Running head: SOCIAL IDENTITY APPROACH

Pulling the Group Together: The Role of the Social Identity Approach

Andrew. L. Evans[1], Matt. J. Slater[2], Pete Coffee[3], and Jamie. B. Barker[2]

[1] Centre for Health Sciences Research, Salford University

[2] Centre for Sport, Health, and Exercise Research, Staffordshire University

[3] School of Sport, University of Stirling

FINAL VERSION

Introduction

How do coaches successfully pull a group together? This chapter focuses on the role and importance of creating and maintaining social identities for group functioning and performance. Research documenting the role and importance of social identities has increased considerably over recent years, with over 200 research articles published across a variety of psychological domains in 2012 alone (Haslam, 2014). Given the wealth of empirical studies available, we have chosen to focus on key research articles within our review of social identity literature to highlight the role and importance of social identities in coaching contexts. Ultimately, social identity researchers recognise that groups are dynamic and have the capacity to change individuals which means that groups and organisations are much more than an aggregation of their individual parts (Haslam, 2004). Therefore, the key to successfully pulling a group together from a social identity perspective lies in the understanding and promotion of a shared sense of social identity among group members. For a coach to understand their role in optimising group functioning and performance, the social identity approach to leadership (Haslam, Reicher, & Platow, 2011) contains four principles that can be implemented within coaching practice. This chapter will also explore each principle of social identity leadership for a coaching audience.

Key terms

According to the social identity approach, individuals can define themselves in terms of personal or social identities (Haslam, 2004). A personal identity reflects the unique attributes and characteristics that define an individual (Fransen et al, 2015). On the other hand, a social identity represents the sense of belongingness and emotional significance an individual feels towards a particular group (Slater, Evans, & Barker, 2013). In sport, an athlete may develop or maintain a social identity with a team (e.g., the England soccer team) and/or an organisation (e.g., United Kingdom [UK] Sport). To illustrate the distinction

between personal and social identities consider the case of Mark—a cricket batsman. Mark is creative, extroverted, and energetic as an individual which are characteristics that define Mark as a person ("I am Mark, a creative, extroverted, and energetic individual"). Mark also belongs to a cricket team with other athletes that share the same goals and interests (e.g., to win cricket matches). Mark's membership to a cricket team additionally defines Mark as a person. A social identity should not be confused with the term cohesion—a predominant group-level psychological factor—which represents the tendency of individuals to stick together and remain united when pursuing goals and objectives (Carron, 1982). Although social identity and cohesion are significantly and positively related (Evans, Coffee, Barker, Allen, & Haslam, 2015a), social identity reflects the psychological significance of groups to individuals whilst cohesion represents a group-oriented behaviour. The notion that individuals with a strong sense of social identity share goals and interests highlights that social identities are meaningful to individuals. The meaning (or reason) individuals attach to their social identity is commonly termed as the content of social identity (Turner, 1985). Arguably, the most common contents of social identity prevalent in elite sport centre around achievement or excellent performance (Evans, Slater, Turner, & Barker, 2013; Slater, Barker, Coffee & Jones, 2015).

Given the importance of social identities for group functioning and performance, the social identity approach to leadership provides coaches with four main principles that make for effective leadership. The first principle of social identity leadership suggests that leaders should be an in-group prototype. An in-group represents a group that an individual has formed a social identity with whereas an out-group signifies a group that an individual has not formed a social identity with. Being in-group prototypical therefore means that coaches should aim to represent the values of the group to which they belong. The second principle purports that leaders should be an in-group champion. Being an in-group champion means

that coaches should be solely motivated to further the collective interests of the group to which they belong. The third principle explains that leaders should be entrepreneurs of social identity. In other words, coaches should seek to construct meaningful in-group values that mobilise collective action. Finally, the fourth principle suggests that leaders should be embedders of social identity. Being an embedder of social identity means that coaches should aim to make in-group values a reality.

From this point, this chapter will: (a) review research on the role and importance of social identities, the content of social identities, and social identity leadership; (b) suggest future research; and (c) outline applied recommendations for coaches aiming to pull groups together through the harnessing of social identities.

Review of the Literature

The social identity approach

The social identity approach is a psychological framework incorporating several predictions about cognition, emotion, and behaviour that are communicated through two theories: social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and self-categorisation theory (Turner, 1999). Ultimately, the social identity approach recognises that the psychology and behaviour of group members is not simply determined by the ability of individuals to think, feel, and act as individuals (as "I" or "me"). The psychology and behaviour of group members is also influenced by the capacity of individuals to define themselves as belonging to meaningful social groups (as "we" or "us"; Fransen et al., 2015). Initially, the social identity approach stipulates that an individual will be inclined to categorise themselves as a member of a group (i.e., self-categorisation) when the differences between themselves (e.g., cricketers) and members of one group (e.g., a cricket team A) are smaller than the differences between themselves and members of other groups (e.g., other cricket teams) within a particular context (e.g., a league). This process is commonly known as comparative fit

(Turner, 1999). An individual will also be inclined to categorise themselves as a member of a group when their beliefs about in-group values (e.g., to win) are consistent with actual in-group values. This process is commonly known as normative fit (Turner, 1999). Self-categorisation then initiates a process of depersonalisation where individuals view themselves and other in-group members as interchangeable representatives of the attributes and qualities associated with their group (Hornsey, Dwyer, Oei, & Dingle, 2009). Depersonalisation means that individuals do not view themselves and other in-group members as a collection of idiosyncratic individuals. Depersonalisation causes individuals to define themselves and others as belonging to a collective entity (e.g., *we* are a cricket team) rather than being defined through more personal forms of identity. At the point of depersonalisation, an individual has formed a social identity with their respective group. Depersonalisation then triggers a final process known as self-stereotyping where in-group members adopt forms of attitude and behaviour prescribed by in-group values (Turner, 1999). So, self-stereotyping would suggest that athletes will exert high levels of effort when being hard-working as a group is a valued component of social identity. The main implication of self-stereotyping is that in-group members will bring their attitude and behaviour into conformity with their in-group prototype whilst generating positive attitudinal consensus and behavioural uniformity (Hogg, 1992). Based on the social identity approach, the development of a social identity would appear to be an important pre-requisite for group-oriented thinking and behaviour (see Figure 18.1).

The importance of social identities

A critical mass of research across psychological domains has demonstrated that a strong sense of social identity significantly predicts a range of outcomes including morale, self-esteem, burnout, stress, satisfaction, and commitment (Haslam, Jetten, & Waghorn, 2009; Haslam, O'Brien, Jetten, Vormedal, & Penna, 2005; Haslam et al., 2006). One

explanation for the positive effects of social identity on stress-related outcomes (e.g., self-esteem) suggests that social support emanating from a shared sense of social identity buffers against stressful experiences. Haslam (2004) suggested that a social identity serves as a basis for individuals to receive and benefit from support that fellow in-group members can provide. Indeed, Haslam et al. (2005) demonstrated that social support mediated the relationship between social identity and stress whilst social identity influenced the perception of how stressful different modes of work are for individuals. Applied to Lazarus' Cognitive-Motivational-Relational Theory (CMRT; Lazarus, 2000), a strong sense of social identity would appear to be a resource that would increase the coping potential of in-group members when appraising encounters with the environment. Emerging research within sport also supports the notion that social identities are important determinants of group-level outcomes. In a longitudinal study, Evans et al. (2015a) measured social identity, cohesion, collective efficacy, and team performance at the start, middle, and end of a season in all eight rugby league teams competing within one Rugby League Premier Division. Using multilevel modelling procedures, data indicated that higher levels of social identity (between-athletes) were associated with higher levels of cohesion, collective efficacy, and team performance. Higher levels of social identity (within-athletes) were also associated with higher levels of collective efficacy. Data appear logical when considering social identity theory. The main premise of social identity theory suggests that individuals will form social identities with groups that make a positive contribution to self-esteem (Haslam, 2004). Accordingly, individuals will feel inclined to behave in the best interests of their group (rather than their own personal interests) because individuals strive to see their group as different to (and better than) other groups to experience positive self-esteem (Haslam, 2004). In other words, individuals will strive to achieve in-group distinctiveness when a social identity has been formed. Social identities therefore motivate individuals towards group-level outcomes

because the fate of the group will decide the psychological fate of individuals who have undergone processes of self-categorisation, depersonalisation, and self-stereotyping (van Knippenberg, 2000).

The content of social identities

The potential for social identity content to influence cognition and behaviour was highlighted in the process of self-stereotyping explained earlier (Turner, 1999). That is, once individuals have depersonalised the perception of themselves, in-group members take on forms of attitude and behaviour associated with their social identity. Livingstone and Haslam (2008) provided support for the effects of social identity content upon the cognition and behaviour of in-group members. Data revealed that Catholic and Protestant religious groups only acted antagonistically towards each other when the content of their religious identity was focussed on being hostile and conflictual to opposing religious groups. The potential for social identity content to influence athletes was exemplified during the London 2012 Paralympic Games. During the final lap of the women's H1-3 hand-cycling road race, TeamGB athletes Karen Darke and Rachel Morris were set to contest a sprint finish for the bronze medal position. Fifty metres from the finish-line, Darke and Morris held hands and crossed the finish-line together in an attempt to finish equal third. From a social identity perspective, the behaviour of Darke and Morris could have been attributable to the strong sense of shared identity experienced between two team-mates. Additional comments from Darke suggested that both athletes felt it wrong for one to cross the finish-line without the other because both athletes had worked equally hard together preparing for the race (BBC Sport, 2012). Ultimately, a TeamGB hand-cycling identity focussed strongly on excellent interpersonal relationships and respect between team-mates appeared to encourage thoughts and actions aligned to the content of Darke and Morris' social identity. Nevertheless, preliminary research by Evans et al. (2015a) generally revealed that two components of social

identity content pertinent to sport (i.e., achieving excellent results and exhibiting excellent friendships) failed to significantly predict ratings of cohesion and collective efficacy. However, correlational analyses did reveal that the relationship between league position and a social identity content focussed on exhibiting excellent friendships was moderately high, significant, and positive over time. The authors argued that perhaps athletes changed the meaning attached to their social identity over time (a strategy known as social creativity) in response to threatened social identity content which prevented significant effects from emerging.

The effects of threat to social identity content

From a social identity perspective, threat arises when a situation or event causes an in-group to be negatively distinguished from another group. Examples of negatively distinguished in-groups include in-groups that are low in status compared to another group (e.g., a poorer performing in-group vs. a high performing out-group) or in-groups that have received negative evaluation on a specific factor (e.g., "we have performed poorly"). Across two experimental studies, Evans, Coffee, Barker, and Haslam (2015b) explored: (a) the effects of threatening social identity content on social identity-related variables and (b) the role of social identity content during episodes of relevant content threat. Following a sustained period of threat to results content only, data revealed that members of a results content condition (where social identities were focussed on achieving excellent results) reported significantly lower social identity and in-group prototypicality than members of a support content condition (where social identities were focussed on being supportive of one another). Post threat, members of the results content condition also reported significantly higher out-group prototypicality and expressed a significantly stronger desire to move to another group (a strategy known as social mobility). Accordingly, in experiment two, participants were assigned to dual content conditions (where social identities were focussed

on achieving excellent results and being supportive of one another). In condition one, results content was threatened through false performance feedback that suggested repeated failure on five performance trials. In condition two, support content was threatened through false supportive feedback that suggested poor willingness to support in-group members across all trials. Members of both conditions reported higher social identity and in-group prototypicality (post threat) than members of the results content condition in experiment one. Members of both conditions also reported lower out-group prototypicality and social mobility (post threat) than members of the results content condition in experiment one. Interestingly, members of both dual content conditions showed evidence of social creativity in response to social identity content threat. Specifically, members of each condition significantly reduced the emphasis placed on the threatened aspect of their social identity content whilst maintaining the focus placed on the unthreatened aspect of their social identity content. These experimental findings suggest that broadening the repository of social identity content within groups may protect important social identity processes and group-oriented behaviour when an aspect of social identity content is threatened. For example, groups that value achieving excellent results and supporting one another as a group are likely to be protected when the group experiences a period of poor form. Drawing on social identity theory, having unthreatened elements of social identity content available would mean that social identities contribute to the achievement of positive self-esteem (Haslam, 2004).

The social identity approach to leadership

The social identity approach to leadership has attracted growing research attention due to its appreciation of contextual influences and group dynamics within leadership. Essentially, the social identity approach to leadership proposes four principles that coaches can work through to harness social identities within groups (see Figure 18.2).

Leader as in-group prototypes. The first principle of social identity leadership suggests that coaches should be in-group prototypes. Coaches who are in-group prototypical are more likely to be categorised as in-group members through the principles of comparative and normative fit. For instance, coaches are more likely to be categorised as an in-group member when their beliefs about in-group values are consistent with the actual values of their in-group (i.e., normative fit). Slater, Coffee, Barker, and Evans (2014) described how being in-group prototypical as a leader is akin to person-centred counselling procedures (Rogers, 1980) used by counsellors during applied practice to develop strong working alliances with clients. During person-centred counselling, effective working alliances are created when counsellors show key counselling skills (e.g., empathy) to their clients (Slater et al., 2014). Being in-group prototypical as a coach also relates to being co-oriented (i.e., when athletes' and coaches' thoughts are interconnected) within the 3C+1 model for building an effective coach-athlete relationship (Jowett, 2007). An example of a leader in sport who can be considered highly prototypical of their in-group is Sir David Brailsford. Throughout the London 2012 Olympic Games, Brailsford was motivated towards achieving cycling success for TeamGB cyclists (e.g., through the use of key performance indicators) which encapsulated the motivation of TeamGB to achieve their best medal haul at an Olympic Games (Slater et al., 2013). Research has found that being in-group prototypical as a leader benefits a host of outcomes including gaining trust, support, and the ability to influence in-group members (for a review, see van Knippenberg, 2011). Understanding in-group values as a coach is therefore imperative. Consider Alex Ferguson. When arriving at Manchester United football club in 1986, Ferguson spent considerable time understanding the values of Manchester United before implementing managerial activities (Bolton & Thompson, 2015). Research also suggests that understanding in-group values is critical for mobilising in-group members towards collective action. In the BBC prison experiment conducted by Reicher and

Haslam (2006), volunteers were randomly assigned to the role of prisoner or guard within a mock prison. On the sixth day of the experiment, a new prisoner (who had a background working as a trade union official) was introduced into the prison regime to encourage collective action and develop an equal set of relations between prisoners and guards. Before articulating a shared vision for prisoners and guards, the new prisoner spent time reflecting on the current prison regime (e.g., with prisoners) to understand the prison regime. The ability to reflect on in-group values is therefore critical to becoming in-group prototypical as a coach.

Leaders as in-group champions. The second principle of social identity leadership suggests that coaches should be in-group champions. Using the social identity approach, coaches who enhance the interests of their group will help their group achieve positive distinctiveness in comparison to other groups which means in-group members will be more likely to experience positive self-esteem (Haslam, 2004). Research has demonstrated that leaders must carefully consider context when attempting to enhance in-group interests. For example, Platow, Nolan, and Anderson (2003) asked Australian citizens to rate their support for leaders who either favoured their in-group over out-groups or treated all groups equally during the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games (a context that promotes inclusivity and fairness). Data indicated that in the context of the Olympics, leaders who favoured their in-group over other groups were endorsed less than leaders who treated all groups equally. Platow et al. confirmed that the thoughts and actions within a coach's interest will be dependent on how in-group members define their social identity. Similarly, Slater et al. (2015) found that TeamGB's vision for achieving excellent performance at the London 2012 Olympic Games dictated decisions made around optimising peak performance (e.g., choice of team kit).

Recent research by Slater, Coffee, Barker, Haslam, and Steffens (under review) examined how leaders may best champion in-group interests in relation to the concept of

power. Using an experimental design, participants were led by either a power through leader or a power over leader. The power through leader sought to engage with the group to understand their social identity content and propose a vision that encompassed the group's shared social identity. The power over leader sought to exert power in a top-down manner by outlining to the group what their social identity content was going to be. Slater et al. (under review) found that members of the power through condition reported significantly higher levels of shared social identity, trust in the leader, and mobilised effort (assessed via time spent on a practice task) compared to members of the power over condition. Data suggests that coaches who lead in a manner that works with and through (rather than against and over) their group will increase the effectiveness of their leadership practice.

Leaders as entrepreneurs of social identity. The third principle of social identity leadership implies that coaches should be entrepreneurs of social identities. As self-categorisation theory suggests, in-group functioning is determined by in-group values. Coaches may therefore aim for in-group members to take on in-group values that align with the coach's vision (Slater et al., 2014). Recent evidence (Slater et al., under review) has outlined the importance of coaches creating shared values rather than creating values independently. Across four experimental conditions, athletes' social identity content was either identical or dissimilar to the social identity content of a sports coach. Members of two shared content conditions reported significantly higher social identity with the team and coach, trust in their leader, and intentional mobilisation (assessed by hours dedicated to an additional task set by the coach) compared to members of two unshared content conditions. Overall, creating shared values underpins the development of a shared social identity whilst the specific content of social identity that is shared may be less important that the act of sharing content itself.

Creating shared values requires time and involves change. Although group members can be resistant to change (Bovey & Hede, 2001), leaders have been shown to instigate a change in group values through various social identity-related methodologies. For example, in the BBC prison experiment, the prisoner introduced on day six encouraged prisoners and guards to view themselves under a new set of values whilst belonging to one group (i.e., a prison group vs. prisoner and guard groups). The new prisoner instigated a change in group values and the conceptualisation of social identity by drawing on participant clothing and using collective language to emphasise a new shared social identity. Reicher and Haslam (2006) suggested that creating newly formed social identities enabled the new prisoner to gain support and mobilise the prison group towards its vision. Steffens and Haslam (2013) provided further evidence that using collective language can mobilise in-group members towards a newly articulated vision. Successful Australian Prime Ministerial candidates were found to use more collective pronouns in comparison to their unsuccessful counterparts across 43 election campaigns. Those successful candidates used collective language every 79 words compared to every 136 words for unsuccessful candidates. For coaches, it seems imperative to be mindful of rhetoric used; 'together, *we* will achieve great things' triumphs over '*I* will lead you to great things'.

Leaders as embedders of social identity. The fourth principle of social identity leadership suggests that coaches should be embedders of social identity. A good example of a leader embedding social identities is Sir David Brailsford. Leading up to the London 2012 Olympic Games, Brailsford talked about how the values of TeamGB cycling were focussed on being creative in achieving success (Slater et al., 2013). Brailsford sought innovation for TeamGB by recruiting expert professionals (e.g., bike technicians) and acquiring information that would assist TeamGB in making their vision a reality. For example, Brailsford consulted surgeons about washing hands thoroughly to reduce illness whilst learning about improving

the sleeping behaviour of athletes. Evans, Edwards, and Slater (2015c) corroborated the principle of embedding social identities as a leader by randomly assigning 74 members of team sports to one of two conditions. Participants in both conditions were given the same scenario of belonging to a sports team, having a strong connection with a coach, and sharing in-group values based around being innovative as a team. In condition one, the coach was described as helping the in-group realise its vision (a leader embedder) by seeking innovation for the team. In condition two, the coach was described as a leader non-embedder by not helping the in-group realise its vision. After reading their vignette, participants in the leader embedder condition reported significantly higher leader prototypicality, trust in their leader, leader influence, mobilisation, and expected realisation of in-group vision in comparison to participants in the leader non-embedder condition.

In a second experiment, Evans et al. (2015c) explored whether social identity processes change in response to either becoming a leader embedder or failing to sustain a leader embedder approach in a real-world setting. Across two conditions, soccer athletes were introduced to a soccer coach (week one), made aware of shared in-group values (week two), and completed four soccer activities over four separate weeks (week three to week six). After each activity, athletes completed a series of measures including mobilisation, realisation of vision, trust, influence, and conflict. In condition one, the coach embedded social identities during week three and week four by delivering soccer activities aligned to in-group values. The coach failed to embed social identities in week five and week six by delivering soccer activities inconsistent with in-group values. Alternatively, in condition two, the coach failed to embed social identities in week three and week four before embedding social identities in week five and week six. Data indicated that ratings of social identification and identity with the coach within each condition at baseline were significantly different from zero. Perceptions of the coach as a leader embedder were lower when the coach delivered soccer

activities inconsistent with in-group values. When the coach delivered soccer activities aligned to in-group values, athletes reported higher mobilisation, trust in their leader, anticipated realisation of vision, and ability of their leader to influence the group. Athletes also reported lower levels of conflict with their leader when the coach delivered soccer activities aligned to in-group values. Overall, Evans et al. (2015c) demonstrated that coaches can improve social identity-related processes by becoming an identity embedder. Data also documented that failing to sustain an identity embedder approach will harm social identity-related processes. Therefore, the sustainability of effective leadership seems to rest in a coach's proactive capacity to embed what matters most to their group into reality.

Implications for Future Research

Whilst social identity research in sport is beginning to emerge (e.g., Evans et al., 2015a), continuing to investigate the principles of the social identity approach in sport would benefit coaching practice. Current social identity research in sport has focussed on exploring the relationships between two aspects of social identity content (i.e., results and friendships content) pertinent to sport (see Evans et al., 2015a). Future researchers could adopt qualitative methodologies to explore the various forms of social identity content that exist within sport. Accordingly, the relationships between aspects of social identity content (above and beyond results and friendships content) and a wider set of outcome variables (e.g., resilience, achievement goal orientation) could be examined. Current applied research in sport has documented the effects of two forms of Personal-Disclosure Mutual-Sharing (PDMS: relationship-oriented and mastery-oriented) on social identities and aspects of social identity content amongst athletes. Future researchers could also demonstrate the effectiveness of alternative forms of PDMS (e.g., coping-oriented PDMS) or other group-based interventions in manipulating social identities and aspects of social identity content beyond those prescribed in current literature. It also remains to be seen whether PDMS (or other

group-based interventions) can manipulate the social identities and social identity content of other group members (e.g., coaches, parents, key stakeholders) within an athlete's support network. Increasing the volume of applied social identity research would help to close the chasm that currently exists between social identity theorists and applied practitioners (Haslam et al., 2014) which can potentially explain the difficulties researchers and practitioners have faced when attempting to apply the social identity approach to psychology and performance.

The majority of research studies exploring the four principles of social identity leadership within sport have adopted experimental research designs. To increase the external validity of research findings, future researchers could draw on real-life sporting groups when testing the four principles of social identity leadership. For coaches, having a structured intervention procedure or programme of workshops to base their social identity leadership practice around would also be useful. Existing research into the four principles of social identity leadership has had the propensity to focus on testing differences between experimental conditions that are faced with a specific type of leader. Future research could examine the importance of incorporating the four principles of social identity leadership into coaching practice within specific scenarios. For example, researchers could explore whether implementing the social identity approach to leadership can protect social identity processes (e.g., social mobility) during times of organisational change (e.g., a change in organisational strategy). Perhaps most importantly, however, social identity research in sport would benefit from the development of sport-specific measures of social identity, social identity content, and social identity leadership to assist researchers in their endeavours to advance current research findings.

Implications for Applied Practice

Primarily, research presented within the literature review suggests that it is important for coaches to build and maintain a shared sense of social identity among group members to

encourage collective thinking and action (e.g., cohesion, collective efficacy) that may benefit performance. To promote a shared sense of social identity, coaches could increase group members' awareness of how their in-group is positively distinguished from other groups so that group members can achieve positive distinctiveness through their in-group membership (Haslam, 2004). For example, coaches could emphasise that their group is more creative, more successful, or friendlier in comparison to rival out-groups.

Applied research is also beginning to emerge that suggests social identities can be created or strengthened through group-based interventions. PDMS is a group-based intervention that would enable coaches to create or strengthen social identities within groups. PDMS sessions involve group members preparing and delivering previously unknown information to other members of their group (Barker, Evans, Coffee, Slater, & McCarthy, 2014). Current literature has documented the effects of relationship-oriented PDMS (where group members share information focussed on relationships) and mastery-oriented PDMS (where group members share information based around best performances) on social identity. Broadly, relationship-oriented PDMS activities have been found to increase the sense of social identity from pre-intervention to post-intervention (Barker et al., 2014; Evans et al., 2013). Mastery-oriented PDMS activities have been shown to maintain ratings of social identity from pre-intervention to post-intervention (Barker et al.). As a coach, it would appear fruitful to encourage greater understanding between group members through group-based interventions (such as PDMS) to increase or maintain the emotional significance and sense of belongingness athletes feel towards their group.

PDMS research has also shown that the type of information shared within PDMS sessions can develop particular in-group values. For example, Evans et al. (2013) and Barker et al. (2014) found that disclosing information based around relationships significantly enhanced the value athletes placed upon friendships within their team (i.e., friendships

identity content). Barker et al. (2014) also documented that disclosing information centred upon best performances significantly enhanced the value athletes placed on the results achieved by their team (i.e., results identity content). Coaches could therefore ask athletes to share information around a specific theme (e.g., best performances) when aiming to improve certain performance-related outcomes (e.g., collective efficacy). Indeed, Barker et al. found that a single-bout of mastery-oriented PDMS significantly enhanced collective efficacy beliefs from pre-intervention to post-intervention. Additionally, encouraging athletes to share information around a diverse set of themes (e.g., relationships, best performances, coping with stressors) could enable coaches to develop groups with multiple contents of social identity. As a coach, asking group members questions to generate discussion about in-group values (e.g., "what type of group would *we* like to become?") would appear profitable to begin moulding shared and meaningful social identities that empower group members towards collective thinking and action.

To implement the four principles of social identity leadership into coaching practice, Haslam et al. (2011) presented the 3Rs of social identity leadership (Reflection, Representation, and Realisation). Reflection involves coaches taking an interest in the group's identity and values through active listening, discussion, and observation. Reflecting with group members is important so that coaches do not misinterpret social identities resulting in the advancement of alien identities (Haslam, 2004). Representation involves coaches making decisions and behaving in a manner consistent with the shared and multiple characteristics of their group. For example, if a group is founded on its togetherness, a coach should seek to represent that group by championing to importance of togetherness (e.g., organising inclusive group meetings). Realisation involves coaches organising opportunities for their group to behave in line with the group's social identity content which enables group members to progress towards their collective vision. For instance, support staff (e.g., sports

scientists) with a history of discovering modern-day innovation could be employed when in-group values are focussed upon being innovative as a group. Slater, Evans, and Turner (2015) suggest that a fourth 'R' (Reappraisal) may also be important to incorporate into leadership practice. It has been postulated that social identity can enhance resource appraisals (e.g., perceptions of control) and/or reduce demand appraisals (e.g., uncertainty) through the social support emanating from social identities. In turn, in-group members will approach stressful situations in a challenge state (i.e., a positive appraisal state) rather than a threat state (i.e., a negative appraisal state; see Slater et al., 2014).

Despite the collective-oriented nature of the social identity approach, it is not always the case that an inclusive approach to leadership is required. This approach was evident in the 2014 Ryder Cup golf tournament. European Ryder Cup captain, Paul McGinley, decided to assign certain athletes to leadership roles. More senior golfers (e.g., Ian Poulter, Lee Westwood, and Graeme McDowell) were to "blood the rookies" (i.e., those less experienced European golfers) and socially support the rookies in their preparation and performance. Turner, Slater, and Barker (2015) explained that McGinley's decision was effective because "the selected players represented the team ideal and epitomised the values of team Europe. In social identity terms, Poulter, Westwood, and McDowell are prototypical leaders" (p. 277). Ultimately, McGinley's decision to assign more senior golfers to specific leadership roles was particularly effective because this decision was made in the best interests of the team (Turner et al, 2015).

In conclusion, this chapter has highlighted the importance of attending to social identities as a coach when aiming to pull a group together. Social identities influence the way group members think and behave so it makes sense for coaches to work on developing a shared sense of social identity within groups. Social identities are also meaningful to group members. When social identities incorporate multiple meanings they can protect groups when

faced with considerable strain. Coaches have a vital role to play in building and strengthening the social identities of group members. Being prototypical, championing the in-group, being an entrepreneur, and embedding in-group identities undoubtedly serve as a useful principles that can assist coaches in their leadership activity.

References

Barker, J. B., Evans, A. L., Coffee, P., Slater, M. J., & McCarthy, P. J. (2014). Consulting on tour: A multiple-phase personal-disclosure mutual-sharing intervention and group functioning in elite youth cricket. *The Sport Psychologist, 28*(2), 186-197. doi: 10.1123/tsp.2013-0042

BBC Sport (2012). Paralympics: Rachel Morris & Karen Darke try to share bronze. Accessed on 30th June 2015: http://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/0/disability-sport/19519150

Bolton, B., & Thompson, J. (2015). *The entirepreneur: The all-in-one entrepreneur-leader-manager.* Oxon: Routledge.

Bovey, W. H., & Hede, A. (2001). Resistance to organisational change: The role of defence mechanisms. *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 16*(7), 534-548. doi: 10.1108/EUM0000000006166

Carron, A. V. (1982). Cohesiveness in sport groups: Interpretations and considerations. *Journal of Sport Psychology, 4*, 123-138.

Evans, A. L., Coffee, P., Barker, J. B., Allen, M., & Haslam, S. A. (2015a). *The importance of social identity and social identity content for psychology and performance in sport.* Unpublished manuscript. Staffordshire University.

Evans, A. L., Coffee, P., Barker, J. B., & Haslam, S. A. (2015b). *When the going gets tough: The role of group meanings in response to social identity content threat*. Unpublished manuscript. Staffordshire University.

Evans, A. L., Edwards, M., & Slater, M. J. (2015c). *Embedding social identity principles into leadership practice.* Unpublished manuscript. Nottingham Trent University.

Evans, A., Slater, M. J., Turner, M. J., & Barker, J. B. (2013). Using personal-disclosure mutual-sharing (PDMS) to enhance group functioning in a professional soccer academy. *The Sport Psychologist, 27*(3), 233-243.

Fransen, K., Haslam, S. A., Steffens, N. K., Vanbeselaere, N., De Cuyper, B., & Boen, F. (2015). Believing in "us": Exploring leaders' capacity to enhance team confidence and performance by building a sense of shared social identity. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Applied*, *21*(1), 89-100. doi: 10.1037/xap0000033

Haslam, S. A. (2004). *Psychology in organizations: The social identity approach*. (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Haslam, S. A. (2014). Making good theory practical: Five lessons for an applied social identity approach to challenges of organizational, health, and clinical psychology. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, *53*(1), 1-20. doi: 10.1111/bjso.12061

Haslam, S. A., Jetten, J., & Waghorn, C. (2009). Social identification, stress and citizenship in teams: A five-phase longitudinal study. *Stress and Health, 25*, 21-30. doi: 10.1002/smi.1221

Haslam, S. A., O'Brien, A., Jetten, J., Vormedal, K., & Penna, S. (2005). Taking the strain: Social identity, social support, and the experience of stress. *British Journal of Social Psychology, 44*, 355-370. doi: 10.1348/014466605X37468

Haslam, S. A., Reicher, S. D., & Platow, M. J. (2011). *The new psychology of leadership: Identity, influence and power*. Hove: Psychology Press.

Haslam, S. A., Ryan, M. K., Postmes, T., Spears, R., Jetten, J., & Webley, P. (2007). Sticking to our guns: Social identity as a basis for the maintenance of commitment to faltering organizational projects. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *27*, 607-628. doi: 10.1002/job.370

Hogg, M. A. (1992). *The social psychology of group cohesiveness*: From attraction to social identity. London: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Hornsey, M. J., Dwyer, L., Oei, T. P. S., & Dingle, G. A. (2009). Group processes and outcomes in group psychotherapy: Is it time to let go of "cohesiveness"? *International Journal of Group Psychotherapy, 59*(2), 267-278. doi: 10.1521/ijgp.2009.59.2.267

Jowett, S. (2007). Interdependence analysis and the 3+1Cs in the coach-athlete relationship. In S. Jowett & D. Lavallee (Eds.), *Social psychology in sport*. (pp. 15-28). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Lazarus, R. (2000). Cognitive-motivational-relational theory of emotion. In Y. L. Hanin (Ed.), *Emotions in sport*. (pp. 39-63). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Livingstone, A., & Haslam, S. A. (2008). The importance of social identity content in a setting of chronic social conflict: Understanding intergroup relations in Northern Ireland. *British Journal of Social Psychology, 47*(1), 1-21. doi: 10.1348/014466607X200419

Platow, M. J., Nolan, M.A., & Anderson, D. (2003). *Intergroup identity management in a context of strong norms of fairness: Responding to in-group favouritism during the Sydney 2000 Olympics.* Unpublished manuscript. The Australian National University.

Reicher, S. D., & Haslam, S. A. (2006). Rethinking the psychology of tyranny: The BBC prison study. *British Journal of Social Psychology, 45*, 1-40. doi: 10.1348/014466605X48998

Rogers, C. R. (1980). *A way of being.* Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

Slater, M. J., Barker, J. B., Coffee, P., & Jones, M. V. (2015). Leading for Gold: Social identity leadership processes at the London 2012 Olympic Games. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise, and Health, 7*(2), 192-209. doi: 10.1080/2159676X.2014.936030

Slater, M. J., Coffee, P., Barker, J. B., & Evans, A. L. (2014). Promoting shared meanings in group memberships: A social identity approach to leadership in sport. *Reflective*

Practice: International and Multidisciplinary Perspectives, *15*(5), 672-685. doi: 10.1080/14623943.2014.944126

Slater, M. J., Coffee, P., Barker, J. B., Haslam, S. A., & Steffens, N. (under review). Leaders mobilize followers by cultivating a sense of shared social identity content. *European Journal of Social Psychology.*

Slater, M. J., Evans, A. L., & Barker, J. B. (2013). Using social identities to motivate athletes towards peak performance at the London 2012 Olympic Games: Reflecting for Rio 2016. *Reflective Practice: International and Multidisciplinary Perspectives, 14*(5), 672-679. doi: 10.1080/14623943.2013.835725

Slater, M. J., Evans, A. L., & Turner, M. J. (2015). Implementing a social identity approach for effective change management. *Journal of Change Management.*

Steffens, N. K., & Haslam, S. A. (2013). Power through 'Us': Leaders' use of we-referencing language predicts election victory. *PLoS ONE, 8*(10), 1-6. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0077952

Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In W. G. Austin & S. Worchel (Eds.), *The social psychology of intergroup relations*. (pp. 33-47). Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Turner, J. C. (1985). Social categorization and the self-concept: A social cognitive theory of group behaviour. In E. J. Lawler (Ed.), *Advances in group processes*. (pp. 77-122). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

Turner, J. C. (1999). Some current issues in research on social identity and self-categorization theories. In N. Ellemers, R. Spears, & B. Doosje (Eds.), *Social identity: Context, commitment, content*. (pp. 6-34). Oxford: Blackwell.

Turner, M. J., Slater, M. J., & Barker, J. B. (2015). A commentary on Simon Jenkins' article: Winning formula, man management and the inner game: Commonalities of success in

the Ryder Cup and Super Bowl. *International Journal of Sports Science and Coaching, 10*(2+3), 275-279.

van Knippenberg, D. (2000). Work motivation and performance: A social identity perspective. *Applied Psychology*, *49*(3), 357-371. doi: 10.1111/1464-0597.00020

van Knippenberg, D. (2011). Embodying who we are: Leader group prototypicality and leadership effectiveness. *The Leadership Quarterly, 22,* 1078-1091. doi: 10.1016/j.leaqua.2011.09.004

Figure Caption

Figure 18.1. The development of social identities leading to group-oriented behaviour through the processes of self-categorisation, depersonalisation, and self-stereotyping.

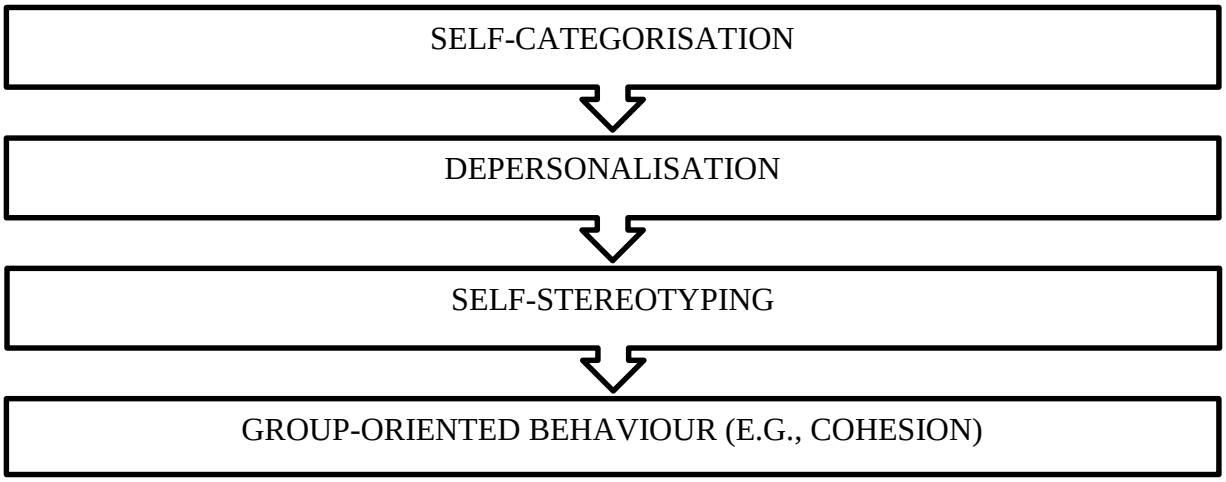

Figure 18.2. A hierarchical model of actions and outcomes for social identity leadership in sport. Taken from Slater et al. (2014).