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Leadership behavior in elite football

A master´s thesis about elite footballers´ experiences with leadership for well-functioning teams with the use of qualitative interviews and thematic analysis.

NTNU
Norwegian University of
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Master's thesis in Counselling Science
Supervisor: Jonathan Reams
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Faculty of Social and Educational Sciences
Department of Education and Lifelong Learning

Abstract

This master's thesis has aimed to shed light on professional male footballers' experiences with coaches they have worked with, and how the experienced coaching behaviors have promoted and inhibited the creation of a well-functioning team. This has been done using qualitative research and in-depth interviews with four informants. The interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis where my scientific point of view, interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA), had an impact on the procedure.

The research question is: How do elite football players experience different coaches, and how can the perceived behaviors promote and inhibit the creation of well-functioning teams? To answer the thesis' research question previous research and theory in the field was first presented. The presented previous research emphasizes some traits, behaviors and interactional abilities that will be appropriate for creating a good team, as well as the importance of promoting team cohesion. After previous research has been presented, task-oriented leadership and relation-oriented leadership are elaborated. Then, theory regarding how leaders can create well-functioning teams is presented, where the focus is on the right skills and performance strategies, member diversity and cohesion, and mutual trust, cooperation, and psychological safety.

Furthermore, the findings made using interviews and thematic analysis are presented. Three main themes are highlighted, these are the footballer's coach, the well-being coach and group composition. The theme footballer's coach is described by the informants as a coaching behavior that bears the mark of being result-oriented, appearing as a role model with an authoritarian appearance. The theme well-being coach is described as a coaching behavior that appears to be democratic and sociable. The last theme is group composition, where the informants' positive experiences of being part of a group that is homogeneous, where camaraderie is strong, and an internal culture is presented.

The next chapter, the discussion, starts with an argument for why the experienced leadership behaviors can be said to be task-oriented and relation-oriented. This argument is then taken further to illuminate how the different approaches to leadership can affect the group's function, by discussing them in the light of previous research and theory. Then the importance of and how team cohesion can be promoted is highlighted. Finally, the discussion aims to set the coach's behavior and the informants´ experiences into different situational contexts.

This thesis finds that the two coaching behaviors can both promote and inhibit the creation of a well-functioning team. Although the task-oriented approach contains more professional knowledge and intrapersonal knowledge, it is nevertheless concluded that this coaching behavior can be risky to operate with alone. This is justified by the fact that there are apparently very few situations where this behavior would be preferable, and that the behavior is inhibiting the development of team cohesion and psychological safety. The relation-oriented approach is possessing a high degree of interpersonal knowledge, which is important for the development of team cohesion and psychological safety. There are also most situations where relation-oriented leadership would be preferable.

Sammendrag

Denne masteroppgaven har hatt som hensikt å belyse profesjonelle mannlige fotballspilleres erfaringer med trenere de har jobbet med, og hvordan de opplevde treneratferdene har fremmet og hemmet skapelsen av et vell-fungerende lag. Dette har blitt gjort ved bruk av kvalitativ forskning, nærmere bestemt dybdeintervju av fire informanter. Intervjuene ble analysert ved bruk av tematisk analyse hvor mitt vitenskapsteoretiske ståsted, fortolkende fenomenologisk analyse (IPA), har hatt innvirkning på fremgangsmåten.

Oppgavens problemstilling er: Hvordan opplever elitefotballspillere ulike trenere, og hvordan kan den opplevde atferden fremme og hemme skapelsen av et velfungerende lag? For å besvare oppgavens problemstilling blir først tidligere forskning og teori på feltet presentert. Tidligere forskning som oppgaven presenterer viser til noen bestemte atferds trekk og egenskaper som det vil være hensiktsmessig at ledere innehar for å kunne evne å skape et godt lag. Tidligere forskning peker også på hvordan ledere kan fremme lag kohesjon, og hvorfor det er sentralt. Etter at tidligere forskning er presentert, blir oppgave-orientert lederskap og relasjons-orientert lederskap gjort rede for. Deretter blir teori vedrørende hvordan ledere kan skape vell-fungerende grupper presentert, hvor fokuset ligger på riktige ferdigheter og ytelsesstrategier, medlemsmangfold og kohesjon, og gjensidig tillit, samarbeid og psykologisk trygghet.

Videre blir funnene gjort ved bruk av intervju og tematisk analyse presentert. Her trekkes tre hovedtemaer frem. Disse hovedtemaene er fotballspillerens trener, velferds treneren og gruppesammensetning. Temaet fotballspillerens trener blir av informantene beskrevet som en treneratferd som bærer preg av å være resultat-orientert, samt fremstå som en rollemodell med en autoritær fremtoning. Temaet velferds treneren beskrives som en demokratisk og sosial treneratferd. Det siste temaet er gruppesammensetning, hvor informantenes positive opplevelser ved å være en del av en gruppe som er homogen, hvor kameratskap står sterk og intern kultur presenteres.

Det nest siste kapittelet, diskusjonen, starter med en argumentasjon for hvorfor de opplevde lederatferden kan sies å være oppgave-orientert og relasjon-orientert. Dette argumentet tas så videre for å belyse hvordan de ulike orienteringene til lederskap kan påvirke gruppens funksjon, ved å se de i lys av tidligere forskning og teori. Deretter blir viktigheten av, og hvordan lag kohesjon kan fremmes belyst. Til slutt tar diskusjonen sikte på å sette treneratferdene og informantenes opplevelser opp imot ulike situasjonelle kontekster.

Oppgaven finner at begge trener atferdene kan til dels både fremme og hemme skapelsen av et vell-fungerende lag. Selv om den oppgave-orienterte tilnærmingen til trener rollen tilsynelatende innehar mer profesjonell kunnskap og intrapersonell kunnskap, blir det likevel konkludert med at denne trener atferden kan være risikabel å operere med alene. Dette begrunnes med at det tilsynelatende er svært få situasjoner hvor denne atferden vil være å foretrekke, samt at atferden er hemmende for utviklingen av lag kohesjon og psykologisk trygghet. Den relasjons- orientert tilnærmingen virker der imot å inneha en høy grad av interpersonell kunnskap som er viktig for utviklingen av lag kohesjon og psykologisk trygghet. Det er også flest situasjoner hvor relasjon-orientert ledelse vil være å foretrekke.

Acknowledgments

After five years as a student, and half a year writing this thesis I am torn between different emotions. Of course, I feel happy that I can now, hopefully, say that I have a master's degree, but I still feel a little sad that these amazing years are over. In the past five years I have been reading about significant individuals within my professional field, from Karl Marx and Max Weber to Carl Rogers and Robert Kegan. But the ones I have learned the most from are my classmates, and the incredible teachers.

I therefore want to thank the teachers who have not only shown great interest in the theoretical field we have covered, but also in me as a person. Your engagement has been contagious both in terms of commitment to the field and the explicit desire to get to know people on a deeper level. This has led us students to show a great deal of interest in each other, which have resulted in lifelong bonds. These close bonds resulted in an environment where it has been allowed to try and fail, ask and help, nothing has been wrong, and everything has been received with the greatest love. I am therefore beyond grateful for the time we have spent together and for all the things my classmates have taught me, not only about the subject, but also about myself.

I would especially like to thank Anniken, Jo and Tord who have been by my side through thick and thin, regardless of whether we have been close to each other or far apart. It is also right and reasonable that my supervisor Jonathan Reams gets a personal thanks. Thank you for all the time you have spent on helping me, for answering emails at all hours and thank you for giving me an insight into your unique knowledge and interest in the subject. There is also no hiding the fact that this thesis could never have been created if it were not for my four cooperating informants. Thank you for choosing to share your experiences with me, and thank you for your trust. Finally, I would also like to thank my parents, my sisters and my boyfriend who have set aside time to proofread the thesis, and for all your love.

Now, the whole big world is at my feet and I am excited about what the future holds. I know that these years in counseling science have prepared me for whatever there is. Because is it not the case that it is through crises and challenges one develops? Yes, I believe so.

Paphos, Cyprus, May 2023
Amalie Øyen Skaar

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1.0 Introduction

At my first leadership course in 2017 I got introduced to one of the best leaders in the world. I did not meet that leader in person, after all I was just a leader at a folk high school for other teenagers. This person was not a good leader in the same way as Elon Musk or Steve Jobs, who managed to give the world something we never knew we needed before we laid our hands on it. This leader had done something else, something I got more fascinated about, he had created a very much well-functioning team under an enormous pressure. This man is Jürgen Klopp. Back then I tried to monitor and read all I could about Klopp to understand how he managed to create such a good football team, after all he was compared to Jesus by my course instructor. I still could not figure out precisely what it was that made this coach so good, but now I believe I can. At least I can look at different leaders' behaviors and use my knowledge to predict what makes the leader effective.

1.1 Background for choice of theme

One can say that almost the entire society is made up of smaller or larger groups. Nevertheless, I believe that very few of us are familiar with what it takes for a group to be well-functioning. This became of interest to me during one of the courses in this master's program, namely the group counselling subject. Another subject that made me problematize this apparent lack of knowledge even more was the course on counseling in organizations with a main focus on leadership. In that course it became clear that it is not just «ordinary» people who do not know what it takes for a group to function well, but also leaders. For example, Rook & Tolbert (2005) found that only 15% of the managers in their survey showed the consistent capacity to innovate and to successfully transform their organization (p. 68). After I discovered this interest within myself I began to immerse myself in the theme, where I came across one particular series: hodet I klemme.

This spring, season two of "hodet i klemme" (Head in a pinch), has been shown on NRK. The series is about the national wrestling team of Norway and gives an insight into their everyday life with both training and competitions. In the first season, we were introduced to Felix, a wrestler who was perhaps not quite like the others. He expressed a significant need for care and closeness, something he felt that the national team's head coach, Fritz, was unable to offer him. Fritz is strict, yelling, authoritarian and stands firm on his vision of how to create world-leading wrestlers. Felix's experienced that Fritz neither listened to, nor saw any of his needs, which made the relationship inflamed. Felix therefore chose to replace coach Fritz in favor of coach Eren. Eren, on the other hand, is friendly, generous, emotional, empathetic, and democratic (NRK Sport, 2021). The portrayal of two seemingly opposites coaching behaviors piqued my interest. I became particularly curious about which of these behaviors would be most beneficial for the wrestling team's goal achievement. In addition to just watching season two of the series, I just as well chose to do my own research, not within wrestling, but within football.

Through being a part of the football community, or as others call it, a WAG (short for women and girlfriends of footballers), I have met several coaches, with different ways of creating well-functioning teams. My experiences indicate that the main difference between the coaches is that some wishes to create a team characterized by a good atmosphere and a friendly tone, while others is so focused on goal achievement that it comes at the expense of the group's well-being. This thesis will examine the effects these different leadership styles have on footballers' performance and experience. This will be done by taking a deep dive into the experiences of some selected footballers.

1.2 Research question

My wish for this thesis is as mentioned to shed light on football players experiences with different coaches to see how the perceived leader behaviors can affect the group's function. The research question is therefore:

How do elite football players experience different coaches, and how can the perceived behaviors promote and inhibit the creation of well-functioning teams?

The research question will be answered by looking into these three questions:
1) How are coaches in elite football perceived?
2) How can the behavior of the coaches affect the way a team function?
3) How can different situations influence the experience of good leadership?

There are some terms used in the research question that need clarification. First of all, football in this context is soccer, not American Football. An elite football team is thus a group consisting of approximately 25 individuals, where their main source of income is from playing football. They are training together almost every day with the task of winning matches against other teams. When playing games, the two teams, consisting of 11 players each, meet out on the pitch where the main task is to put the round ball in to the opponents´ goal. The coach is the person (in these cases a man) who is in charge of teaching, training, developing and making decisions for the individuals in the team. This person is often referred to as the head coach since the coach usually has other coaches to help him.

It is not the case that all football teams can be considered well-functioning. The easy way to put it, is that a well-functioning football team is made up of players who are able to make each other better. Getting better involves several different elements such as getting better technically and physically, getting better at reading the game and cooperating, and getting better at handling pressure. The more theoretical way of defining a well-functioning team is to say that a group consisting of individuals with the right skills and performance strategies, where all members are committed to task objectives, while having mutual trust and cooperation in combination with an appropriate degree of cohesiveness and an environment characterized by psychological safety are well-functioning (Edmondson, 1999, p. 377; Railo, 1979, p. 117-118; Yukl, 2013, p. 247). This definition of a well-functioning team is based on repeatedly mentioned elements in previous research and theory. How these elements contribute to make the team well-functioning will be further elaborated in chapter two and five.

Last but not the least, when the term experience is used it is referring to the footballers self-perceived and subjective thoughts and opinions about what they have taken part in.

1.3 The thesis structure

The master's thesis consists of six chapters. Each chapter is divided into sub-chapters in order to illuminate the thesis' theme and research question in the best possible way.

Chapter 1 is the introduction to the thesis. The background for the choice of topic is presented, where the reader gets an insight into why this topic is of interest to me. Clarification of some important terms is also provided. The research question is also clearly described.

Chapter 2 presents the thesis´ theoretical foundation. Previous research and theory in the field is presented, so that the reader have a good theoretical understanding before the findings are discussed. The theory presented is about group composition and function, and leadership behaviors, more precisely the task-oriented approach and the relation-oriented approach to leadership.

Chapter 3 offers a reflection on the task's procedure, the method. My scientific point of view is presented together with how the data collection has taken place and how the data has been analyzed. A reflection on the thesis' quality and ethical considerations is presented at the end of the chapter.

Chapter 4 gives the reader a comprehensive insight into the research's findings after conducted interviews and analysis. The findings are presented as three themes that reads as follows: the footballer's coach, the well-being coach and group composition.

Chapter 5 provides the thesis' discussion. The findings that are presented in chapter four, will be seen in the light of research and theory from chapter two. The chapter starts with an argument about where the findings belong in the literature, before the three major points of discussion are presented. These major points are experienced leadership as team-leadership for good group function, recruitment and maintenance to create team cohesiveness and situational context.

Chapter 6 is the final chapter of the thesis, where a conclusion and summary are presented. The study's limitations are also highlighted, as well as a proposal for further research on the thesis' findings.

2.0 Theoretical foundation

In this chapter, the thesis' theoretical foundation is presented. The chapter consists of three parts. The first part presents previous research on sports teams, the second part presents relevant leadership theories with a focus on different leader behaviors. In the third and last part of this chapter, theory regarding team leadership and functions is presented.

2.1 Literature review - coaching effectiveness

Previous research on sports teams has focused on several different aspects of coaching effectiveness to create well-functioning teams. In this literature review two of the key themes found in previous research will be highlighted. These key themes are leadership styles and team cohesion. To determine what makes leadership effective in sport is not a simple process (Crust & Lawrence, 2006, p. 41). Côté & Gilbert (2009) point to three different perceptions found in previous literature to define coaching effectiveness in sports teams. First off, one can examine leadership effectiveness by looking at win-loss percentage, the second way is by looking at the coach´s experience and the third is by looking at athletes' personal attributes which involve satisfaction and enjoyment (p. 308).

The purpose of Côté & Gilbert´s (2009) paper was to make a clearer definition of the term coaching effectiveness (p. 307). Before they did so, they highlighted different elements that are found to be important. Among those are a high degree of professional knowledge, but this knowledge alone is insufficient. Côté & Gilbert (2009) therefore emphasize the importance of interpersonal and intrapersonal knowledge, to create and maintain appropriate and effective communication (p. 310). Crust & Lawrence (2006) also offer some implications to the complex task of coaching effectiveness, which involve some leader traits, behaviors and interactional abilities similar to Côté & Gilbert´s (2009). The traits they emphasize are adaptability, self-confidence, persistence, ability to tolerate stress, rebound from adversity and to seek out new practices. From the behavioral perspective they highlight consideration, initiating structure and contingent positive reinforcement (Crust & Lawrence, 2006, p. 41). When it comes to interactional approaches Crust & Lawrence (2006) enforce the ability to be flexible, which implies abilities to vary the leadership approach depending on the situation and the group (p. 41).

Côté & Gilbert´s (2009) definition of the term coaching effectiveness ended up being "The consistent application of integrated professional, interpersonal, and intrapersonal knowledge to improve athletes' competence, confidence, connection, and character in specific coaching contexts" (Côté & Gilbert, 2009, p. 316). Even if this definition of coaching effectiveness seems like a simple process Crust & Lawrence (2006), who did a review on leadership and coaching in sport, emphasize that even leaders who do not follow the proposed composite view from previous research can still be effective (p. 41). Nevertheless, the following sections will continue to highlight previous research´s view on what makes coaches effective and what characterizes well-functioning teams.

2.1.1 Coaching styles

After looking into Côté & Gilbert´s (2009) definition of coaching effectiveness, and the traits, behaviors and interactional abilities Crust & Lawrence (2006) highlights, this section will go further into styles of leadership that impact a team´s function. Pratt & Eitzen (1989) have done this by looking into how contrasting leadership styles affect a teams' ability to win, which is by them how athletic teams' organizational effectiveness is seen (p. 311). They start of by establishing that coaches operate as leaders, as we see them in organizations, since they are in a position of power and combines that power with a particular leadership style to provoke great performances. They emphasize that there are many factors that can impact a team´s ability to win but point to the role of the leader as especially crucial, since losses and wins often are attributed to the behavior of the coach (Pratt & Eitzen, 1989, p. 311-312).

Cronin et al. (2020) find that this responsibility, regarding losses and wins, that the coaches are assigned can result in strongly felt pressure and fear of getting fired. This pressure can affect how they appear, with a more autocratic approach than they initially prefer (p. 136). Pratt & Eitzen (1989) found a more autocratic and demanding coaching style to not generate more wins than the democratic and less demanding coaches, since high degree of team discipline was not supported to be an important element of consistently successful teams (p. 320). They found this by looking into basketball teams in high schools, where team effectiveness was measured by the winning percentage of coaches' lifetime (Pratt & Eitzen, 1989, p. 316- 318).

Cook et al. (2022), who looked into Olympic swimmers' perceptions of their coaches, also found that a more autocratic and demanding approach was less effective regarding achievement of gold medals in the Olympics (p. 35-37). They used a trait approach to look at which traits swimmers used to describe the world-leading coaches (Olympic gold medal winning) versus the world-class coaches (Olympic non-gold medal winning). What they found was that the world- leading coaches scored higher in conscientiousness, emotional intelligence, and openness to experience, while the world-class coaches scored higher in narcissism (Cook et al., 2022, p. 35-37). Cook et al. (2022) propose a hypothesis that says that the word-class coaches who use aggression, had low intimacy and lack of empathy may undermine the relationship with the athlete in the long term (p. 36).

Cronin et al. (2020) believe that the key to prevent a more autocratic and demanding approach to evoke, which can, among other thing, undermine the relationship with the athletes, is to care about the players and make sure they are well (p. 123- 126). This matches Erikstad et al.´s (2021) practical recommendation to coaches who wants to affect personal development, participation and performance in a positive matter (p. 1). Their practical recommendation is that coaches should aim to increase their use of transformational coaching behaviors (Erikstad et al., 2021, p. 6). Transformational coaching behaviors are characterized, roughly speaking, by clear communication, a positive vision of the future, behave as role models, encourage followers to develop independence, challenge and motivate followers to reach their potential, and show individual considerations (Erikstad et al., 2021, p. 2). This form of behavior can promote task and social cohesion, which is here referred to as team cohesion, and mastery climates and increase athletes' positive sport experiences (Erikstad et al., 2021, p. 5).

2.1.2 Coaching styles for team cohesiveness

Team cohesion is the tendency a group have to stick together and remain united. It is also the construction that represent the strength of the social bond within the group (Carron, 1982, p. 124). Carron et al. (2002) found, with the use of a meta-analytic review, that cohesion have a moderate to large relationship with performance (p. 181). There is also a significant relationship between leadership behavior and team cohesion (Gardner et al., 1996, p. 373). By looking at 189 baseball players and 118 softball players in junior and high schools, Gardner et al. (1996) found that certain behaviors of the leaders promote cohesive teams. Leaders who have the ability to provide training and instructions, as well as having a behavior characterized as democratic and supportive tend to have more cohesive teams (p. 375).

Aoyagi et al. (2008) re-emphasize team cohesion to be a major contributor to team effectiveness, and states that sports team will, by being cohesive, engage in effective team behavior (p. 38). They base their study on the assumption that studies of organizational teams have much to offer sport psychology when it comes to efficient and effective teams. The coach´s job, as in organizations, is to promote cohesiveness by aiming to positively influence athlete satisfaction (Aoyagi et al., 2008, p. 25-27; p. 37). Aoyagi et al. (2008) emphasize at the same time the importance of monitoring the development of cohesion, since group cohesion do not necessary promote group performance (p. 27). The group should not be so comfortable that they are not prepared to work hard, commit to the objectives set and engage in productive conflicts (Jowett et al., 2023, p. 6).

To promote team cohesion in sports teams can be especially challenging since athletes often operates in competitive environments (Jowett et al., 2023, p. 1). Jowett et al. (2023) suggest that psychological safety can have a significant impact on relationships in sports team regarding handling the need for cooperation in a competitive environment. To prevent this contradiction to affect the groups functioning, the coaches can create a climate of psychologically safety (p. 7). By promoting psychological safety, which is essential to learning and engagement, Jowett et al. (2023) believes that the coach can manage to make the athletes rely on each other to create, innovate and produce extraordinary performances even if the environment is competitive (p. 7).

Previous research presents different views on how to create well-functioning teams. Coaching effectiveness, team cohesion and psychological safety sticks out to be important elements for the creation. In the next section the theoretical foundation will be further elaborated, starting off with a presentation of different leadership behaviors.

2.2 Leadership

Leadership has been largely discussed and debated within the social sciences (Derue et al., 2011, p. 7). There are multiple ways of studying leadership and from that predict leadership effectiveness. This thesis will mostly be using the behavioral paradigm to look at leadership, since behaviors are found to be an important predictor of effective leadership (Derue et al., 2011, p. 37). The behavioral paradigm also involves implications for what leaders should do and how they should behave to get the best out of their co-workers (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2007, p. 385). This thesis has chosen to focus on two leadership behaviors: relation-oriented and task-oriented.

Before the leadership behaviors are elaborated it is necessary to define leadership, as well as how leadership takes place in the form of a coaching role. A clear definition of leadership is not a straightforward process. Already in 1974 Stogdill emphasized that there whereas many definitions of the word as there where texts written about it (Yukl, 2013, p. 18). Nevertheless, there are some similarities within the definitions that must be addressed. These similarities are that leadership is a process where someone is intentional influencing other people by guiding, structure, and facilitating activities and relationship in a group or an organization (Yukl, 2013, p. 18). Jacobsen & Thorsvik (2007) also sees leadership as an ongoing process between humans where one or more is in the position to influence other people´s thinking, attitude and behavior (p. 381). Fiedler & Garcia (2005) also include influence in their definition, but add power to the relationship for it to be categorized as leadership (p. 189)

In organizations leadership is seen as someone who has a purpose of enabling someone to reach their goals, keep them motivated and make them satisfied with their work (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2007, p. 381). How leadership often is perceived in organizations draws similarity with how the role of a (football) coach is perceived. The coach´s job, as leaders in organizations, is to strive for visible performance outcomes, where the structure is similar to the structure of a business team, with one person who is formally appointed as the leader (Fransen et al., 2015, p. 28). To reach those performance outcomes it seems important to be able to motivate, guide, structure, and facilitate activities and relationships (Fransen et al., 2015, p. 28).

To summarize, leadership in organizations is comparable to the coaching role. The coach is formally appointed as the leader and has the task of guiding, structuring, and facilitating activities and relations with and within the team. In a position with power, the coach can influence the athletes´ thinking, attitude, and behavior with the purpose of creating visible performance outcomes (Fransen et al., 2015, p. 28; Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2007, p. 381; Yukl, 2013, p. 18). The next two sections will show how the unfolding of leadership can be done by elaborating two frequently discussed approaches, starting off with the task-oriented approach to leadership.

2.2.1 Task- oriented leadership

A leader who is particularly interested in the actual task an organization or a group is to solve are often referred to as having a task-oriented leadership behavior. These leaders focus on promoting efficiency and structuring how to meet formal goals. The communication is characterized by concrete orders, as well as no desire to include employees in decision-making processes. The subordinates are rather given assigning tasks (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2007, p. 396; Yukl, 2013, p. 64).

A leader is therefore seen as task-oriented when he/she is especially concerned for the group´s goals and their work on achieving those. This involves an assumption within the leader that their role and purpose is to complete assignments and to get the work done (Bass & Stogdill, 1990, p. 472). Their behavior is often seen as cold and with concern of keeping a distance between them and their followers, while monitoring the operations (Bass & Stogdill, 1990, p. 472; Yukl, 2013, p. 66). Some researchers have seen this behavior as performance leadership, which involves putting a lot of effort in to motivating the group on their way to reach the goal (Bass & Stogdill, 1990, p. 472).

The task-oriented leadership behavior is especially suitable for favorable and unfavorable situations according to Fred Fiedler´s contingency theory of leadership (Fiedler & Garcia, 2005, p. 194). Fred Fiedler´s very influential theory points out how task-oriented leadership will be preferable in some situations, and relation-oriented in others. When the situation is favorable the leader will have a great deal of power and influence. In an unfavorable situation the leader will lack power and influence (Fiedler & Garcia, 2005, p. 194).

A favorable situation takes place when three elements score high. These elements are the leader's position, task and task solution and the position of power. A favorable situation takes therefore place if the leader is accepted and the atmosphere is good, the tasks are highly structured, where all details of how the task is to be solved are clear, and if the leader has a high degree of formal power (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2007, p. 402). An unfavorable situation for the leader will therefore take place if the opposite is true.

The task- oriented leadership approach is, as we can see, especially concerned for the group´s goals and their work on achieving those. The leader comes across as somewhat harsh and independent of employees' opinions. In some situations this form of leadership will be effective, while in other situations a more relation-oriented approach will be more suitable. This approach will be discussed in the next section.

2.2.2 Relation- oriented leadership

Relation-oriented leadership is a behavior that first and foremost focuses on building good relationships with subordinates (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2007, p. 396; Yukl, 2013, p. 64). This involves building follower respect and encourage followers to put the welfare of the group in focus (Derue et al., 2011, p. 16). This form of behavior will be most appropriate in situations that are partly favorable or partly unfavorable, mainly because those states force them to attend to their interpersonal relations (Fiedler & Garcia, 2005, p. 194).

The leaders who execute this form of behavior are often seen as democratic, attentive, considerate, supportive, and good listeners. When leading with this behavior, emphasis is placed on involving employees in discussions of problems or difficult questions, where employees are actively listened to (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2007, p. 396; Yukl, 2013, p. 64). Thus, the relation-oriented leader is easily approachable and treats all group members as equals, which makes the leader appear as friendly (Derue et al., 2011, p. 16).

When these leaders establish social and emotional ties it provokes trust, less felt need to control and less close supervision (Bass & Stogdill, 1990, p. 473). These leaders are particularly paying attention to communication patterns, where the purpose is to make subordinates feel that they can speak their truth and express their thoughts about the assignments (Bass & Stogdill, 1990, p. 473). This behavior is often highlighted as the behavior that subordinates like the best, whereas the more authoritarian, the task-oriented leadership behavior, are often the least preferred (Railo, 1979, p. 141). One reason for this might be that the feeling of "we" becomes greater in a group with a more democratic leader (Railo, 1979, p. 142).

If a football team is especially concerned with social and/or emotional activity it might be at the expense of good performances. A group with a particular focus on social and emotional activity will possibly experience that good performances are second-rated (Railo, 1979, p. 123). Allan Wade, an English football coach solved this by splitting up the group as soon as the team had experience success over time, this was done to prevent overly concern with relations. Whereas good results can resolve in a team staying together because of the good sense of belonging, rather than an urge for good performances (Railo, 1979, p. 125).

The relation-oriented approach is appearing to be more spacious and sociable compared to the task-oriented approach. These leaders also seem especially concerned with social and emotional activity through their democratic way of being. The behavioral differences of the coaches make them suitable for different situations. The next section will go into another aspect of leadership, namely leadership with the goal of creating well-functioning teams. This form of leadership is here presented as a separately theme, but as the thesis will go further into in chapter five there are some similarities and contradictions regarding the leadership behaviors and what is seen as good leadership of teams.

2.3 Team leadership

This part of the chapter will give an overview of some literature regarding development and maintaining of well-functioning teams. A presentation of team leadership, group development and psychological safety will be provided. This literature will be further discussed and contrasted with leadership behaviors in chapter five (discussion). In order for this to be done it is necessary to make a clearer definition of the term team, regarding both organizational teams and sports teams.

A team differs from the whole organization as it is a smaller unit with interacting members. Unsurprising football teams are often used to exemplify the definition of team. Yukl (2013) emphasizes that a team is a group that has interdependent roles and complementary skills (p. 245). Jacobsen & Thorsvik (2007) include cooperation to realize a common goal to their definition of team (p. 405). One individual is therefore not capable of resolving the goal on its own but are rather depending on a team (Katzenbach & Smith, 2009, p. 57-58).

A football team is usually made up of individuals with interdependent roles, complementary skills and are highly dependent on each other. For example, the player with the striker skill can lurk in the opponent's half since he knows that the team's defenders are responsible for monitoring the opponent's striker to prevent counterattacks. It will be highly challenging for one player to manage to win a match on its own, but with a team made up of individuals who fill the roles of defenders, midfielders, wings, strikers, and goalkeepers, it is theoretically possible since they complement each other.

By providing a clearer understanding of the term team and some points that substantiates that a group of footballers can be considered a team, the next section can go further into leadership of teams.

2.3.1 Team leadership for expedient and developing cooperation

Burke et al. (2006) found in their meta-analysis that leadership behavior in teams matters with a resounding yes (p. 302- 303). How good a team can function is dependent on how the leader initiates and develops the teamwork (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2007, p. 405). Being able to lead a group in an effective way will bring the individuals together around a common goal and create discipline within the group. If the leader is unable to do so, the team may end up disinterested in collective goals and rather concerned with individual achievements. Thus, leadership is seen as an important success factor in creating efficient and well-functioning teams (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2007, p. 407).

First, a leader who has the possibility to influence the group composition must recruit individuals with the right skills and performance strategies. The leader must contribute to promote these skills and strategies when meeting common tasks and goals (Yukl, 2013, p. 247). This also involves creating a clear role expectation for the individuals. The leader should therefore ensure, when selecting new members, that they can contribute to an appropriate mix of complementary skills (Yukl, 2013, p. 247). At the same time, both new and old members should clearly understand their responsibilities and the relevant procedures for performing specific types of activities (Yukl, 2013, p. 247).

Second, when selecting members with complementary skills, it is necessary to emphasize the development of mutual trust, cooperation, and cohesiveness (Railo, 1979, p. 117). Trust, cooperation, and cohesiveness are forces that connects the individuals together to become one unit, which in turn is shown to have a great impact on the group performance ability (Railo, 1979, p. 117-118). As the case is for football teams, the member roles are highly interdependent, where cooperation and mutual trust are thus important determinants for performance. For mutual trust and cooperation to take place it is usually necessary that the members identify with the team, value their membership and are very cohesive (Yukl, 2013, p. 249). The leader can promote this by, among other things, conducting team building activities, and recognize and reward members' contributions to team performance (Yukl, 2013, p. 249).

A group can only be noted as a team if the task is dependent on more than one individual. The team is therefore more than just the sum of good performers (Railo, 1979, p. 115). This implies that a well-functioning team consist of skilled individuals who manages to cooperate in an expedient and developing way. It also implies that individuals not necessarily perform as good in every team. Therefore, an important task for the leader (here: coach) will be to facilitate expedient and developing cooperation (Railo, 1979, p. 115).

If a team is well put together, regarding members´ skills, performance strategies, diversity, and cohesiveness, while having mutual trust, and cooperate in an expedient and developing way, the team is close to becoming well-functioning. What is missing is members commitment to task objectives and psychological safety, which the next parts will go further into.

2.3.2 Team leadership for member commitment to task objectives

A team that consists of strong member skills and relevant performance strategy, while at the same time manages to achieve mutual trust and cooperation is more likely to successfully carry out its mission and achieve specific task objectives (Wu et al., 2010, p. 101; Yukl, 2013, p. 250). For this to happen it is important that all members are committed to task objectives, which involves innovation and extra effort to accomplish difficult task (Yukl, 2013, p. 247). A leader can promote members commitment by making a clear vision of how to solve task objectives, while supporting innovation, focusing on the task, and facilitating good internal communication (Hülsheger et al., 2009, p. 1141). Yukl´s (2013) call for how to facilitate member commitment to task objectives are similar but he also includes empowering member to participate in a creative way to find solutions to problems (p. 247).

To promote a team´s chances of successfully achieving task objectives, Wu et al. (2010) say it is, among other things, important for the leader to let go of the need to satisfy individual's needs, and rather focus on group needs (p. 101). This is because leadership of groups in the form of treating members as separate rather than a group could result in differentiated leadership, which may cause loss of group efficiency. The leader should therefore know when it is necessary to have an individualized behavior, and to do so without compromising group effectiveness (Wu et al., 2010, p. 102-103). Another important element is for the leader to always be ahead of problems and how they should be handled (Bass et al., 2003, p. 215).

Even if a leader does his utmost to promote these elements that promote well-functioning teams, it can be difficult with recently created teams and teams that are constantly affected by replacements, as well as cultural differences (Yukl, 2013, p. 249). Cultural differences which are seen as member diversity can have implications for group process and outcomes (Railo, 1979, p. 119; Yukl, 2013, p. 251). If the members of the team do not share values, beliefs, and traditions they are likely to be less cohesive and cultural differences, as for example language, can make communication difficult (Yukl, 2013, p. 251).

To sum up, Jacobsen & Thorsvik (2007) have made a list of key determinants important for good leadership of teams. This involves clear formulation of goals, get everyone to believe in the goal, motivate, organize so that people benefit from each other as much as possible, handling relationships, orderly and realistic work plan and avoid group thinking (p. 407). For the leaders´ interventions to have an effect, it is central that subordinates are able to learn and acquire these elements. This can be done, among other things, by establishing a psychologically safe environment that promotes learning behavior, which the next section will elaborate.

2.3.3 Team leadership for psychological safety

Team psychological safety, "a shared belief held by members of a team that the team is safe for interpersonal risk taking" (Edmondson, 1999, p. 354), is shown useful for understanding collective learning processes and promotes team effectiveness (Edmondson, 1999, p. 375; p. 379). Psychological safety implies mutual trust where no one will be ridiculed, rejected, or punished for expressing what they think or mean, as well as respect within the group (Edmondson, 1999, p. 354). This felt sense of safety is

not to be confused with group cohesion, since, as Edmondson (1999) puts it, it can promote the phenomenon of group thinking (p. 354).

High degree of cohesiveness can as mentioned sometimes shape group thinking. This phenomenon can make the individuals of a team reluctant to risk social exclusion by questioning the majority point of view or presenting opposing alternatives (Yukl, 2013, p. 249-250). Therefore, Yukl (2013) share the concern of Edmondson (1999) that a high degree of cohesiveness can be inhibiting, although these groups have a higher chance of agreeing on how to solve challenges, since they have similar values and attitudes (p. 250; p.354).

Team psychological safety, on the other hand, will promote well-functioning ways of handling failure, feedback, learning behavior and achievements (Edmondson, 1999, p. 375-376). Feeling secure in one's work group makes it easier to indulge in a process of development, learning, contribution, and performants (Edmondson & Lei, 2014, p. 41). That is some of the reason why psychological safety is found to be positively related to task performance (Frazier et al., 2017, p. 130). In the absent of psychological safety, the team members can feel threatened, have barriers to change and low tolerance of things going wrong (Frazier et al., 2017, p. 115). If the members of a group do not feel like they can share knowledge, experiment with new ideas and talk about mistakes there is no need for diverse expertise (Edmondson & Harvey, 2017, p. 75).

Frazier et al. (2017) found that leader's behavior was crucial in promoting psychological safety (p. 140). Humble and moral behavior is what Rego et al. (2021) point to as promoting such safety (p. 669). Edmondson & Harvey (2017) also suggest that leaders should display authentic caring and framing cross-boundary work as a resource to be able to facilitate team psychological safety (p. 76). This implies that the leader should manage to pay close attention to the viewpoints and difficulties of the team members, as well as acknowledge different perspectives and not view these differences as difficulties (Edmondson & Harvey, 2017, p. 76). Fransen et al. (2020) suggest that leaders in sports teams should especially focus on creating and strengthen a shared identity within the sports team to cultivate psychological safety (p. 9).

To sum up there are three main elements that leaders of teams should be able to facilitate to create a well-functioning team. These three elements are expedient and developing cooperation, commitment to task objectives and a psychologically safe environment.

This chapter have provided the theoretical foundation of the thesis, with a literature review regarding previous research in the field, the two leadership behaviors task- and relation-oriented, and how a leader can promote the development of a well-functioning team. The theoretical foundation will be further discussed in chapter five by seeing it in the context of the empirical findings. Before doing so the thesis method and findings will be presented.

3.0 Methodology

A scientific method is a systematic procedure (Rienecker & Jorgensen, 2013, p. 187). Method is the core of science and is used to gather, analyze, and professionally describe information and interpret analysis results (Rienecker & Jorgensen, 2013, p. 187). My wish for this project is to understand and interpret the phenomenon of leadership in terms of the meaning people give to it. This procedure characterizes the scientific method qualitative research (Ryen, 2017, p. 133). After a thorough discussion of which method to use within qualitative research, the choice fell on qualitative in-depth interviews with inspiration from Heidegger´s hermeneutic phenomenology and interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), with the use of thematic analysis.

Looking at what makes good leaders of teams can be done in various ways. One can for examples look at what characterizes good leaders by giving a large number of individuals a survey and then analyze the responses. This procedure is seen as quantitative method (Kelly, 2010, s. 307). I, on the other hand was more interested in getting into the depth of the experience some footballers have with leadership of teams. This way of obtaining and generating information is seen as a qualitative method (Smith et al., 2009, p. 66). Trying to understand a phenomenon in depth with the use of text rather than numbers is some of the aspects that characterize qualitative research (Tjora, 2013, p. 18). This methodology operates together with an ontology and an epistemology which together shape the researcher's scientific theoretical starting point (Sohlberg & Sohlberg, 2008, p. 238). The next section will therefore highlight my scientific point of view, before giving a further description of the qualitative method, and how I have chosen to use it regarding scientific point of view, data generation, data analysis, and quality and ethical considerations.

3.1 Scientific point of view

In this part, interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), which is my scientific point of view will be described, but first the term scientific theory has to be established. Scientific theory is studies of the problems that arise in the search for knowledge within science. Scientific theory is therefore science about science. By following a specific theory, one has some ideals for how science should be conducted (Sohlberg & Sohlberg, 2019, p. 23). The next section will give an overview of the characteristics of IPA and how the philosophical theory of Heidegger led me to the use of this scientific theory.

3.2.1 Heidegger and IPA

My understanding of what research is and how it should be done has taken form through inspiration from both hermeneutics and phenomenology, and especially Heidegger´s hermeneutic phenomenology. His philosophic theory involves the important view within phenomenology that says that human experience must be acquired as it is lived (Dowling, 2007, p. 133). Instead of emphasizing the importance of completely objective descriptions, Heidegger includes the use of hermeneutics. This implies that lived experience is an interpretive process (Dowling, 2007, p. 133). Heidegger´s point of view was, as mentioned, originally a philosophic theory, which brings up some issues when trying to use it as a research method (Dowling, 2007, p. 133). IPA, on the other hand, builds on this explicit description of phenomenology as a hermeneutic enterprise and are

created to be a qualitative research procedure (Smith et al., 2009, p. 9; p. 43). Since IPA is made to be used as a research method, while at the same time having the theoretical underpinnings of the approach from phenomenology and Heidegger, my scientific point of view is therefore inspired from IPA.

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) is defined by Smith et al. (2009) as "A qualitative research approach committed to the examination of how people make sense of their major life experiences" (p. 9). With the use of IPA, which is concerned with detailed examination of human lived experience, I have tried to make descriptions from the interviews as pure as possible (Smith et al., 2009, p. 48). At the same time, I have taken into account that lived experience is an interpretive process, which both IPA and Heidegger concur on that the inquiry of phenomenology is from the outset (Dowling, 2007, p. 134; Smith et al., 2009, p. 48). Interpretation is thus, always involved in the analysis of data, according to IPA (Smith et al., 2009, p. 51). This implies that understandings, and not only objective descriptions, can be used when doing research (Dowling, 2007, p. 133).

3.2.2 Thematic-analytic (TA) approach in combination with IPA

In addition to IPA, I took inspiration from the thematic- analytic approach in the process of making sense of the collected data. Qualitative thematic-analytic approach «(...) is a method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data» (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). This involves looking for themes within the original data before allowing a more hermeneutic approach, which involve interpretation of the themes to find commonalities and differences (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87). Both TA and IPA have several similarity's on how to do the analytic process. They both share the same starting point which is to read and re-read the transcribed data. After doing so, the researcher can begin the initial coding and creation of emergent themes, which will help the search for connections across the themes where one can see patterns across the cases (Braun & Clark, 2006, p. 87; Smith et al., 2009, p. 118 – 142).

IPA´s main focus is to direct the analytic attention towards the participants' attempts to make sense of their experiences (Smith et al., 2009, p. 114). TA, on the other hand, does not necessary give experience primacy, since this form of analysis believe that a researcher does not have to understand people's everyday experiences in great detail to understand the phenomenon in question (Braun & Clark, 2006, p. 80). This brings me to one of the reasons why I have chosen to include the thematic-analytic approach in my research method. When using IPA one should be analyzing the first case in detail before moving to the second case, where each case must be examined before going into more general claims (Smith et al., 2009, p. 48; p. 117). I, on the other hand, saw it as necessary to look for general claims at an earlier stage, which TA "allows" (Braun & Clark, 2006, p. 87). Another reason why I decided to use TA is because I was the most familiar and experienced with this approach at the beginning of the project.

Another difference between IPA and TA is that IPA is theoretically bounded. IPA is attached to phenomenological epistemology, which again is similar to my point of view (Braun & Clark, 2006, p. 80). This brings me to the third reason for why I have chosen a combination of IPA and TA, namely to bring some theoretically foundation to the process of analytic.

3.2.3 Abductive approach and understanding

Research is often said to be done inductive, which is typical for qualitative research, or deductive, which is typical for quantitative research. In this project I have used the third way, the abductive approach. IPA does the analytic procedures by moving from single cases to more general statements, but still allow one to retrieve particular claims for any of the individuals involved (Smith et al., 2009, p. 301). This is also how the abductive approach start, with empiricism which get generated and processed. During this process abduction, unlike induction, value and use theory and other perspectives (Tjora, 2013, p. 218; Tjora, 2018, p. 17). In this thesis theories and perspectives were used in the empiricism stage to make the interview guide. This was done to make sure that the questions asked during the interview could reflect and be analyzed with the use of theory in the field. Theories was also used in the analytic stage to make it easier to see patterns and make sense of the collected data. How the data was collected and generated will be described in the next section.

3.2 Data generation

In order to gain insight into how footballers experience their coaches, data generation has been done. Data generation is the work that is done to collect empirical data that is not initially found elsewhere, but is constructed through research (Tjora, 2013, p. 219). To successfully collect data, it is necessary to use strategies that requires organization, flexibility, and sensitivity (Smith et al., 2009, p. 60). By following the scientific point of view of IPA I have committed to situating participants in their particular context and exploring their personal perspectives (Smith et al., 2009, p. 48). This will be described in more depth further down this section.

Those who contributed to the generation of data are here referred to as informants, and the generation was done with the use of qualitative interviews. The term informant is used because it refers to someone who contributes with information, which the individuals I interviewed did. I also prefer this term rather than research object and interviewee simply because it is less objectifying. The next section will go further into the use of qualitative interviews.

3.2.1 Qualitative in-depth Interviews

The purpose of a qualitative interview is to produce knowledge in the form of rich textual data. It is designed as a social interaction between a researcher and one or more informants, where the interaction focuses on questions, listening and answers (Gudkova, 2018, p. 77; Kelly, 2010, p. 307; Warren et al., 2003, p. 94). In this qualitative research, one to one interview was used with the purpose of getting thorough information. This form of interview is called in-depth interviews. In-depth interviews are based on a phenomenological perspective, where the purpose is to gain a deeper understanding of the informants' experiences with a specific phenomenon, which in this case was leadership (Tjora, 2013, p, 105). This involves coming at the research question "sideways". The research question is often at a too abstract level to be easily answered and should therefore not be asked directly. Instead, the researcher should facilitate a discussion of the relevant topics (Smith et al., 2009, p. 84).

3.2.2 Interview guide and structure

Semi-structured interviews are the most common design of qualitative interviews, and was also used in this project (Kelly, 2010, p. 310). By using this form of structure, you achieve both flexibility and predictability since you can advantageously write down some questions in an interview guide before conducting the interview (Gudkova, 2018, p. 79). This makes it possible to gain deeper insight into some specific research interests, rather than a more holistic perception of an individual´s experiences with a given phenomenon (Kelly, 2010, p. 318). This way of structuring the interview gave me the opportunity to focus on certain aspects of the phenomenon of leadership, namely leadership for good group functioning. In order to be able to ask good questions that shed light on these aspects of the phenomenon, it was necessary for me, who has relatively little knowledge of the field, to familiarize myself with research, theory and stories regarding leadership in football clubs. By using this abductive method, I had the opportunity to design some questions for an interview guide (Appendix C) that suited my research interest within the phenomenon. The interview guide was tested in a pilot interview, which resulted in a few changes of the questions to better capture the main aim of the thesis and to make it easier for the informants to understand the questions. The structuring of the interview allowed the informant to speak freely about the questions that were asked, and I was «allowed» to ask follow-up questions.

3.2.3 Selection and recruitment

In qualitative studies, the main rule is that a strategic selection of informants is made. This is done by recruitment of informants who, for various reasons, have access to a particular perspective on the phenomena (Smith et al., 2009, p. 71; Tjora, 2013, p. 145). For me, strategic selection of informants meant choosing someone who knew about footballers' lifeworld, namely the footballers themselves. The recruitment requirements read as follows: to be an active footballer for a specific club and to have been so during several coaches. These requirements were done to make sure that they were able to say something about how things have been and how things are now. Another criterion for the footballers who were requested to participate, was that their main income is from playing football. This was a criterion based on the hypothesis that the rest of the team, and the coaches, would have an important impact on their everyday lives. An assessment was carried out as to whether the informants had to play for the same club, or if the recruitment should allow players from different clubs. The choice fell on seeking footballers from different clubs to avoid the information given by the informants to only contain experiences with one coach in particular.

The informants who fit the criteria were recruited with the use of two different methods. Some of the informants were recruited on the basis of acquaintanceship. The remaining informants were recruited through familiarity with one mental coach where I knew some of his clients. The idea behind recruiting some of the mental coach´s clients was to ensure that some of the informants was already trained at reflecting on their experiences. My prejudice was that the footballers had gained reflection on their situation by sharing thoughts and opinions with the mental coach over a longer period of time.

A total of four informants agreed to participate in the research project. Since the primary concern of IPA is with a detailed account of individual experience, quality, not quantity, is desirable (Smith et al., 2009, p. 75). Few informants made it easier to complete the main

tenet of the research project, namely, to get in-depth information about experiences, understandings, and thoughts the informants had about the phenomenon.

When interviewing footballers in different clubs, a challenge arose regarding the conduct of interviews, which the next section will enlighten.

3.2.4 Planning for the interviews

After making the interview guide, getting the research approved by SIKT (Appendix A), and the recruitment of informants was finished, it was time to start the planning of the interviews. Since none of the informants lived in the same city nor in the same city as me, I decided to do the interviews online. This was done due to the financial costs of travelling, as well as the time costs. Although in-depth interviews often take place face-to-face, such practical and economic obstacles may make it necessary to conduct interviews digitally (Tjora, 2013, p. 140).

There are several elements a researcher should be aware of before planning for online interviews. The researcher should make sure that the informants have access to technology that enables web-based interviews and that they know how to use these for the given purpose (Silverman, 2019, p. 176). I solved this by letting the informants, which I knew had access to mobile phones and internet, choose the digital platform for the interviews. The researcher, who is the facilitator of the conversation, should also think through what differences online interviews contains (Silverman, 2019, p. 176). This led me to reflect on the challenges and benefits of digital interviews, which made me aware of the missed interaction when having this type of interview. In a face-to-face situation one will most likely ask the informants if they want something to drink, and chitchat as one move from the entrance to the place of the interview. This aspect could be important to create a relaxed atmosphere. However, my perception was that digital interviews for my informants promoted more advantages than disadvantages. Part of footballers' job is to recover, which is often done at home with food and beverages readily available. Having to move around or prepare their home for visits can affect their recovery, where digital interviews would not have as much impact on this aspect. In the next section, the conduct of the interviews is presented.

3.2.5 The interviews

To create a relaxed atmosphere during the digital interviews, which IPA emphasize, I chose to give some guidelines to make it easier to talk about personal experiences (Smith et al., 2009, p. 93). First, I made it clear that they got recorded and that they had the power to not answer, and to decide what to share. I made it clear that by not answering, I would not dig any further into the reason why. I did also create a sign together with the informants, that would be used if someone entered the room or was close enough to hear the conversation. This was done since some of the informants chose to have the interview at the same time as they were at training camp with the rest of the team. Some did therefore participate in the interview in the common area of the hotel, where there was a significant chance of coaches or fellow players to enter.

After creating this sign, the interview moved forward to some warm-up questions (Appendix C). These are simple, concrete questions which in this case was done by asking the informants to summarize their career in football so far (Tjora, 2013, p. 112).

Since this question does not require much reflection, it appeared to be easy to answer. After this it seemed that the informants were ready for more demanding questions, so-called reflection questions. Reflection questions are those that occupy the main part of the interview (Tjora, 2013, p. 113). Here, questions were asked about their experience with various aspects of coaches and teams, which required the informants to reflect. My experience was that all the informants mastered this well, nevertheless I experienced that the most demanding questions, regarding reflection, could advantageously be left to the end of this part of the interview.

The end of the interview consisted of so-called rounding off questions. These are questions that seek to normalize the situation, or to equalize the balance of power (Tjora, 2013, p. 113). The informants were therefore asked questions about near future plans, at the same time as I told them about my own plans. By being able to speak freely about thoughts and questions that came up during the interview, the situation felt less formal. The interviews lasted between 45 minutes and 1 hour. During the interviews I found the skills acquired through the master´s program to be useful regarding communications skills such as asking questions and listening.

3.2.6 Transcription

When using in-depth interviews, it is recommended to record the conversation, as done here, in order to carry out a complete transcription of the material afterwards (Tjora, 2013, p. 143). How the transcription process should be done depends on what is useful in the specific situation (Tjora, 2013, p. 144). I chose to conduct a detailed transcription, where all words were written down. There were also written down «not-words» such as hmm, uhh, ahh, etc... This was done in case such uncertainty or difficulty in wording oneself would have an impact on the analysis (Tjora, 2013, p. 144). I chose to rewrite the spoken language into written language in as much detail as possible in order to have more raw data to work with in the analysis process.

In the transcription process, the informants were anonymized by using numbers as the names of football clubs, for example club 1, and fictive names for the informants: David, Ethan, George and Oliver. This was done to maintain their anonymity. Age, place of residence and other information that could have made it easy to identify the informants, were also excluded from the transcription since it was unimportant for the analysis. How the analysis was done will be described in the next section.

3.3 Data analysis – thematic analysis

Thematic analysis, as the name implies, involves analyzing data by looking for themes (Johannesen et al., 2018, p. 279). The data are distributed between themes, where the data collected in the same theme indicate that they have some important common features. The aim is thus to use these data organized into themes to answer the research question (Johannesen et al., 2018, p. 279). IPA´s phenomenological epistemology comes to view through the use of preconceptions, both consciously and unconsciously, to be able to put the codes (data) into themes (Braun & Clark, 2006, p. 80).

In order to maintain the quality of the data throughout the analysis, I used Braun & Clark's (2006) six steps of conducting a thematic analysis (p. 87). In the first phase, the focus was on getting to know the generated data, which was done by transcribing the

interviews and then reading through the transcriptions several times. At this point, the data seemed very confusing and incoherent. Nevertheless, I moved on to the second phase, which Braun & Clark (2006) believe will help to find interesting features of the data across the interviews (p. 87). This was done by using an analysis tool, Nvivo, where the transcripts were strategically reviewed to highlight and code all statements of interest and thus also get a better overview.

The third phase consisted of establishing broader themes than those presented as codes (Braun & Clark, 2006, p. 88). These topics were mainly data-driven, i.e. a reflection of the raw data, but also somewhat theory-driven since the topics shed light on some specific research questions developed from theory and previous research in the field. The third phase was the most demanding since it was necessary to get an overview of the raw data, which involved seeing connections and contradictions. As a result, most of the codes from step two were reorganized into larger themes or as sub-teams in these large, wide-ranging themes.

In the next phase I went through the topics proposed in the previous phase, where I found, as predicted by Braun & Clark (2006), that some of the themes were not really themes (p. 91). This was done, among other things, by reading through all the codes that were organized into the different themes, to find out if there was still a clear coherent pattern. This step involved an assumption about what the report should look like in the end.

In the penultimate phase, I started defining and naming themes. This is done to find the essence of what each topic is about (Braun & Clark, 2006, p. 92). By doing this, I got an overview of what the analysis said. As presented more in depth later, two of the themes got the names "well-being coach" and "footballer's coach". These names were created through the informants' statements and refer to two contradictory descriptions of the coaches. The final phase is about preparing a report (Braun & Clark, 2006, p. 93). In this assignment, it was done in the form of writing out the topics in the results section and viewing them in light of theory and previous research.

Carrying out such data generation and analysis process means that the researcher must be aware and transparent about the quality and the ethical guidelines. The next two parts will deal with this.

3.4 Quality considerations

Reliability, validity, and generalizability are often used as indicators to say something about the quality of research in general (Tjora, 2018, p. 79). In addition, transparency and reflexivity are key criteria for quality and are thus included here (Tjora, 2018, p. 79).

To begin with, one note must be made. All my informants spoke Norwegian and since this thesis is written in English the statements of the informants, those used in chapter four and five, had to be translated. I used a good amount of time to make the translation as precisely and accurate as possible, but there is no getting away from the fact that some Norwegian proverbs and sayings cannot be directly translated. Some misinterpretations, which can also happen even if one does not translate, may have been made. This is presented as a starting point for the quality considerations to show transparency, which the next part will go further into.

3.4.1. Reflections on my role as a researcher – transparency

The researcher's interest in and commitment to the topic may bias the project. The researcher's personal opinions and attitudes may color the findings of the project in a significant way, which can compromise the reliability of the project (Tjora, 2018, p. 83). It is therefore important for a researcher to demonstrate transparency, which is done by presenting and discussing the background for the choices made (Tjora, 2013, p. 216). My knowledge in the field mainly comes from close relationships with footballers and a long-lasting interest. Since I am familiar with the field, I have some thoughts about what characterizes coaches who are good at promoting well-functioning teams, but so has my field of expertise. In order to challenge my preconceived notions from my knowledge of the world of football and my professional background, I have spent a significant amount of time reading previous research articles, as well as seeking to challenge my original thoughts. Nevertheless, it is conceivable that my personal experience with the field have affected the findings.

3.4.2 Reliability

How reliability is assessed says something about the connection throughout the research project (Tjora, 2018, p. 79). This entails, among other things, how the informants are selected, which perspectives and theories are used to shape the research design and analysis, and how this is interpreted and reported (Tjora, 2013, p. 205). To test the reliability one can have other researchers repeat the project to see if they come up with the same results (Silverman, 2019, p. 89). I certainly believe that other researchers would have found some similar results, but there would with no doubt been some differences as well. This has not been done, but there are different ways of checking the reliability. It can be done through transparency, where research strategy and data analysis methods are sufficiently detailed (Silverman, 2019, p. 90). This thesis has chosen this approach by giving a detailed description of how the thematic analysis is used in the process of finding results.

3.4.3 Validity

If the questions asked through research are those answered, the research project is characterized by a high degree of validity. Validity is often seen as communicative or/and pragmatic (Tjora, 2018, p. 80). Validity in the form of communicative is what the qualitative research environment is most concerned with, where the validity of the results is tested in dialogue with the research community. In this assignment, this has been done by continuously referring to previous research in the discussion chapter.

3.4.4 Generalizability

Whether the research can apply beyond the units where it has been investigated says something about the generalizability of the research (Tjora, 2018, p. 79). Since this thesis had four informants who took part in the in-depth interviews, and not more, it is limited how generalizable the findings can be. What I can imagine, however, is that some of the findings can, if not to be used, be tested in researcher on similar teams, for examples in other sports and in high performance organization teams.

3.4.5 Reflexivity

Reflexivity is about the reflections one makes in the encounter with the interpretation of data, since data in itself cannot be a simple reflection of reality (Tjora, 2013, p. 217; Tjora, 2018, p. 85). This was done by following the steps in the thematic analysis, where several documents were created for each step. This means that instead of revising and changing a document that has been used, for example in the 2nd step of the analysis, a new one was created to save the reflections made earlier. By doing so I could at any point go back and look at earlier reflections.

This was my thoughts on the quality considerations, the next part will look into the ethics considerations.

3.5 Ethics considerations

In qualitative research there are several ethical considerations a researcher must take. In interviews, there is particularly a lot of ethics related to the presentation of data. The researcher must, among other things, carry out anonymization and in no way harm the informants (Smith et al., 2009, p. 77). In social research, as a general rule, audio recordings are used to ensure correct quotation. This involves some ethical challenges which are further discussed in this section (Tjora, 2013, p. 159-160).

3.5.1 Informed consent

Informed consent was given by all the informants before conducting the interviews (Appendix B). The informants have the right to be informed with a non-technical account that is detailed and understandable (Silverman, 2019, p. 158). This was given in the form of a letter with a template from SIKT. The letter included information regarding the purpose of the project, the responsible institution, and why they get asked to participate and what it will involve for them. They also got to see their rights and how their personal data would be taken care of. This information is important to make sure that the informants understand what they are saying yes to and that they can withdraw from the research at any time (Silverman, 2019, p. 158).

3.5.2 Audio recordings

In the information letter where they got to confirm their informed consent, it was also announced that the interview would be recorded. Audio recordings are used to make sure the researcher gets all the information presented by the informants without having to make notes during the interview, which could make the researcher unfocused (Tjora, 2013, p. 137). It was necessary to record the conversations in order to remember exactly what the informants had said. A tool designed for managing data collection online, which is by NTNU seen as a secure solution, Nettskjema Diktafon, was used to do the recordings. The recordings were deleted before the project ended, while the transcription (the interview in text format) will be delete as soon as the project is completed.

3.5.3 Anonymity

It is my job to ensure that no unauthorized person would get access of the informants' personal data. To prevent this from happening I replaced the names, ages, places of residence and names of employers with a code that only I could link to the informants as soon as the recordings had been converted to written format. This was also done to ensure their anonymity. The researcher cannot decide if the data is to be particularly delicate or intimate. The informants' identities have to be protected regardless (Silverman, 2019, p. 153). This also involve confidentiality, which means to not share unnecessary information, or information that could identify the informants.

In this chapter I have provided an insight into my scientific point of view, IPA. I have also described how the data got conducted with the use of four digital in-depth interviews, and how the data were analyzed using thematic analysis. At the end of the chapter the quality and ethical considerations has been presented. The next chapter, chapter four, will provide a presentation of the findings made with the use of this method.

4.0 Presentation of findings

This chapter will give a presentation of the findings generated through interviews, transcription, and thematic analysis of the raw data. The findings are presented in the form of themes. Collectively the themes provide an answer to the first part of the research question namely *how do elite football players experience different coaches?* The second part of the research question *how can the perceived behaviors promote and inhibit the creation of well-functioning teams?* Will be touched upon but described in greater depth in chapter five.

As mentioned in chapter three, the informants have been assigned pseudonyms to preserve their anonymity and to create a flow in the text. The names are as follows: David, Ethan, George, and Oliver

«I appreciated both (coaches), in terms of well-being I appreciated the first one the most, while the footballer in me appreciated the other one the most.» This statement of Ethan laid the foundation for the themes: well-being coach and footballer´s coach, which this chapter begins by elaborating. Furthermore, the theme of group composition is presented, which according to the principles of thematic analysis has a significant connection to the other two themes, while being different enough to form its own team (Braun & Clark, 2006, p. 82).

4.1 Well-being coach versus footballer's coach

The statement that laid the foundation for two of the themes implies that it is possible to experience at least two different types of coaching behaviors, where one contributes to well-being, while the other contributes to the development of football skills. The themes will be presented separately to provide a thorough description. Nevertheless, an important note is that the themes were created by being considered opposites. Which means that the well-being coach exists as an individual phenomenon, and at the same time as a counterpoint to the footballer's coach, and vice versa. They will therefore be presented separately, while some of the quotes from the informants will be used to highlight the way they are considered to be opposites.

Since the informants speak about their experience with coaches, i.e., different individuals who are compared and differentiated from each other, the themes well-being coach and footballer´s coach reflect the coaches they have experienced. Therefore, the theme well-being coach is a summary of individual coaches who share the same leadership behavior. The leadership behavior of these coaches has different characteristics than the footballer's coach, where the coaches who are "placed" in the theme footballer's coach also share the same leadership behavior.

4.2 Well-being coach

As mentioned, the theme got its name after a statement from one of the informants. The well-being coach is the subject of a coaching behavior that the footballers refer to as more pleasant and friendly. These coaches are described as pleasant, inclusive, sociable, trusting, good-humored, curious and relationship oriented. This coaching behavior is also described as more dependent on the group taking responsibility.

All the informants share the opinion that it is more pleasant to work with the well-being coach, while at the same time the informants are somewhat skeptical as to whether this appearance can contribute to the best results and development. In order to give a deeper insight into the theme's content, it is divided into two sub-themes: sociable and democratic.

4.2.1 Sociable

Oliver referred to one of his coaches as having good relational skills. This skill was seen as "(...) being good at talking to people and spreading safety around them to their surroundings (...).» Something that Oliver considers conducive to «(...) having fun around him.» This behavior is here termed sociable and is a sub-theme of well-being coach. Sociable is commonly used by the informants to describe a coaching behavior that is friendly and with which you easily create a good relationship.

Ethan refers to the same appearance and evidently agrees with Oliver when he says «(...) he's a very sociable guy who's easy to like (...), so I think it's a bit of a security that people feel when you're around him.» At the same time, Ethan is somewhat skeptical of this desire to be so sociable since he utters that this coach was so «(...) concerned with well-being and everything like that, that maybe he was not as honest in saying that things weren't good enough and rather bet that things would work out, that things would go their way.»

The appearance of being sociable seems to promote perceived safety for the informants. The coach George refers to as sociable, he describes by saying «(...) he is like a friend, very open and I feel safe with him.» George emphasizes that the coach initiates conversations about both football and private life. The coach is experienced as curious and interested in getting to know the individuals beneath the uniform. This leads George to believe that the coach is concerned with making everyone feel safe and welcomed to the team.

Those who are referred to as coaches with focus on well-being seem to be less concerned with appearing as role models regarding discipline. The coach Ethan refers to as a well-being coach «(...) accepted a bit more like chocolate and Pepsi max because he emphasized more well-being, and that people should be allowed to be themselves. And that people should be able to figure out what is best for themselves.»

4.2.2. Democratic

The aspect of being able to figure out what is best for oneself, is precisely what the informants emphasizes as an essential trait of the well-being coaches. This aspect is here referred to as democratic, which is organized as a sub-theme. Oliver experienced this aspect as the main difference between the two coaching behaviors. Something Oliver expresses by saying «(...) he very much invites people to share their opinions and in that way we can perhaps agree that we do it in a different way.» George seems to agree with Oliver that the well-being coaches initiates exchange of views and opinions by saying «here we try to meet in the middle, more collaboration.» Oliver experiences that this promotes motivation, since by being listened to, you get, as he says himself, «(...) more ownership of what is going on and spreads safety at the same time.» Oliver sees this as

exclusively positive and as a contrast to keeping people on their toes. Although Oliver first expresses it as exclusively positive to feel ownership, he later says that the sense of safety that accumulates through felt ownership can lead to poorer concentration and presence.

Ethan had an assumption as to why his coach chose a democratic approach «(...) I think in a way that he depended on a good group of players, that he had players to fix it instead of it being his ideas that will make the team win in a way.» Even though Ethan experiences the coach as more mutual and open to other people's ideas, he nevertheless countered by saying «he's probably not, but he at least seems willing to listen to other people's voices.» Regardless, he expresses a felt sense of relatively freedom regarding what he could choose to do out on the pitch, something he believes makes his performance better.

Ethan experiences the felt sense of getting space to manage himself as received trust from the coach. Where he states that «I believe that if I am to look at where I have succeeded, I believe that I am dependent on gaining trust.» Having said that, he points out that both coaches, one that is here seen as well-being coach and the other who is seen as footballer´s coach, are able to make him feel that he has received trust. Which can indicate that trust is not directly linked to the experience of being able to exercise self-governance, but rather something more towards the feeling of «(...) not being defined by the one struggle.»

George also experienced that it was ok to share personal thoughts and opinions regarding what should be done on the football pitch with both of his coaches. Nevertheless, he expresses that he felt more listened to by the coach who is here seen as the one concerned with well-being. The well-being approach to leadership is also what Oliver believes he can keep up with for years since "(...) he does not tire of his surroundings. He also respects people, at the same time as he is good at spreading enthusiasm and joy.»

4.3. Footballer´s coach

«All coaches want results, but for some it is easier to see it in the way they talk that they only think about results.» This is what David says about what this thesis refers to as the footballer´s coach. The theme footballer´s coach comes, like the well-being coach, from the statement of Ethan. This theme presents experiences of coaches who are contrasted with the so-called well-being coach, which in sum expresses a more result-oriented and tough leadership behavior. The informants describe these coaches with adjectives such as perfectionist, serious, dedicated, knowledgeable and a role model to strive for. At the same time, it seems like these coaches have more faith in themselves and are therefore more faithful to their methods.

David and Oliver are somewhat skeptical of this form of leadership, while Ethan has a good experience with such leadership. In the case of George, it appears to be that he had a coach who wanted to appear authoritarian and tough but failed to enforce this kind of approach. To give a deeper insight into these elements and the theme as a whole, three sub-themes are presented: Result-oriented, role model, and authoritarian.

4.3.1 Result- oriented

Oliver says, «For some (football players) who are only result-oriented, of course they could certainly go with someone who shouted them in the ear for 10 years, but for me personally, it is important to have fun with what I do.» The theme of the footballer´s coach involves, as mentioned, a more result-oriented leadership style, which for some is experienced more demanding. All the informants are of course concerned with good results and understand that their coaches are too. David for example says «I love results myself, so I guess I'm a good mix (between result and process)."

David experiences that the coaches who are more concerned with results are especially concerned with what the position will be after the match. «It is often the case that coaches, if the team have played a terrible match, but win, then everything is fine (...) then you are not process-oriented, then you are very result-oriented.» For David this involved that he «(...) heard it to a greater extent when I did badly, and when I did well it was more like this is just expected in a way.» David sees such a result-oriented approach to leadership as the opposite of process-oriented. He has experienced that coaches who are process-oriented «(...) rarely lost their heads or lost themselves.» He continues by saying «(...) it was like the process then, we kind of just continued on the same steady course. Steady, calm and controlled is the way to get results.»

Oliver points to the organization itself when he tries to explain why some coaches is mainly concern with results by saying «(...) because of the leadership styles even higher up, which demand results right away.» Oliver feels that this approach comes at the expense of the players' ability to relax while playing, which leads to «(...) things getting a little choppy.» Oliver is thus positive towards coaches who «(...) are able to look behind the results all the time instead of looking at the scoreboard and that is what decides whether you have had a good match or not.»

4.3.2 Role model

«I think he set a good example of how to be present here and now and do your best in training every day in order to have the best possible quality of everything that can be done anytime." By saying this Ethan made the foundation for the sub-theme «role model». To be a role model is here contrasted with appearing sociable. Ethan, who has thrived very well with a slightly tougher coaching style, highlights seriousness and a clear and distinct appearance as particularly positive. It was this coach Ethan believed was most likely to create the best results. «The coach was clearly the best because I think all the things he said were very sensible, from a sporting point of view, he was very clever and knowledgeable (...)» At the same time, the informant is very clear that such a detailed, perfectionist and demanding leadership style only works well if the coach has the necessary knowledge, or as the informant says «(...) if you hadn't bought the content then it could have become tiring.»

Ethan points out that having a role model to look up to was making him work harder and kept him motivated. The coach got a lot of respect, through being clearly ambitious and dedicated. Ethan experienced this as contagious in the sense that there was no room to relax, where you had to be sharped every day. He was also very strict and took people aside if they did not follow the norms and rules he had set for the team. Ethan wasn't

quite sure if that was something he valued at all times. He utters this by saying «(...) although I perhaps thought it was taking it a bit too far.»

It seems to be that the coaches who run a harder front can have a big impact on the players' experiences, safety and motivation if they deliberately vary their approach a little. Oliver describes one episode after a game where the coach, who he initially experienced as impersonal, came to him to talk. "He understood how I felt and put himself in my situation and managed it in a way. From initially being a guy who liked to keep people on their toes, he managed to get down to a human level and neutralized a bit of football in itself.» Oliver experienced this as encouraging during a troubled period, where he experienced that the change in behavior gave him calmness in his work and made football harmless, «(...) because it is, after all, just a game.»

In this game, it is still important for the informants to develop and be as good as possible, which Oliver expresses by saying «(...) because in the end, it's about getting as far as possible." Where he elaborates that it is not necessarily the coaches you are most comfortable around who will take you to the next level and «(...) that is, in a way, what is at the top of the wish list.»

4.3.3 Authoritarian

«(...) The coach was very much a bit of a perfectionist, and maybe to some extent a bit the opposite, not as sociable a person, a bit more serious and maybe he didn't trust the players because he didn't want any coincidences and was very clear on how he wanted things.» This is what Ethan says about coaches who appears to be more concerned with the footballer´s development, than their well-being, and therefore opts for a more authoritarian approach. Appearing authoritarian is a clear contrast to a more democratic appearance and are here organized as a sub-theme under the theme footballer's coach.

Ethan experienced the coach to «have the key to success», and therefore made it clear that he had complete confidence in himself and his own philosophy. For Ethan this felt safe since «if we did this and that, then we were going to succeed and even if we might not have won the game yesterday this is the way to do it.» Here it becomes clear that it can vary how result-oriented such an authoritarian leadership behavior can be. Although Ethan experiences this coach as very result-oriented, it seems as if his firm belief in his own methods leads to the process also being emphasized.

The coach Ethan considered to be mostly concerned with development was also very quick to express his thoughts and to point out what he meant was not good enough, by, among other things, giving zero tolerance for things he didn't like. Oliver, who has had a coach with a fairly similar appearance, experiences this as mediocre communication. He expresses that «due to a slightly authoritarian management, the environment is a little uninterested in what the individual has to say.» Where the two authoritarian coaches he has had are described as completely locked into their way of doing football. «Of course, when people aren't interested in hearing what you have to say, you get a little demotivated, and sometimes of course it can feel a little hopeless too.»

The feeling of always having to be on your toes affected Oliver´s motivation negatively. «It gets very messy when you almost feel like it's a bit of PlayStation playing every now and then. That is to say, your coach says what to do all the time and you have to

constantly deal with that instead of solving the task in your own way.» Although Ethan seems significantly more positive towards the coach he experienced with a tough coaching style, he nevertheless states that he also finds this behavior demanding by saying «it might become a bit tiring in the long run, unless you are motivated to give everything for the next 10 years.»

George has also experienced a coach who he believes tried to appear tough. He found this coach to be very bad, since «(...) He tried to appear authoritarian, but everyone did as they wanted without any consequences which meant that in the end the whole group collapsed.» He experienced that the coach pretended like nothing was going on, since he could not risk putting some good footballers on the bench. «His problem was, he was a nice guy as well, but the problem was that he wasn't such a good football coach, that is, the subject of football, he also didn't have control over the group, but he had a much more difficult job than the other coach, there is no doubt about that.»

4.4. Group composition

Group composition is the name given to the third theme. This aspect of teamwork and leadership has been given its own theme due to how frequently it got brought up during the interviews and its importance regardless of the coaching approach. George illustrates it when he says: "I feel that the coach in club 1 promoted something of the same (as the coach in club 2), but it was not the same group of players there (club 1) as here (club 2).»

George is referring to his experience that has shown that even if the coaches chose the same approach, it worked completely different because of the players in the group. He goes on to say that the coach in club 1 could create significantly better group function with the same approach within club 2, because of the quality of the players. This aspect of the composition is for most people easy to understand, a better group of players gives better results. At the same time, it seems as if there is something more than the players «just being good» which makes the coach portrayed as skilled.

The group composition, which the informants see as the coach´s job, can apparently function as a frame. This frame is by David seen as something that can contribute to create good performances. «We won most of the games and got promoted to the next division. It was probably because there was such a good framework that contributed to us creating good performances." He continues with referring to homogeneity, camaraderie, and a good environment as important determents for a well-created group.

4.4.1 Homogeneity

George says that it was only the coach in club 1 who used team building activities, where they were, among other things, given the task of creating a revue to be presented at the end of the season. In club 2, on the other hand, George states that "not much is done to bring the group together, it is more the group itself that arranges for that." What the coach in club 2 has done, on the other hand, is to «put together a group of players that fit very well together.» This statement brings us to what the informants experienced as most important for a good group composition, homogeneity. In George's opinion, the group of players in Club 1 did not work well together because «there were a lot of people from that country and a lot of people from another country, which didn't go well

together.» In club 2, on the other hand, there are only people from the same country, which the informant experiences as an advantage, where he states that «(...) if someone from abroad had come to the team now, it would have been difficult for him to find his place.» But if the group is so homogeneous that the members have low diversity, one can imagine that it can be challenging to find one´s role. David experienced when he changed clubs «(...) that I knew what role I was going to get, I felt a bit like I was going home.» This was something he indicated as being particularly important for his well-being.

David shares the same experience regarding the importance of a homogeneous group to promote the group's functioning as George. «I think they have chosen somewhat strategically to get a group that works well together, because there are many boys aged 20-25 from the same country.» says David. The coach's ability to choose players who get along well seems to be important for all four informants, where Oliver also states «(...) player logistics is a bit like that, you get the type of people you want to have in the group and in that way they promote relations.» Another central aspect of group composition was here brought up, namely the players relationships.

4.4.2 Camaraderie

Good relationships are often mentioned by the informants as the cause for good results and perceived well-being. A group that feels connected to each other creates better results, conflicts are more easily resolved, and the pressure becomes easier to bear. Such relationships were here given the name camaraderie and serve as a sub-theme to highlight this important aspect of the composition of groups. «(...) So I feel that where camaraderie is strongest, it is easiest to perform.» This is what Oliver answered when he got asked where he performed the best. Apparently, having a group that identifies as something more than colleagues is central to him, and that the group is heading in the same direction.

Camaraderie also seems important to David, who has experienced transition from a club characterized by camaraderie to, as he himself describes it, sharing a dressing room with 20 egoists. He experiences the time when he played with good friends as a fantastic time in terms of well-being, but also in terms of group achievements, where the team moved up to the upper division. «The coaches made a lot of arrangements for that because they thought that if we are to be able to deliver out in the field, we must have a group that stands together, and have a very good dynamic in the group.»

Conflicts and disagreements did not appear as intimidating to David since everyone agreed they were mates no matter the conflict. Where he experienced that «(...) you really just have to be at each other's throats, and you almost get closer to each other after you have done that.» One time David unintentionally talked negatively about his teammates, which appeared condescending. Then the coach got angry and explained it with the importance of camaraderie "(…) we shouldn't talk negatively about each other unnecessarily."

The felt sense of camaraderie also seems to reduce the pressure regarding performance. David refers to a time when he was surrounded by good mates as a time with little felt pressure. «It was such a safe environment, in the dressing room there were comrades everywhere you looked.» He experienced that it was easier for him to put on a mask

when he himself was not satisfied with his performance «(...) because there were mates and buddies and thus much easier to be happy for their success, so it's a job that the coaches and managers have done to get the right type of people so that we get a good vibe in the group.»

4.4.3 Culture

How the environment in the group is designed will have an impact on the culture that is getting established. This sub-theme, culture, sheds light on elements of group composition that can make the group easier or more challenging to lead to good functioning. For example, in George's current club (2) there is no need for strict rules and reprimands as the group operates with a strong inner sense of justice. According to George "Here it is a strong internal justice and that has worked well, it has not been broken, it does not get broken here. The culture here is very good. Everyone pulls in the same direction." Even if no strict rules are established in this club «(...) nobody comes late or things like that anyway.» The coach in club 1, on the other hand, did not have control over the group, but as the informant states, he had a much more difficult job.

The informants describe the generous culture they have experienced in the various football clubs as a product of the coach's actions in challenging situations. George speaks about one episode where one of his fellow players started to cry. The so-called well-being coach chose then to handle the situation by expressing «(...) how powerful it was to be able to show emotions and such, and almost praised that he showed that he was unable to train that day.» David also highlights one episode, where one of the players suffered from a chronic injury. The coach, instead of being impatient and hard, chose to let him «(...) use the time he needed after each hit.» Where the coach was insistent that he should receive proper treatment. David also highlights another action by the well-being coach that he sees as promoting for a good group function. Multiple times when the coach considered the team to be exhausted he chose to give them time off from training, where they were given the task of doing something pleasant together instead.

Oliver highlights anger from the coach as something he has experienced as inhibiting the sense of safety in the group. «Some people get angrier than others if you lose, some manage to put their hands on their players regardless, and it's of course a good thing if you want to try to spread that sense of safety.» This can, among other things, lead to the environment being a bit more merciless, partly because they «lose their temper as soon as the team does badly.»

To summarize, the informants express three main aspects of how they experience coaches in the football teams they have played for. The first two presented here is seen as opposites, the well-being coach and the footballer's coach. Both approaches contain traits and skills that the footballers appreciate. How these two behaviors affect the group functioning will be discussed in the next chapter. The same applies to group composition, which the footballers apparently attach great importance to when it comes to their comfort.

5.0 Discussion

In this chapter I will go into depth of the already presented behaviors of the coaches that the informants have experienced. I will present a discussion regarding the perceived characteristics of the coaching behaviors to see how they correspond to the aims of team leadership and coaching effectiveness, and in which situations they will be preferable. Before the discussion is presented, it will be argued that the well-being coach has a relation-oriented approach to leadership, while the footballer´s coach has a task-oriented approach to leadership. Throughout this chapter the informants´ experiences will be presented to support the discussion. Before starting the discussion I want to give a reminder of the thesis' research question:

How do elite football players experience different coaches, and how can the perceived behaviors promote and inhibit the creation of well-functioning teams?

5.1 Perceived leadership

In order to answer the thesis' research questions in more depth, it is necessary to look at the informants' experience with coaches in light of theory and previous research. Presented in the previous chapter, the perceived coaching behaviors are placed into two contrasting themes. In the following part, an argument will be given that the themes well-being coach and footballer´s coach are consistent with what the theory refers to as relation-oriented leadership and task-oriented leadership.

The way I see it there are two elements in particular that underpin the fact that the well-being coaches carry out a relation-oriented approach to the coaching role. These elements are the characteristics sociable and democratic. These elements have already been shown to characterize the well-being coaches' approach. In relation-oriented leadership, the democratically characteristic is visible by the fact that these leaders emphasize involving employees in discussions of problems or difficulties, where employees are actively listened to. The sociable characteristic comes to light through their appearance as attentive, considerate, supportive and good listeners (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2007, p. 396; Yukl, 2013, p. 64). Relation-oriented leadership is, as mentioned, characterized by a main focus on building good relationships with subordinates, as well as encouraging followers to focus on the welfare of the group (Derue et al., 2011, p. 16). The discussion thus takes a further point of departure that well-being coaches are relation-oriented.

The task-oriented leaders are particularly interested in the actual task an organization, or what a group is to solve (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2007, p. 396; Yukl, 2013, p. 64). I argue that this approach to leadership matches the characteristics found within the behavior of the so-called footballer's coach. This leadership behavior is referred to, in the same way that the theory refers to the task-oriented, as a demanding approach (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2007, p. 396; Yukl, 2013, p. 64). Concrete orders are what characterize the communication of task-oriented leaders, as well as no desire to include employees in decision-making processes (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2007, p. 396; Yukl, 2013, p. 64). The footballer's coach communication is seen in the same way and are referred to by the informants as authoritarian. Being authoritarian is also a part of what makes these coaches appear impersonal. With an impersonal approach, the coaches act as

unattainable role models, and emphasize results rather than creating relationship and promote the footballer's well-being. This corresponds with task-oriented leaders who are characterized as cold and with a concern to keep a distance between them and their followers, while they monitor the operations (Bass & Stogdill, 1990, p. 472; Yukl, 2013, p. 66). The discussion thus takes another point of departure, namely that the footballer´s coach is task-oriented.

By giving a brief introductory argument for where the themes regarding leadership behaviors belong in the theory, the thesis will further build on this argument by illustrating several similarities, as well as how the experienced leadership behaviors can create well-functioning teams.

5.2. How can the behavior of the coaches affect the way a team function?

Côté & Gilbert´s (2009) definition of coaching effectiveness will work as a base as the discussion continues to look at how the relation-oriented and task-oriented coaches can promote and inhibit the development of a well-functioning team. Their definition reads as follows "The consistent application of integrated professional, interpersonal, and intrapersonal knowledge to improve athletes' competence, confidence, connection, and character in specific coaching contexts" (Côté & Gilbert, 2009, p. 316). When a coach master to lead a team in an effective manner, it will have a great impact on the team´s ability to win (Pratt & Eitzen, 1989, p. 311). Thus, leadership behavior is seen as an important success factor in creating efficient and well- functioning teams (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2007, p. 407). How good a team can function is dependent on how the leader initiates and develops the teamwork (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2007, p. 405).

The findings presented in chapter four illustrates that the two coaching behaviors initiate and develop teamwork with the use of different methods. A discussion regarding central characteristics within the two behaviors will therefore be provided to shed light on the complexity and challenge regarding what can be considered coaching effectiveness. In order to better understand what it is that these coaches do differently, I believe it is necessary to shed light on one behavior at a time, before comparing them. Therefore, the discussion will start by looking at the democratic and sociable well-being coaches, before looking into the authoritarian and impersonal footballer´s coach, to see how these behaviors can promote the creation of well-functioning teams. At the end of this part the two approaches will be compared and contrasted.

To give a reminder, there are three elements that are essential when in the task of creating a well-functioning team according to the presented theory in chapter two. These are expedient and developing cooperation, commitment to task objectives and a psychologically safe environment. These elements are highly interdependent. For example, to facilitate commitment and to solve task objectives will be difficult without having the team cooperating in an expedient and developing way. To be able to cooperate it is essential that no one will be ridiculed, rejected, or punished for expressing what they think or mean, that is, a psychologically safe environment. These elements are again connected to Côté & Gilbert´s (2009) definition of coaching effectiveness, ass will be made clearer later.

5.2.1 The well-being coaches´ promotion of well-functioning teams

The relation-oriented approach to the coaching role is especially suited to create expedient and developing cooperation through their apparently high degree of interpersonal knowledge which makes them facilitate mutual trust, psychological safety and cohesiveness. The first two elements will be discussed here.

To start with I will highlight how the relation-oriented coaches apparently manages to promote psychological safety. To have a psychologically safe environment in teams is important to create good ways of handling failure, feedback, as well as promoting learning behavior and achievements (Edmondson, 1999, p. 375-376). The relation-oriented leaders do this by encourage inclusion of players in discussions of problems and challenges, where the players can speak their truth while being actively listened to (Bass & Stogdill, 1990, p. 473; Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2007, p. 396; Yukl, 2013, p. 64). I argue that both Oliver and David experienced a psychologically safe environment during the well-being coach. Oliver, because he felt listened to which led to "(…) more ownership of what is going on and spreads safety at the same time." David, because he felt it was easier to be happy for his teammates, even if he did badly «(...) because there were mates and buddies and thus much easier to be happy for their success."

It is not only by including players in discussions of problems and challenges, i.e., being democratic, that the well-being coaches promote a felt sense of psychological safety, it is also by being sociable. George sees the sociable coach this way «(...) he is like a friend, very open and I feel safe with him.» When the coaches are seen as friendly and therefore easy to create close relationship with, they make an important foundation for resurrection of psychological safety by showing authentic caring, and making sure they are well, while having a humble and moral behavior (Cronin et al., 2020, p. 124; Edmondson & Harvey, 2017, p. 76; Rego et al., 2021, p. 669). In addition to "just" being friendly these coaches also initiate conversations about both football and private life, which is perceived by the informants to be done with the simple reasoning that they are sincere curious and interested in getting to know their players. This shows key characterizes of relation-oriented leaders, namely to be attentive, considerate, supportive and good listeners (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2007, p. 396; Yukl, 2013, p. 64).

The relation-oriented coaches are also promoting psychological safety through their emotional intelligence, which is found by Cook et al. (2022) to be an important trait of world-leading coaches (Olympic gold medal winning) (p. 37). George was telling a story from when his relation-oriented coach was able to understand that a player had a tough time, and therefore gave him the day off since that was what he needed. After the player left the pitch the coach expressed to the team how important and brave it was to share feelings. I argue that the coach showed emotional intelligence by understanding the player´s emotions and by giving him what he needed. I also argue that this intelligence made him promote psychological safety by showing the group that no one will be ridiculed, rejected, or punished for expressing their emotions or needs, as well as encouraging the group to show the player who left the pitch respect. If the relation-oriented coaches manage to create a psychologically safe environment they will have an advantage when it comes to creating expedient and developing cooperation. This is because psychological safety has a significant impact on relationships in sports teams

when it comes to managing the balance of cooperation and competition (Jowett et al., 2023, p. 7).

Psychological safety implies mutual trust where no one will be ridiculed, rejected, or punished for expressing what they think or mean (Edmondson, 1999, p. 354). Psychological safety and trust are thus mutually dependent on each other, which makes it conceivable that these coaches also manage to promote mutual trust. One way they facilitate mutual trust is by encouraging the players to develop independence. I know this sound contradicting but hear me out. These coaches show that they trust their players by engaging them in problem solving, where the players can find good performance strategies together independent of the coach. By doing so, these coaches show that they trust the players, while encouraging the players to trust each other in the process of developing the right performance strategies.

To encourage followers to development independence is a practical recommendation from Erikstad et al. (2021) to coaches who want to affect personal development, participation and performance in a positive matter (p. 2; p. 6). The informants utters that the felt sense of relative freedom, regarding what they can chose to do out on the pitch, positively affects their performance. This felt sense of freedom is by me seen as a result of the coach being able to encourage independence, while actively involving them in decisions and procedures. This is also how Ethan experiences it when he is getting space to manage himself "I believe that if I am to look at where I have succeeded, I believe that I am dependent on gaining trust." According to theory, leaders who establish social and emotional ties invites trust, and therefore less felt need to control and close supervision (Bass & Stogdill, 1990, p. 473). Judging by Ethan's statement, it seems that these well-being coaches achieve just this. When letting go of the close supervision the players can get a felt sense of ownership and authority, which the informants see as important for them to perform at their best. This way these coaches promote cooperation by encouraging mutual trust and creating a psychologically safe environment. Oliver experienced this by saying "here we try to meet in the middle, more collaboration.»

To a certain extent these well-being coaches also manages to promote member commitment to task objective. To promote this, it is imperative that leaders work to strengthen members' participation in problem solving (Yukl, 2013, p. 247). A democratic approach to coaching includes, as perceived by the informants, a willingness to listen to the players opinions and take those into consideration. Oliver expresses for example that «(...) he very much invites people to share their opinions, and in that way, we can perhaps agree that we do it in a different way.» The well-being coaches therefore appear to be able to promote this central aspect of coaching effectiveness to a certain extent.

To summarize, the well-being coaches are in a good position to create expedient and developing cooperation through their interpersonal knowledge which comes to light through their work on facilitating psychological safety and mutual trust. They also manage to some extent to promote member commitment to task objective, but as will be made clearly in the next section, the task-oriented coaches have an advantage when it comes to promoting this aspect.

5.2.2 The footballer´s coaches´ promotion of well-functioning teams

The task-oriented approach to the coaching role is especially suited to keep the focus on the task through their apparently high degree of professional knowledge which makes them appear as role models and less concerned for the players well-being. Ethan expresses that "The (task-oriented) coach was clearly the best because I think all the things he said were very sensible, from a sporting point of view, he was very clever and knowledgeable (...)» The authoritarian leaders is considered more knowledgeable, and thus more confident in their way of achieving results.

Côté & Gilbert (2009) highlights how a high degree of professional knowledge is a characteristic for coaching effectiveness (p. 310). Although the informants perceive the footballer's coach as demanding, since they listen less to their players and because of their strong preoccupation with results, all the informants expresses that they love good results. Ethan is also very clear that the task-oriented coaches are most likely to create the best results.

The task-oriented leaders are also seen as the most likely to create the best results, at least according to Ethan, because they dare to speak up when something is not good enough. The reason why these coaches dare to speak up is perceived by the informants to be because of their confidence and their zero tolerance for non-promoting aspects. Ethan reflects on this by pointing to seriousness and a clear and distinct appearance as particularly positive. These authoritarian coaches manage to convince the players through their confidence, knowledge, and their clear vision that they have the key to success. By having the knowledge necessary to be ahead of problems and how they should be handled, they also hold a central element in the promotion of achieving specific task objectives (Bass et al., 2003, p. 215).

To be perceived as especially knowledgeable accumulates a great deal of authority. This authority is given to the coaches since the players think that if they do what the coach says it will create good results. Apart from having the players following everything they say, the given authority also causes the coach to become a role model. Appearing as a role model is highlighted by Erikstad et al. (2021) as an element in promoting personal development and performance (p. 2; p. 6). Being referred to as a role model in this context, is to have a behavior that seems almost unattainable, which is possibly reinforced through the desire task-oriented coaches have to keep a distance between themselves and their followers (Bass & Stogdill, 1990, p. 472; Yukl, 2013, p. 66). These coaches appear to have unique knowledge, a high degree of discipline and are clearly ambitious and dedicated, which breeds respect. Ethan expresses this by saying "(…) I think he set a good example of how to be present here and now and do your best in training every day in order to have the best possible quality of everything that can be done anytime." In turn this promotes the players motivation, as well as a desire to work harder. This is part of the reason why such leadership is often considered performance leadership, precisely since they put a lot of effort into motivating the group on their way to reach the goal (Bass & Stogdill, 1990, p. 472). As Oliver says, it is not always the coaches you feel most comfortable around who manage to take you to a new level, which is clearly at the top of the footballers list.

Building on Oliver´s experience, it is clear that coaches who have a harder front and lead the players out of their comfort zone have the ability to develop their players. Even if

Oliver experiences this as "(…) the environment is a little uninterested in what the individual has to say" it can contribute to keep the task in focus. If the leader is able to keep the team focused on the task, while creating a clear vision of how to solve task objectives, and communicate it clearly to the group, it will promote members commitment to task objectives (Erikstad et al., 2021, p. 5; Hülsheger et al., 2009, p. 1141; Yukl, 2013, p. 247). Since the task-oriented coaches appear authoritarian they can master this through their dictating way of communicating, which gives no space for discussion and therefore prevents the footballers from gaining traction for a more comfortable vision of how to solve task objectives. All of this indicates that this coaching behavior is not to concerned with welfare and are therefore not particularly focused on social and emotional activity, which makes performances first rated.

To summarize the footballer´s coach is in a position of power which causes the players to follow his orders, while the knowledge he possesses makes his orders valid. The impersonal approach leads to an increased focus on the task and less focus on social and emotional activity. With this behavior one avoids performance and task achivement being second-rated.

5.2.3 The differences
The discussion of these two behaviors promoting aspects show that both approaches contain important elements in the development of a well-functioning team. Even so, as pointed out at the beginning of the discussion, the elements that promote a well-functioning team is highly interdependent. This part will therefore look further into which aspect that the behaviors lack when in the task of creating expedient and developing cooperation, members commitment to task objectives and psychological safety.

The task-oriented coaches are perceived as the most knowledgeable. Their professional knowledge and impersonal authoritarian approach keep the team focused on the task. This makes the task-oriented coaches suited to handle the aspects of making a clear vision of how to solve task-objectives, initiate structure, challenge and motivate followers to reach their potential, while appearing as a self-confident role model. All these aspects are found in previous research to be important to create a well-functioning team (Crust & Lawrence, 2006, p. 41; Erikstad et al., 2021, p. 6; Hülsheger et al., 2009, p. 1141). The task of creating a well-functioning team is nevertheless extremely complex, where cooperation and mutual trust is essential for the team to be able to carry out its mission and achieve specific task objectives (Wu et al., 2010, p. 101; Yukl, 2013, p. 250).

Members commitment to task objectives are not only determent of the coach´s ability to make the players focus on the task and make a clear vision of how to solve task objectives. It is also determent of the coach´s ability to support innovation and facilitate good internal communication (Hülsheger et al., 2009, p. 1141). Creating good internal communication involves creating social interactions, which is how interpersonal knowledge appears (Côté & Gilbert, 2009, p. 310). The task-oriented coaches are rather impersonal and therefore not so interested in creating social interactions. Ethan expresses this by saying that the task-oriented coach is "(…) not as a sociable person, a bit more serious (…)."

I argue that another important element of good internal communication is to facilitate for sharing of opinions, if not, there is a risk that the communication can be better characterized as a monologue. Limiting the possibility of sharing opinions and excluding

encouragement of player to share their ideas can also make it challenging to promote innovation. Oliver put this experience into words by saying «Of course, when people aren't interested in hearing what you have to say, you get a little demotivated, and sometimes of course it can feel a little hopeless too.» It is perceivable that the authoritarian and impersonal appearance will come at the expense of the creation of expedient and developing cooperation, which again is consistent with mutual trust and psychological safety. Ethan reflects on his coach´s behavior by saying "(…)maybe he didn't trust the players (…)." Since these coaches are fully determining performance strategies and making all assessments themselves, they remove opportunities for discussions where collaboration can take place and develop.

The task-oriented impersonal approach can also negatively affect the team's psychological safety. I would like to highlight how their result-oriented approach contribute to defining players based on less good performances. David experienced that he «(...) heard it to a greater extent when I did badly, and when I did well it was more like this is just expected in a way." This will not only affect the teams felt sense of safety. Previous research has also found that contingent positive reinforcement will promote the team's function, while aggression can undermine the relationship with the athletes in the long term. Low intimacy and lack of empathy, as footballer´s coach can sometimes appear, does also increase the risk of undermining the relationship with the athletes (Cook et al., 2022, p. 36). The footballers experience that the feeling of always having to be on their toes directly affects their sense of safety and their ability to be calm when they are playing. In contrast, the well-being coaches are able to put their arms around their players regardless, which helps to spread safety and facilitate better relations.

The relation-oriented coaches seem to have a high degree of the knowledge the task-oriented coaches are lacking, namely interpersonal knowledge. These coaches´ sociable and democratic behavior seems to facilitate for mutual trust and psychological safety, which is important for a team to cooperate in an expedient and developing way. Their behavior also shows consideration and emotional intelligence, while being open to experiences and giving the players room to develop independence. All these aspects are shown to promote a well-functioning team (Cook et al., 2022, p. 37; Crust & Lawrence, 2006, p. 41; Erikstad et al., 2021, p. 6).

The democratic approach of the well-being coach is nevertheless seen by Ethan as an attempt to hide the low degree of professional knowledge, which is important for achieving task objectives. He says that «(...) I think in a way that he depended on a good group of players, that he had players to fix it instead of it being his ideas that make the team win in a way.» The informants also worry that the relation-oriented coach´s focus on well-being comes at the expense of the coach's willingness to speak up when something is not good enough, as well as challenging the group's comfort. The informants suspect that this wish for welfare may affect the results negatively, since the coach appears to be just praying for things to go well, instead of taking any concrete actions.

One element that contributes to the creation of well-functioning teams that both approaches master is to set aside the individual´s needs. Wu et al. (2010) emphasizes this aspect when in a task of promoting a team´s chances of successfully achieving task objectives (p. 101). The well-being coach can master this through, as a democratic approach implies, listening to everyone and make the decision based on the needs of the

majority of the group. In this way, individual needs can be set aside in order to please the team. Both the informants and the theory express that with the use of this approach all group members get treated as equals (Derue et al., 2011, p. 16). The footballer's coach can also manage to set aside individual's needs by running his directive and self-determined way of progress, which is independent of the players' opinions. It is nevertheless conceivable that the group's needs are not satisfied either, since the coach acts on the basis of his own opinions and not necessarily what the group themselves expresses that they need. Oliver experiences this as deprivation of authority, which he says leads to that " (…) you almost feel like it's a bit of PlayStation playing every now and then."

What I draw from this comparison is that the task-oriented coaches rank strongest when it comes to knowledge of football, but considerably weaker when it comes to interpersonal knowledge. Although the relation-oriented coaches do not appear as self-confident and knowledgeable, which make them afraid of speaking up when something is not good enough or if it can harm the group's welfare, it is likely that they make up for it by giving the players ownership, promoting psychological safety and creates good internal communication.

Intrapersonal knowledge, which involve introspection, review, and revision of one's practice has not yet been discussed (Côté & Gilbert, 2009, p. 311). This aspect of coaching effectiveness will be looked further into in the last part of this chapter. But first I will present a discussion regarding recruitment, maintenance, and the creation of cohesive teams.

5.3 Recruitment and maintenance to create team cohesiveness

Leaders in the role of a coach are rarely in the position to choose all the individuals they want on their team, rather they can recruit some new players, as well as let some go. When in a process of recruitment, the coaches should search for players with the right skills, which complement the others, and performance strategies that contribute to the individuals making each other better (Railo, 1979, p. 117; Yukl, 2013, p. 237). As will be further discussed in this part, the recruitment of the "right players" can contribute to team cohesiveness. Team cohesion is already mentioned in chapter two to have a significant connection to leadership behavior, and a moderate to large relationship with performance, yet a major contributor to team effectiveness (Aoyagi et al., 2008, p. 27; Carron et al., 2002, p. 181; Gardner et al., 1996, p. 373). If the coach does not get the opportunity to recruit and keep the players who have a good chance of developing team cohesion, such as players with similar values and culture, or if the team are constantly affected by replacements, there are still several things the coach can do to promote this important aspect of well-functioning teams. This will also be discussed in this part, but first I will shed light on how to have the "right players" in a team can contribute to team cohesiveness.

5.3.1 Recruitment to create team cohesiveness

The informants believe that if the coach makes the right decisions when hiring new players, the group will be easier to lead. David believes that the group composition creates a framework, this he expresses by saying "We won most of the games and got promoted to the next division. It was probably because there was such a good framework

that contributed to us creating good performances**.**" This so-called good framework I argue is team cohesion.

To emphasize the given argument I continue by referring to a another statement of David «I think they have chosen somewhat strategically to get a group that works well together, because there are many boys aged 20-25 from the same country." This composition of individuals made the foundation for, as it appears to be that they have manage to develop, team cohesion. The rationale for this argument is that I suspect that this group was homogeneous, i.e. they share one culture and the same values, beliefs and traditions. A homogeneous team has a greater chance of developing team cohesion (Railo, 1979, p. 119; Yukl, 2013, p. 251).

It appears to be that George has experienced some of the same, "not much is done to bring the group together, it is more the group itself that arranges for that." George continues by saying that the coach did in fact do one thing, he «put together a group of players that fit very well together." The coach's ability to choose players who get along well seems to be important for all four informants.

5.3.2 Maintenance that creates team cohesiveness

Sometimes the coach is not in the position to create a team that consists of homogeneous individuals. Then the coach has to use other methods to create team cohesion. I will therefore continue by presenting the elements within the relation-oriented approach that promotes the development of team cohesion, before doing the same with the task-oriented approach.

A coach can promote team cohesion by influencing athlete satisfaction and positive sport experiences, showing individual considerations, encouraging followers to develop independence, challenge and motivate followers to reach their potential and by behaving as a role model (Aoyagi et al., 2008, p. 37-38; Erikstad et al., 2021, p. 5). Still, all this aspect is dependent on the groups development of mutual trust and cooperation (Railo, 1979, p. 117). The discussion further up showed that the relation-oriented coaches encourage followers to develop independence, while facilitating for mutual trust and cooperation and showing individual considerations through their emotional intelligence. The task-oriented coaches, on the other hand, challenge and motivate their followers to reach their potential and behave as role models. Both approaches manage thus, to a certain extent, to facilitate team cohesion. Nevertheless, democratic and supportive leaders are found by Gardner et al. (1996) to have more cohesive teams (p. 375).

Railo (1979) supposed that the reason behind relation-oriented leaders having more cohesive teams is that the feeling of "we" in the group becomes greater with this coaching approach (p. 142). My findings suggest a similar reasoning. By focusing on the players well-being and on building relationships, the relation-oriented coach spends much time on social and emotional activity. David for example said that "The coaches made a lot of arrangements for that (players to be good friends) because they thought that if we are to be able to deliver out in the field, we must have a group that stands together, and have a very good dynamic in the group." When the coach considered the team to be exhausted he chose to give them time off from training, where they were given the task of doing something pleasant together instead.

To influence athlete satisfaction and positive sport experiences can also make team cohesion occur (Aoyagi et al., 2008, p. 37-38; Erikstad et al., 2021, p. 5). Even if the footballer´s coach appears equipped to create good results with their high degree of professional knowledge, at least according to Ethan, they might not be as equipped to provoke athlete satisfaction and positive sport experiences. If the players are «robbed» of all authority and ownership of what they do, even good results and achievements can feel less positive. Oliver expressed that he "(…) feel like it's a bit of PlayStation playing (…)." In the case of good performances with the well-being coach, one can imagine that the players will feel a significantly greater degree of satisfaction since they have more ownership and determination to the achieved results. It will therefore be as much their performance as the coach's. When it comes to athlete satisfaction all the informants also state that their well-being is better with the relation-oriented coaches, rather than the task-oriented ones, at least in the long run.

What I draw from this part of the discussion is that the relation-oriented coaches are more capable of creating cohesive teams, even if they do not necessarily have a good starting point regarding a homogenous group of players. By spending time on social and emotional activity, facilitating cooperation and mutual trust through communication and encouraging players to develop independence, while showing individual considerations, they manage to promote team cohesion. The task-oriented coaches seem to be less equipped to promote team cohesion, but as the next section will shed light on, team cohesion is not necessarily always conducive.

5.3.3 Challenges with team cohesion

Team cohesion is not necessarily only positive according to the literature. A team consisting of very similar players can affect individuals' tendency to share conflicting opinions. This can lead to the phenomenon called group thinking (Yukl, 2013, p. 249-250). The team can also stick together, not because of the desire for good results, but because of the good sense of belonging (Railo, 1979, p. 125).

My findings also have two objections to team cohesion. First, I am referring to David´s experienced when he changed club «(...) that I knew what role I was going to get, I felt a bit like I was going home.» It is conceivable that it will be difficult to find one´s role in a team that has very low member diversity. To have an appropriate mix of complementary skills is also necessary to create an effective team (Yukl, 2013, p. 247). A team consisting of very similar players can as mentioned affect individuals' tendency to share conflicting opinions, and also be inhibiting for creative task solving since everyone operate with fairly similar knowledge, experiences and perspectives. This is also Edmondson´s (1999) worry with group cohesion. Even if none of the informants utters this aspect, I think it is important to take it into consideration.

My other objection is that all the informants seem to be very comfortable when in a cohesive team. I am a little worried that the camaraderie can go at the expense of their willingness to work hard to achieve results. Oliver shares this concern by uttering that the sense of safety can lead to poorer concentration and presence.

Nevertheless, it is clear that all the informants see it as important for good performance to thrive in the team. Oliver states that «(...) So I feel that where camaraderie is strongest, it is easiest to perform.» David apparently agrees when he states that the

time when he played with good friends was a fantastic time in terms of well-being, but also in terms of group achievements. Conflicts and disagreement also seem easier to handle when everyone are mates. David illustrates this by saying «(...) you really just have to be at each other's throats, and you almost get closer to each other after you have done that.» The pressure regarding performance also seems easier to handle when the player sees their co-workers as comrades. David again illustrates this by saying «It was such a safe environment, in the dressing room there were comrades everywhere you looked.»

As presented, there are some challenges that can come with team cohesion, even if it seems important for the informants´ well-being and performance. The next part will widen the perspective a little more, and thus look at situations that are appropriate for the two coaching behaviors.

5.4 How can different situations influence the experience of good leadership?

Both task- and relation-oriented coaching correlates with team performance outcomes to a greater or lesser extent. This matches Burke et al.´s (2006) findings, where I therefore emphasize that it would be preferable if coaches were trained to execute both behaviors (p. 303). There are nevertheless situations that require the coach to have more of one behavior and less of the other. Leaders should therefore be able to vary their leadership approach depending on the situation and the group (Crust & Lawrence, 2006, p. 41). To manage to review and revise one´s behavior is a part of intrapersonal knowledge, which is consistent with coaching effectiveness (Côté & Gilbert, 2009, p. 311). It is natural to assume that all coaches are capable of adjusting their behavior to a certain extent. Nevertheless, the main features seem to remain the same, at least according to the informants who have yet to experience that a relation-oriented coach changes into task-oriented, or vice versa. This part will therefore look into what limitations this brings the two coaching behaviors, in relation to which situations they are theoretically in a position to exercise coaching effectiveness.

The task-oriented leaders' approach will suit the extremes of situations the best, these situations are labeled by Fiedler & Garcia (2005) as favorable situations and unfavorable situations. For a favorable situation to take place, the team must have a high degree of trust in the leader, i.e., score high on leader-member relations, and the leader must be in a position of power with authority over the team. The tasks to complete the project must also be clear and structured (Fiedler & Garcia, 2005, p. 197-199; Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2007, p. 402). One can imagine that such a situation is an ideal situation, i.e., it does not occur very often. Still, it is imaginable that this was the situation for the team Ethan played in where he was very satisfied with the task-oriented coach. The coach was clearly given a large degree of authority, through the fact that he was «allowed» to be authoritarian and give clear directives to his players. Ethan also had great confidence that the coach had what was needed to achieve good results.

It is natural to assume that situations that are partly favorable and partly unfavorable are the most «common» situations. In such situations the team either has problems with one or two of these elements: leader-member relations, task structure or position of power (Fiedler & Garcia, 2005, p. 197-199). If this is to be true, the extremes of situations will occur less, and it will therefore be rather few situations where the task-oriented approach to coaching will be preferable. This might be the reason why the task-

oriented coaches are for most of the informants less preferred than the relation-oriented coaches. If task-oriented leaders find themselves in a situation where, for example, they have a low degree of authority, it will not help to continue the authoritarian appearance by using directives and punishments. This will most likely rather contribute to the development of dissatisfaction. The coach must then leave his more task-oriented leadership behavior and become more relation-oriented.

The informants nevertheless reflected on some situations where they have experienced that the task-oriented coaches were able to use more relational skills. Oliver tells a story where the coach "(…) understood how I felt and put himself in my situation and managed it in a way. From initially being a guy who liked to keep people on their toes, he managed to get down to a human level (…)" This was encouraging for Oliver during a troubled period, where he experienced that the change in behavior gave him calmness in his work. The coach was, by managing to change his behavior, showing intrapersonal knowledge. If one is not able to do so, according to Fiedler & Garcia (2005), you will not be able to change your position within the team (p. 197). It is conceivable that this was the situation George found himself in when he had a coach who wanted to be task-oriented, which did not work as the players did not give him authority. Because, as Ethan also points out «(...) if you hadn't bought the content then it could have become tiring.»

In situations that are partly favorable and partly unfavorable, the leaders have to attend to their interpersonal relations, therefore the relation-oriented approach are the most suitable (Fiedler & Garcia, 2005, p. 194). When the relation-oriented coaches are not given, or choose not to accept, as much authority they can still create good results by compensating with the relational skills, which include trust and a task-solving strategy that the footballers get to participate in. If these are to be the most common situations, I argue that the relation-oriented approach to coaching will be the "safest" behavior to adopt.

Although there are extremes of situations where a task-oriented leadership behavior is preferable, it is worth reflecting on how long such situations will persist. Over time such situations will most likely start cracking, maybe because of recruitment of new players or because important players are leaving. A situation where none of the three elements scores high will also be tiring over time and perhaps cause the players to become exhausted. This might also be the reason why task-oriented coaches are desirable only for a short period, while the relation-oriented ones for a longer period of time. Something both Oliver and Ethan underpin, Oliver by saying "(...) he does not tire of his surroundings. He also respects people, at the same time as he is good at spreading enthusiasm and joy.» And Ethan by saying "It might become a bit tiring in the long run, unless you are motivated to give everything for the next 10 years.»

To close this chapter and move on to the last chapter of the thesis, where the conclusion and some implications will be given, I will now summarize the important elements extracted from this discussion. First of all, the well-being coaches have a relation-oriented approach to coaching, while the footballer´s coaches have a task-oriented approach to coaching. The relation-oriented approach is found to be better at interpersonal knowledge and the promotion of psychological safety. The task-oriented approach, on the other hand, is found to be better at professional knowledge, and to some extent interpersonal knowledge. Nevertheless, the relation-oriented coaches are

better equipped to create team cohesion, while also being the preferable approach in the situations that occurs most often.

6. 0 Conclusion

The purpose of this master's thesis has been to give an insight into footballers' experiences with different coaches. Where the main aim was to shed light on how coaches' behaviors affect a team´s functioning. Since this is the last chapter of the thesis an explicit answer to the thesis' research question will be given, as well as some of the thesis' limitations.

6.1 Answering the research question

How do elite football players experience different coaches, and how can the perceived behaviors promote and inhibit the creation of well-functioning teams?

The answer to the first part of the research question is that elite football players mainly experience two coaching behaviors, at least the informants in this research. One behavior is concern with well-being and thus practice a relation-oriented approach to leadership. The other behavior is more concerned with results, where a task-oriented approach to leadership is exercised.

The answer to the second part of the research question is a little more complex, since both behaviors contain elements that both promote and inhibit the creation of well-functioning teams. A well-functioning team is in this thesis defined as a group consisting of individuals with the right skills and performance strategies, where all members are committed to task objectives, while having mutual trust and cooperation in combination with an appropriate degree of cohesiveness and an environment characterized by psychological safety (Edmondson, 1999, p. 377; Railo, 1979, p. 117-118; Yukl, 2013, p. 247). In order to offer a conclusion, the elements of a well-functioning team will be highlighted.

The well-being coach holds a high degree of interpersonal knowledge. This knowledge gives an advantage in the promotion of mutual trust, cooperation, psychological safety and in the task of creating a cohesive team. Their interpersonal knowledge creates this advantage by facilitating for good internal communication, engaging the players in discussions, encouraging independence and by spending time on social and emotional activity. This also makes them able to fulfill the aim of supporting innovation which is important for members to be committed to task objectives (Hülsheger et al., 2009, p. 1141). While having a high degree of interpersonal knowledge these coaches often lack the same degree of professional knowledge. This lack of knowledge and by being overly concerned with well-being inhibits their ability to create a clear vision of how to solve task objectives, challenge followers to reach their potential, appear as role models, initiating structure and also make it possible for them to fall into a trap where achievements become second-rated.

The footballer´s coach holds a high degree of professional knowledge. This knowledge gives them an advantage in the promotion of getting members committed to task objectives. They keep the task in focus, since no time is spent on social and/or emotional activity. They also manage to use their knowledge to create a clear vision of how to solve task objectives, initiate structure, challenge and motivate followers to reach their potential and be perceived as role models. These aspects are found important to make

members committed to task objectives. Nevertheless, they also inhibit this aim by not initiating discussion and sharing of opinions. This will also inhibit their ability to create mutual trust, expedient and developing cooperation and psychological safety. This is also done by emphasizing punishment more than reward. They are nevertheless able to facilitate team cohesion to some extent through their appearance as role models and their ability to challenge followers to reach their potential.

When it comes to creating a team that consist of individuals with the right skills and performance strategies, there is no indication that the informants experience one coaching behavior to master this better than the other. I do nevertheless assume that professional knowledge will be important to be able to make an informed choice about who should be recruited to the team.

Even if both behaviors contain promoting aspects for the creation of well-functioning teams I would like to emphasize two elements. First, by implementing the situational aspect an important insight to these findings emerges. The well-being coaches are more suited for the situations that occur most frequently, and the footballer´s coach for the situations that occurs less frequently. Some task-oriented coaches have interpersonal knowledge, which makes them capable of changing their behavior to some extent, but I worry that it is not enough to fulfill the needs of partly favorable and partly unfavorable situations.

Second, the definition of a team emphasizes that a team are dependent on each other in order to perform and achieve specific goals (Katzenbach & Smith., 2009, p. 57-58). I therefore argue that cooperation is essential, which makes professional knowledge insufficient. To make sure that the competitive environment does not get the better of the players, and inhibit the team´s ability to cooperate, they are equally dependent on having a psychologically safe environment. A psychologically safe environment is also more likely to occur if the coach manages to promote team cohesion by focusing on creating and strengthen a shared identity within the team (Fransen et al., 2020, p. 9). What I thus draw from this is that all the aspects are tightly linked. If the team cooperates well and operates in a psychologically safe environment, it will not make it a well-functioning team if the coach is unable to keep them focused on the task. It will also not create a well-functioning team if the coach only manages to keep the team focused on the task and creates a clear vision of how to solve task objectives, if the team is unable or unwilling to cooperate.

6.1.1 Practical recommendation

I have some recommendations for the two coaching behaviors. My recommendation to the relation-oriented coaches is to acquire more professional knowledge, since this knowledge can ensure recruitment of the players with the right skills, and also contribute to the members commitment to task objectives. Another recommendation is to monitor the development of team cohesion since it can affect the team´s willingness to strive for good performances. The task-oriented coaches should, on the other hand, make sure to acquire more interpersonal knowledge, so that they are able to facilitate mutual trust, cooperation, psychological safety and by doing so promote the development of team cohesion. Both approaches can, in my opinion, be better at intrapersonal knowledge. Intrapersonal knowledge gives the coaches the opportunity to change behavior depending on what the situation and the group of player requires.

6.2 Limitations and implications for further research

Writing a master's thesis involves following a template that places limitations on the scope of the thesis. Some choices have therefore been made to make room for what I have deemed most necessary. These limitations are presented here together with implications for further research.

First, this thesis has only been using a behavior approach to leadership in sport teams. It is unarguably an important influence of how this thesis has been formed. There are also other behaviors that the thesis could have chosen to focus on. Among those, are the two contrasted leaderships approaches transactional and transformational leadership.

The theoretical framework also set some guidelines for how the thesis turned out. If I were to use another definition of well-functioning teams it would have had impact on the thesis discussion and contribution. The same applies to the definition of coaching effectiveness. If a well-functioning team was defined by certain number of wins, and coaching effectiveness as a coach who manages to make the team win this many games, then the thesis would rather look at how many wins the players teams had during one coach and compared it to the other coaches.

Another limitation is that the thesis only shed light on the head coach, when it is perceivable that the rest of the coaching crew also has some implications for how the teamwork is facilitated. This brings us to another important note, namely gender. In this thesis all the informants where men, and none of these men have had a female coach. Previous research in the field has made me aware that other important elements can apply to female coaches and female footballers.

As for further research, I would recommend taking a closer look into the second part of Côté & Gilbert's (2009) definition of coaching effectiveness. This thesis has shed light on which knowledge the two coaching behaviors contain but has not delved into how these behaviors affects the athletes´ competence, confidence, connection, and character in specific coaching contexts. The thesis did not have suitable collected data to be able to answer this, so I am passing the ball on to any other researchers who want to take a closer look at how these types of behavior effect these four aspects.

6.3 Closing words

In this thesis, I have provided an insight into the world of football players, with a focus on their experiences with different coaches. I believe it is useful to shed light on team leadership in other contexts than the more «normal» organizational context. Football teams actually have, and have had for a long time, central aspects of how we see the organizational world developing. It is more and more about results and to get those results fast. Perhaps we live in a somewhat more impatient and impersonal world, but as we can see, leaders have the opportunity to promote relational ties, create camaraderie in the workplace, and still be able to create good results.

As a final note, both approaches to leadership are, as we can see, suitable for creating a well-functioning team, especially if the coach is able to switch between the approaches depending on the situation and the group. I therefore believe that Klopp, the coach

mentioned in the introduction, possesses the ability to combine and change between these behaviors. This also implies that the definitely least desirable coaching behavior is to not master either of the approaches. Because even if the task-oriented coaches lose this "match" to be the most desirable, it is actually the case that also these coaches are a part of the world-class coaches.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Approved notification form for the processing of personal data
Appendix B: Information letter with declaration of consent
Appendix C: Interview guide

Appendix A: Approved notification form from SIKT

Vurdering av behandling av personopplysninger

🖶 Skriv ut   ⋮≡ 12.01.2023 ▾

Referansenummer
324423

Vurderingstype
Automatisk ❓

Dato
12.01.2023

Prosjekttittel
Masteroppgave - opplevelse av godt lederskap

Behandlingsansvarlig institusjon
Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet / Fakultet for samfunns- og utdanningsvitenskap (SU) / Institutt for pedagogikk og livslang læring

Prosjektansvarlig
Jonathan Reams

Student
Amalie Øyen Skaar

Prosjektperiode
01.01.2023 – 01.01.2024

Kategorier personopplysninger
Alminnelige

Lovlig grunnlag
Samtykke (Personvernforordningen art. 6 nr. 1 bokstav a)

Behandlingen av personopplysningene er lovlig så fremt den gjennomføres som oppgitt i meldeskjemaet. Det lovlige grunnlaget gjelder til 01.01.2024.

Meldeskjema 🗗

Grunnlag for automatisk vurdering
Meldeskjemaet har fått en automatisk vurdering. Det vil si at vurderingen er foretatt maskinelt, basert på informasjonen som er fylt inn i meldeskjemaet. Kun behandling av personopplysninger med lav personvernulempe og risiko får automatisk vurdering. Sentrale kriterier er:

- De registrerte er over 15 år
- Behandlingen omfatter ikke særlige kategorier personopplysninger;
  - Rasemessig eller etnisk opprinnelse
  - Politisk, religiøs eller filosofisk overbevisning
  - Fagforeningsmedlemskap
  - Genetiske data
  - Biometriske data for å entydig identifisere et individ
  - Helseopplysninger
  - Seksuelle forhold eller seksuell orientering
- Behandlingen omfatter ikke opplysninger om straffedommer og lovovertredelser
- Personopplysningene skal ikke behandles utenfor EU/EØS-området, og ingen som befinner seg utenfor EU/EØS skal ha tilgang til personopplysningene
- De registrerte mottar informasjon på forhånd om behandlingen av personopplysningene.

Informasjon til de registrerte (utvalgene) om behandlingen må inneholde

- Den behandlingsansvarliges identitet og kontaktopplysninger
- Kontaktopplysninger til personvernombudet (hvis relevant)
- Formålet med behandlingen av personopplysningene
- Det vitenskapelige formålet (formålet med studien)
- Det lovlige grunnlaget for behandlingen av personopplysningene
- Hvilke personopplysninger som vil bli behandlet, og hvordan de samles inn, eller hvor de hentes fra
- Hvem som vil få tilgang til personopplysningene (kategorier mottakere)
- Hvor lenge personopplysningene vil bli behandlet
- Retten til å trekke samtykket tilbake og øvrige rettigheter

Vi anbefaler å bruke vår mal til informasjonsskriv.

Informasjonssikkerhet
Du må behandle personopplysningene i tråd med retningslinjene for informasjonssikkerhet og lagringsguider ved behandlingsansvarlig institusjon. Institusjonen er ansvarlig for at vilkårene for personvernforordningen artikkel 5.1. d) riktighet, 5. 1. f) integritet og konfidensialitet, og 32 sikkerhet er oppfylt.

Appendix B: Information letter with declaration of consent

Vil du delta i forskningsprosjektet

«Opplevelse av godt og mindre godt lederskap i prestasjonsteam» ?

Intervjuundersøkelse

Dette er et spørsmål til deg om å delta i et forskningsprosjekt hvor formålet er å søke proff- fotballspillere sin erfaring med ledergruppene de har jobbet for. Ledergruppene som omtales i denne sammenheng er alle de som er ansatt til å veilede og lede fotballspillerne. I dette skrivet gir vi deg informasjon om målene for prosjektet og hva deltakelse vil innebære for deg.

Formål

Denne masteroppgaven har som formål å søke proff-fotballspillere sin erfaring med ledergruppene de har jobbet for. Mer spesifikt ønsker oppgaven å gå inn på hvordan fotballspillere opplever at ledergruppene de har jobbet for har lagt til rette for at spillergruppen skal utvikle seg, samt hvordan de har lagt til rette for personlig utvikling.

I dette forskningsprosjektet skal 5-6 fotballspillere intervjues. Kriteriene for de som blir spurt om å delta er at de har jobbet for forskjellige ledergrupper enten i samme klubb eller gjennom å ha spilt i ulike klubber. Grunnen til at oppgaven søker opplevelsen til fotballspillere og ikke andre arbeidstakere er på grunn av den spesielle situasjonen fotballspillere befinner seg i. Flere fotballspillere opplever at de står ovenfor et stort press, både fra klubb, medspillere, en selv og supportere. En av hypotesene denne oppgaven dermed jobber ut ifra er om god håndtering av dette presset forutsetter at ledergruppen klarer å tilrettelegge for at gruppen kan stå samlet, samt bidra til at enkelt spillere klarer å håndtere presset.

Oppgaven jobber ut ifra et hoved forskningsspørsmål «Hvordan opplever profesjonelle fotballspillere at ledergruppen legger til rette for personlig og gruppe utvikling?» Under dette forskningsspørsmålet er det flere mindre spørsmål som det er ønskelig å besvare.

Hvem er ansvarlig for forskningsprosjektet?

NTNU, Institutt for pedagogikk og livslang læring, er ansvarlig for prosjektet

Hvorfor får du spørsmål om å delta?

Du får spørsmål om å delta på grunn av at du passer noen bestemte utvalgskriterier. Kriteriene lyder slik: mann, spiller fotball på elite nivå og har spilt i flere klubber. Disse personopplysningene om deg (kriteriene) har jeg innhentet gjennom personer med kjennskap til deg.

Som nevnt tidligere er det 5 andre som passer de samme kriteriene som har fått tilbud om å delta.

Hva innebærer det for deg å delta?

Du blir invitert til å delta på et intervju, hvor kun deg og meg er til stede. Intervjuet varer omtrent 45 minutter, med +/- 15 minutter i slingringsmonn. Intervjuet holdes over nett, hvor din foretrukket videosamtale plattform kan benyttes (Facetime, Teams, Zoom, Messenger osv...). Noen av spørsmålene som vil bli stilt er planlagt på forhånd, mens andre er oppfølgingsspørsmål på dine svar. Eksempel på et planlagt spørsmål er: hvordan opplever du ledergruppene du har jobbet for.

Samtalen vil bli tatt opp ved bruk av Nettskjema-Diktafon appen, før den overføres til lagring i NICE-1 (et trygt lagringsområde), hvor opptaket da blir slettet på appen.

Du vil bli anonymisert i alle publikasjoner, slik at det ikke skal være mulig å identifisere deg.

Det er frivillig å delta

Det er frivillig å delta i prosjektet. Hvis du velger å delta, kan du når som helst trekke samtykket tilbake uten å oppgi noen grunn. Alle dine personopplysninger vil da bli slettet. Det vil ikke ha noen negative konsekvenser for deg hvis du ikke vil delta eller senere velger å trekke deg.

Ditt personvern – hvordan vi oppbevarer og bruker dine opplysninger

Vi vil bare bruke opplysningene om deg til formålene vi har fortalt om i dette skrivet. Vi behandler opplysningene konfidensielt og i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

- Det er meg, Amalie Øyen Skaar og min veileder og professor, Jonathan Reams, som vil ha tilgang til dine opplysninger.
- For å sikre at ingen uvedkommende får tilgang til dine personopplysninger vil ditt navn, alder, bosted og navn på arbeidsgiver byttes ut med en kode som kun jeg kan koble til deg, så snart opptaket er omgjort til skriftformat.
- Opplysninger om deg vil også være lagret på NICE-1 i tilfelle min PC blir stjålet.

- Et annet viktig grep for å unngå at dine personopplysninger skal deles med andre er at ditt opptak ALDRI skal spilles av for noen andre enn meg selv. Det samme gjelder når opptaket er omgjort til skriftform
- I den ferdigstilte oppgaven skal din identitet bli hold anonym. Dermed vil informasjon som tydelig peker mot deg unnlates.

Hva skjer med personopplysningene dine når forskningsprosjektet avsluttes?

Opplysningene anonymiseres når prosjektet avsluttes/oppgaven er godkjent, noe som etter planen er 01.06.23. Opptak blir slettet før prosjektet avsluttes, mens transkriberingen (intervjuet i tekstformat) blir slettet ved prosjekt slutt.

Hva gir oss rett til å behandle personopplysninger om deg?

Vi behandler opplysninger om deg basert på ditt samtykke.

På oppdrag fra NTNU har Sikt – Kunnskapssektorens tjenesteleverandørs personverntjenester vurdert at behandlingen av personopplysninger i dette prosjektet er i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

Dine rettigheter

Så lenge du kan identifiseres i datamaterialet, har du rett til:

- innsyn i hvilke opplysninger vi behandler om deg, og å få utlevert en kopi av opplysningene
- å få rettet opplysninger om deg som er feil eller misvisende
- å få slettet personopplysninger om deg
- å sende klage til Datatilsynet om behandlingen av dine personopplysninger

Hvis du har spørsmål til studien, eller ønsker å vite mer om eller benytte deg av dine rettigheter, ta kontakt med:

- NTNU ved Amalie Øyen Skaar, mobil: ▮▮▮▮▮▮, epost: ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮
- Masterveileder ved NTNU Jonathan Reams, epost: ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

Hvis du har spørsmål knyttet til vurderingen av prosjektet som er gjort av Sikts personverntjenester ta kontakt på:

• Epost: personverntjenester@sikt.no, eller telefon: 53 21 15 00.

Med vennlig hilsen,
Amalie Øyen Skaar   Jonathan Reams
(Masterstudent)   (Veileder/professor)

Samtykkeerklæring

Jeg har mottatt og forstått informasjon om prosjektet «opplevelsen av godt og mindre godt lederskap i prestasjonsgrupper» og har fått anledning til å stille spørsmål. Jeg samtykker til:

☐ Å delta i Intervju
Jeg samtykker til at mine opplysninger behandles frem til prosjektet er avsluttet

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(Signert av prosjektdeltaker, dato)

Appendix C: Interview guide

Innledning til informantene:
Introduction to the informants:
- Takk for at du vil delta på intervjuet. Det er dine erfaringer jeg er ute etter å belyse, det er dermed ikke noe galt og rett, så svar gjerne så ærlig som mulig. Er det noe du ikke har lyst å svare på så er det helt i orden.
- *Thank you for taking part in the interview. It is your experiences that I am looking to shed light on, there is thus no right or wrong, so please answer as honestly as possible. If there's something you don't want to answer, that's perfectly fine.*

Del 1: Generelt om karriere og helhetsoppfatning til nå
Part 1: General about career and overall perception up to now
- Vil du fortelle litt om din karriere så langt innen fotballen?
- *Do you want to inform me a little bit about your career so far within football?*

- Nå som du har fortalt litt om de klubbene du har spillt for, Kan du gi en generell beskrivelse av hva som skilte seg ut ... vi kommer tilbake til mer detaljer senere.
- *You described ... number of different teams you played for. Can you give a general description of what stood out ... we will come back to more specifics later.*

Del 2: Hvordan legger ledelsesteamet til rette for at gruppen skal utvikle seg?
Part 2: How does the leader groups facilitate group development?

- Kan du beskrive hva de ulike trenergruppene har lagt vekt på å fremme innad i de ulike spillergruppene?
  - Motivasjon?
  - God dialog?
  - Hva med å skape relasjoner?
  - Hva med å skape trygghet?
  - Hvordan har de vektlagt prosess vs resultat?
  - Hvilke verdier og normer har de ulike trenergruppene vektlagt?
  - Jobbet de utifra en visjon?
- *Can you describe what the coaching group has emphasized promoting within the player group?*
  - *Motivation?*
  - *Good dialogue?*
  - *How about creating relationships between the players?*
  - *How about creating a safe environment?*
  - *How have they emphasized process vs result?*
  - *What values and norms have the various coaching groups emphasized?*

- Kan du beskrive hva de ulike trenergruppene har gjort for å legge til rette for at personlige tanker eller meninger skal kunne bli delt, evt hvordan de har gjort det vanskelig?
- *Can you describe what the diffrent coaching groups has done to facilitate sharing personal thoughts or opinions, or to make this difficult?*

- Kan du fortelle en historie fra minst to av trenergruppene du har jobbet for som illustrer hvordan gruppene har fungerer?
    - Hvorfor tror du det var slik?
- *Can you tell a story of at least two of the coaching groups you have worked for that is a good example of how the team´s function together?*
  - Why do you think it is like this?

- Kan du beskrive en mindre eller strørre konflikt som har tatt sted i gruppen(e)?
- Hvordan håndterte dere denne konflikten?
- Blandet trenergruppen seg inn i konflikten? Hva gjorde de i så fall?
- *Can you describe a conflict in the team(s)?*
  - How did the group handle this conflict?
  - Did the coaching team intervene? If so, what did they do?

Part 3: Handeling pressure
- Hvordan har du opplevd presset om å prestere i de ulike klubbene? Kan du illustrere med et eksempel?
- Hvordan har/har ikke gruppen bidra til at presset oppleves mindre krevende? Illustrer med eksempel
- Hva gjør trenergruppen for at det skal bli lettere å håndtere presset?
- *How have you experienced the pressure to perform in the various clubs? Can you illustrate with an example?*
- *How has the group contributed to making the pressure less demanding? Illustrate with example*
- *What does the coaching team do to make it easier to handle the pressure?*

- Hvordan opplever du å bli møtt av trenerteamet om du spiller en dårlig kamp?
- Hvordan blir selve gruppen møtt etter en dårlig kamp?
- *How are you greeted by the coaching staff if you play a bad game?*
- *How is the group itself met after a bad game?*

- I hvilken gruppe mener du at du har prestert best?
- Hvorfor tror du det er slik?
- *In which group, in your opinion, have you performed the best?*
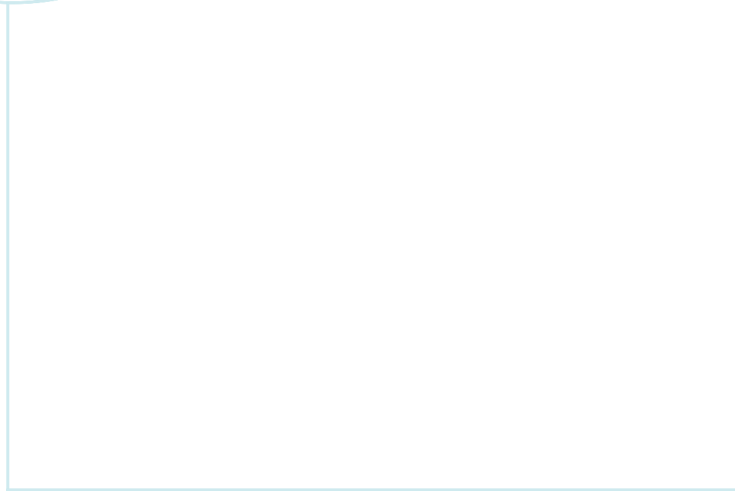- *Why do you think that is so?*

Part 4: More about the leaders

- Kan du beskrive en episode hvor en av lederne virkelig viste at han/hun forsto situasjonen du befant deg i?
- Hvordan ble du møtte av lederen(e) i denne situasjonen og videre fremover?
- *Can you describe an episode where one of the coaches really showed that he/she understood the situation you were in?*
- *How were you met by the coach in this situation and in the future?*

Del 5: Avslutning
Part 5: Ending

- Noe mer du har ønsker å dele?
- *Anything else you'd like to share?*
- Avsluttende spørsmål: Har du noen planer i tiden fremover?
- *Final question: How does the next couple of weeks look like?*