of Human Development." In *Handbook of Child Psychology: Theoretical Models of Human Development*, edited by. W. Damon and R. M. Lerner, 793–828. Wiley. https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470147658.chpsy0114
Butler, J. 1988. "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory." *Theatre Journal* 40 (4): 519–531. https://doi.org/10.2307/3207893.
Champ, F. M., M. S. Nesti, N. J. Ronkainen, D. A. Tod, and M. A. Littlewood. 2020. "An Exploration of the Experiences of Elite Youth Footballers: The Impact of Organizational Culture." *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology* 32 (2): 146–167. https://doi.org/10.1080/10413200.2018.1514429.
Cushion, C., and R. L. Jones. 2014. "A Bourdieusian Analysis of Cultural Reproduction: Socialisation and the 'Hidden Curriculum' in Professional Football." *Sport, Education and Society* 19 (3): 276–219. https://doi.org/10.1080/13573322.2012.666966.
Cushion, C., and Jones R L. 2006. "Power, Discourse, and Symbolic Violence in Professional Youth Soccer: The Case of Albion Football Club." *Sociology of Sport Journal* 23 (2): 142–161. https://doi.org/10.1123/ssj.23.2.142.
Didymus, F. F., J. L. Rumbold, and H. R. Staff. 2018. "Promoting and Protecting Coach Psychological Well-Being and Performance." In *Professional Advances in Sports Coaching*, edited by R. Thelwell, and M. Dicks, 261–276. Abingdon: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781351210980-17 .
Dixon, M., and M. J. Turner. 2018. "Stress Appraisals of UK Soccer Academy Coaches: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis." *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health* 10 (5): 620–634. https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2018.1464055.
Gadamer, H. G. 2013. *Truth and Method*. London: Bloomsbury.
Goffman, E. 1959. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin.

Higham, A. J., J. A. Newman, J. A. Stone, and J. L. Rumbold. 2021. "Coaches' Experiences of Morality in English Professional Football Environments: Recommendations for Creating a Moral Atmosphere." *International Sport Coaching Journal* 9 (2): 211–221. https://doi.org/10.1123/iscj.2021-0026.

Higham, A. J., J. L. Rumbold, J. A. Newman, and J. A. Stone. 2023. "Using Video Docuseries to Explore Male Professional Football Head coaches' Well-Being Experiences Throughout a Season." *Psychology of Sport & Exercise* 69:102488. https://org/kshj.

Kenttä, G., P. Olusoga, and M. Bentzen. 2020. "Coaches: Health, Well-Being, and Burnout." In *The Routledge International Encyclopedia of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, edited by Dieter Hackfort, 154–165. Vol. 1. Abingdon: Routledge.

Kiefer, R. A. 2008. "An Integrative Review of the Concept of Well-Being." *Holistic Nursing Practice* 22 (5): 244–252. https://doi.org/10.1097/01.HNP.0000334915.16186.b2.

Lundkvist, E., H. Gustafsson, S. Hjälm, and P. Hassmén. 2012. "An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of Burnout and Recovery in Elite Soccer Coaches." *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise & Health* 4 (3): 400–419. https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2012.693526.

Lundqvist, C. 2011. "Well-Being in Competitive Sports—The Feel-Good Factor? A Review of Conceptual Considerations of Well-Being." *International Review of Sport and Exercise Psychology* 4 (2): 109–127. https://doi.org/10.1080/1750984X.2011.584067.

Manley, A., M. Roderick, and A. Parker. 2016. "Disciplinary Mechanisms and the Discourse of Identity: The Creation of 'Silence' in an Elite Sports Academy." *Culture and Organization* 22 (3): 221–244. https://doi.org/10.1080/14759551.2016.1160092.

Nesti, M., M. Littlewood, L. O'Halloran, M. Eubank, and D. Richardson. 2012. "Critical Moments in Elite Premiership Football: Who Do You Think You Are?" *Physical Culture and Sport Studies and Research* 56 (1): 23–32. https://doi.org/10.2478/v10141-012-0027-y.

Nizza, I. E., J. Farr, and J. A. Smith. 2021. "Achieving Excellence in Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA): Four Markers of High Quality." *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 18 (3): 369–386. https://doi.org/10.1080/14780887.2020.1854404.

Norris, L. A., F. F. Didymus, and M. Kaiseler. 2017. "Stressors, Coping, and Well-Being Among Sports Coaches: A Systematic Review." *Psychology of Sport and Exercise* 33:93–112. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychsport.2017.08.005.

Potts, A. J., F. F. Didymus, and M. Kaiseler. 2021. "Bringing Sports Coaches' Experiences of Primary Appraisals and Psychological Well-Being to Life Using Composite Vignettes." *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise & Health* 14:778–795. https://org/jjdg.

Purcell, R., V. Pilkington, S. Carberry, D. Reid, K. Gwyther, K. Hall, A. Deacon, R. Manon, C. C. Walton, and S. Rice. 2022. "An Evidence-Informed Framework to Promote Mental Wellbeing in Elite Sport." *Frontiers in Psychology* 13:13. https://org/gp72k9.

Roberts, S. J., M. Baker, M. J. Reeves, G. Jones, and C. Cronin. 2019. "Lifting the Veil of Depression and Alcoholism in Sport Coaching: How Do We Care for Carers?" *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise & Health* 11 (4): 510–526. https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2018.1556182.

Roderick, M. 2006. *The Work of Professional Football: A Labour of Love?*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Rosa, E. M., and J. Tudge. 2013. "Urie Bronfenbrenner's Theory of Human Development: Its Evolution from Ecology to Bioecology." *Journal of Family Theory & Review* 5 (4): 243–258. https://doi.org/10.1111/jftr.12022.

Sarvimäki, A. 2006. "Well-Being as Being Well—A Heideggerian Look at Well-Being." *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-Being* 1 (1): 4–10. https://doi.org/10.1080/17482620500518101.

Seamon, D. 2018. "Well-Being and Phenomenology: Lifeworld, Natural Attitude, Homeworld and Place." In *Routledge Handbook of Well-Being*, edited by Kathleen Galvin, 103–111. Abingdon: Routledge.

Smith, J. A., P. Flowers, and M. Larkin. 2022. *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis*. 2nd ed. London: Sage.

Smith, B., and K. R. McGannon. 2018. "Developing Rigor in Qualitative Research: Problems and Opportunities within Sport and Exercise Psychology." *International Review of Sport and Exercise Psychology* 11 (1): 101–121. https://doi.org/10.1080/1750984X.2017.1317357.

Ventresca, M. 2019. "Beyond the Biopsychosocial: A Case for Critical Qualitative Concussion Research." In *Sociocultural Examinations of Sports Concussions*, edited by M. Ventresca and M. G. McDonald, 170–188. Abingdon: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429028175-10.

Yardley, L. 2017. "Demonstrating the Validity of Qualitative Research." *The Journal of Positive Psychology* 12 (3): 295–296. https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2016.1262624.