

# Special Issue No. 9, June 2015

## Editorial

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This special issue of IJEBM is the publication platform for postgraduate students who presented their research at the annual Coaching and Mentoring Research Conference at Oxford Brookes University on 15th January 2015. It provides an opportunity for new researchers to hone their academic writing skills and gives IJEBM readers across the world the prospect of sharing in an exciting collection of cutting edge research reports.

What struck me about the papers submitted for this issue was their focus on the experiences of the players themselves in various coaching contexts: three of the papers, for example, focus exclusively on gathering the views of coaches, two papers gather perspectives from clients, while two other papers look at peer or managerial coaching in the organisational context. All of the papers, therefore, with the exception of Anzengruber's mixed methods contribution, use some form of phenomenology; either interpretive phenomenological analysis or a heuristic approach. By way of contrast, the final paper in this set of eight explores autoethnographic methods in an attempt to uncover a very personal understanding of coaching practice.

In the first paper, Andy Pendle from York St John University explores the potential for a pluralistic approach to coaching. He first identifies how the pluralistic model has created some debate in psychotherapy circles, and then examines what coaches' attitudes are to this approach. He finds that should this approach become widespread within coaching then certain modifications may be appropriate in how the approach is introduced.

In paper two, David Britten, also from York St. John University, examines the metaphors that coaching clients' use to explain their experiences of coaching. Findings suggest that drawing out metaphors can be a useful if somewhat problematic way of generating experientially-rich research data, but that there can be some interesting relationships between the metaphors and clients' actual experiences. These included a sense of having grown as a result of the coaching and the experience of time during the coaching encounter.

The time perspective is also explored by Johanna Anzengruber from Steinbeis University Berlin in her study of peer coaching interventions between managers in the organisational context. In the paper the influence of managers' personal time perspectives on perceived peer coaching effectiveness is considered. Using mixed methods research with 42 engineers in management positions in Germany, evidence was gathered that suggests peer coaching effectiveness varies according to the combinations of coaches' and coachees' preferred time perspectives.

Our fourth paper examines structured interventions in coaching. Colin Wood from Reading in the UK, looks at how theory-based 'seeding' as a coaching practice. Structures such as theoretical models were used as a way of facilitating coaching engagement and using a heuristic inquiry approach, the study examined coach and client experiences of using seeding. Set against a backdrop of limited research and active coaching debates, Wood's investigation examines coaching practice, experiences and attitudes and explores the theory and literature that illuminate 'seeding', its nature, and possible implications for coaching theory and practice. Findings suggest that structured interventions are useful for facilitating client learning, but that further research is necessary.

Helen Franklin's paper focuses on the experiences of coaches when coaching millennial leaders (born 1980-1999). An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) methodology was used and four UK coaches interviewed. Franklin's findings suggest that the life stage of the coach compared to their millennial client was crucial, resulting in coaches often playing the role of mentor, and that millennial clients interact with the world differently from their older coaches. This in turn affects the coaches' ways of working.

Paper number six is also an IPA study. Here Angie Dixey examines managerial coaching in a sales context the UK and suggests that the frequency and effectiveness of managerial coaching is failing to meet organisational demands. Dixey found that to achieve its potential in terms of performance and employee engagement, it is critical to advance our understanding of managerial coaching: for instance the study revealed that rather than following a formalised coaching process, participants preferred a conversational approach, with the activity seemingly going unnoticed.

Our penultimate paper concentrates on creating the conditions for receptivity of feedback. In this study Lise Lewis, working as a coach in the UK, uncovered how feedback, although generally accepted as key to improving business performance, elicits feelings of anxiety and fear. Observations from business and coach practice developed a perception that feedback has negative connotations and is often avoided. The PPR Coaching Framework created from phenomenological analysis and interpretation of data from coach practice offers guidance on a relational approach for creating the conditions for receptivity of feedback. The anticipation is that engaging in feedback from this perspective will diminish the current conjecture and promote more positive engagement.

In the final paper in this issue, Joanne James from Newcastle Business School uses an autoethnographic approach to shed light on her own coaching practice. She argues that when researching our own coaching practice there are methodological choices to make and she argues for the application of autoethnography to elucidate our practice and make explicit the choices and motives that drive coaching actions and theories-in-use. The paper focuses very much on decisions around research design that may be of value to other coach researchers when considering how to explore their own practice.

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