How Coach Educators Deliver Formal Coach Education: A Full Range Leadership Perspective

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5   How coach educators deliver effective formal coach education: A full range leadership

6   perspective

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Abstract

20   Whilst recent work recognises a need for coach education to place greater emphasis

21   on interpersonal knowledge when developing coaching expertise, it is our position that coach

22   educators (CEs) must follow a similar trajectory in embracing the interpersonal knowledge

23   requisite of *their* role, and move beyond a reliance on content and professional knowledge in

24   order to shape their delivery. In order to better understand CE behaviour, we observed four

25   experienced CEs in Alpine skiing, using an adapted version of the Coach Leadership

26   Assessment System (CLAS) (Turnnidge & Côté, 2019) during delivery of a coach education

27   and assessment course. We also interviewed CEs to further elucidate the observational data.

28   Our findings suggest the benefit of transactional approaches to leadership during assessment,

29   when set against the backdrop of an environment driven by intentions consistent with

30   transformational leadership. Furthermore, we call for a greater appreciation of context when

31   imagining CE behaviours that align with effective practice.

32   *Keywords*: Transformational leadership, critical realism, assessment, authentic

33   behaviour

34   It is well documented that coaching is a complex activity (Bowes & Jones, 2006;

35   Horton, 2015; Martindale & Collins, 2012) and that preparing coaches to operate as effective

36   practitioners in a dynamic environment remains problematic (Avner, Markula & Denison,

37   2017). The gap between theory and practice is an equally knotty issue and despite some

38   excellent work that informs curriculum design and pedagogic innovations (Lefebvre, Evans,

39   Turnnidge & Gainforth, 2016; Morgan, Jones, Gilbourne & Llewellyn, 2013; Paquette &

40   Trudel, 2018a; Vella & Perlman, 2014), developing coaches often cite poor CE delivery and

41   inferior communication skills, as factors that limit the efficacy of formal coach education

42   (Nelson, Cushion & Potrac, 2013; Paquette & Trudel, 2018b). Whilst there is a call to arms

43   for coach education to place greater emphasis on interpersonal knowledge when developing

44   coaching effectiveness (Côté & Gilbert, 2009; Lefebvre et al., 2016; Turnnidge & Côté,

45   2018), coach educators must follow a similar trajectory in embracing the interpersonal

46   knowledge requisite of *their* role, and move beyond a reliance on content and professional

47   knowledge in order to shape their delivery. In considering the role of the coach educator it is

48   important to clarify our use of terminology, which remains ambiguous in the field. When

49   considering coach education, McQuade and Nash (2015) offer a useful distinction between

50   coach assessors and coach developers, where the former is concerned with accreditation and

51   standards and the latter with coach learning. Although we use these terms later in the paper,

52   when referring to coach education more generally and to those who might be engaged in both

53   assessment and development activities, we will continue to refer to the coach educator (CE).

54   Given the complexity of the coach education environment, we suggest that CE

55   behaviour should never be prescribed. However, using leadership models to guide coach

56   educator delivery, in what is often a multi-faceted role, is a worthwhile endeavour that has

57   the potential to advance our understanding of the coach education landscape. To our

58   knowledge, there is no existing research that addresses this area of enquiry. Accordingly, this

59   paper embraces a multi-method approach and draws on the full range leadership model

60   (FRLM) (Avolio & Bass, 1991) to examine observational data, coach educator interviews,

61   and developing coach feedback to make suggestions as to how CE behaviour may shape

62   quality delivery.

63   **Coach Education Landscape**

64   In order to better understand CE behaviour, it is essential to understand the

65   environment in which they operate. Hence, we draw from the wider literature, but also from

66   the collective experience of the research team, as educators of coaches both in higher

67   education and for National Governing Body qualifications. In this paper, we set out to

68   investigate the variant behaviours essential for CEs to occupy the different roles that

69   characterise their practice. Given the limited research in this area we make no apology for

70   providing the reader with an extended overview of what this role requires. Coach education

71   has been categorised as occurring in formal, non-formal and informal settings (Coombs &

72   Ahmed, 1974; Nelson, Cushion & Potrac, 2006) with clear evidence that coaches often refer

73   to informal learning as their preferred mode of development (Cushion, Armour & Jones,

74   2003; Mallett, Trudel, Lyle & Rynne, 2009). Informal learning refers to learning that occurs

75   outside of organised provision (Reade, 2009) and is often driven by reflection, observation,

76   and discussion (e.g. Nelson et al., 2006). Despite coaches reporting a preference for informal

77   learning, the importance of formal coach education must not be under estimated, with some

78   sources suggesting the importance of a balance between the two (Erickson, Bruner,

79   McDonald & Côté, 2008). With the professionalisation agenda continuing to gather

80   momentum (Malcolm, Pinheiro & Pimenta, 2014), sport coaching is becoming more

81   regulated as an industry, with formal coach accreditation now the norm. Whilst informal

82   settings will always shape a coach and we know that social learning is central to coach

83   development (Culver & Trudel, 2006; Garner & Hill, 2017), formal coach education provides

84   the one guaranteed opportunity that CEs have to provide the essential messages that could, or

85   perhaps should, influence the coaches of the future. Furthermore, formal coach education

86   promotes an understanding that can potentially influence informal discussion and learning

87   among coaches.

88   Notwithstanding the importance of formal education, current research continues to be

89   critical of quality and reports a pervasive and dominant focus on discipline specific

90   professional knowledge (Avner et al., 2017; Côté & Gilbert, 2009). Beguiled by a

91   reductionist approach that accelerates the certification and therefore operationalization of

92   coaches, coach education could be accused of compromising a focus on learning and

93   development in its quest for professionalised standards. This position is reflected by a 'trait'

94   or competency based approach (cf. Malcolm et al., 2014), which is indicative of large-scale

95   initiatives to homogenise the process of training and qualifying coaches, such as United

96   Kingdom Coaching Certificate (UKCC) and National Coaching Certification Program

97   (NCCP). Despite this somewhat gloomy appraisal, extant research presents some innovative

98   approaches that require CEs to have advanced interpersonal knowledge. Collins, Carson and

99   Collins (2016) criticise the competency-based approach and call for a greater attention on

100 professional judgment and decision-making (PJDM). They propose "the constructivist

101 approach of a cognitive apprenticeship" (2016, p.358), to help developing coaches acquire

102 the skills to manage the implicit processes and tacit understandings associated with the

103 complexity of real-world contexts. This approach relies on the collaboration of coach and CE

104 to engage in problem solving, and places the CE as a facilitator of learning as opposed to a

105 more didactic imparter of knowledge.

106   Côté and Gilbert (2009) have further added to the idea of effective coaching by

107 proposing a set of knowledge areas that need to be integrated to assure quality delivery and

108 positive outcomes. They suggest that "coaching effectiveness is the consistent application of

109   integrated professional, interpersonal, and intrapersonal knowledge to improve athletes'

110   competence, confidence, connection, and character in specific coaching contexts" (Côté &

111   Gilbert, (2009, p.316). To the authors' knowledge, there is no definition for an effective CE,

112   although Côté and Gilbert's (2009) definition for effective coaching offers a useful departure

113   point for our paper. In order for CEs to be effective, it is proposed that a more detailed

114   understanding of the requisite components exists.

115   **Interpersonal knowledge**

116   Although there is some recognition for interpersonal knowledge to feature more

117   prominently in formal coach education (Vella et al., 2013; Turnnidge & Côté, 2018; 2019), it

118   is often assumed that effective interpersonal knowledge is innate and cannot be taught, with

119   formal coach education neglecting to address interpersonal knowledge in a structured way

120   (Avner et al., 2017; Jones, Morgan & Harris, 2012; Lefebvre et al., 2016). Because

121   interpersonal knowledge may be difficult to teach and equally challenging to assess within a

122   coach education setting, it is often understandably left alone or, at best, judged informally.

123   There are tools that exist within sport coaching research that have been used to

124   capture behavioural data, with much of this work informed by motivational theory (e.g.

125   Erickson & Côté, 2015; Smith et al., 2015; Webster et al., 2013). More contemporary

126   research by Turnnidge and Côté (2019) presents the Coach Leadership Assessment System

127   (CLAS) and a transformational coach development workshop (Turnnidge & Côté, 2017).

128   This recent work is underpinned by the framework of the full range leadership model

129   (Avolio, 2011), which espouses in particular the central tenets of Transformational

130   Leadership (TFL) (Bass & Riggio, 2006). The workshop offers youth coaches a professional

131   development opportunity, in a mediated (Werthner & Trudel, 2006) yet non-formal (Nelson

132   et al., 2006) setting, helping coaches to develop practical strategies to develop a more

133   transformational coaching style. The efficacy of the workshop is measured in part using the

134   CLAS, which is an observational tool for measuring coach leadership characteristics and

135   coach behaviour. More recently, the CLAS has been used to observe and analyse soccer

136   coach behaviour in training and competition settings (Lefebvre, Turnnidge & Côté, 2019) and

137   in the absence of similar resources for CEs, this work will be used to guide and shape our

138   understanding of CE behaviour.

139   **Beyond the dichotomy of transformational and transactional leadership in sport**

140   In referring to leadership as a source to inform coach behaviour, sport coaching

141   literature supports TFL as a model that has a positive impact upon athlete outcomes (e.g.

142   Callow, Smith, Hardy, Arthur, & Hardy, 2009; Charbonneau, Barling, & Kelloway, 2001;

143   Rowold, 2006; Stenling & Tafvelin, 2014). This work is based upon Bass and Riggio's

144   (2006) original conceptualisation of TFL from work in business leadership that presents a

145   way for leaders to positively affect levels of motivation, commitment, and performance

146   amongst followers (Bass & Bass, 2009). Although not without critique (e.g. Arthur,

147   Bastardoz & Eklund, 2017; Figgins, Smith, Knight & Greenlees, 2019), TFL builds upon

148   Burns' (1978) early work that conceptualised leadership as either transactional or

149   transformational, and has become the most widely studied and published model for

150   leadership since the turn of the century (Arnold, 2017). TFL sits within the FRLM (Avolio &

151   Bass, 1991) that also includes transactional leadership (TSCL) and laissez-faire (LF). The

152   FRLM presents TFL as a more effective way to lead than either TSCL or LF, with

153   transformational leaders intent on developing followers into leaders. Conversely,

154   transactional leaders are more focussed on motivating followers for task completion,

155   including dimensions such as contingent reward and management by exception (Avolio,

156   2011). LF refers to disinterest and an absence or avoidance of leadership. In a coaching

157   setting, existing literature places emphasis on TFL as a way to promote lasting learning,

158   athlete empowerment, and the realisation of potential (Turnnidge & Côté, 2017; 2019) by

159   accessing four behaviour dimensions known as the 4 'I's'; idealized influence (charisma),

160   inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration (cf. Bass &

161   Riggio, 2006).

162   Compared to the original research (Avolio & Bass, 1991; Bass & Riggio, 2006),

163   application of the FRLM model in a sporting context remains relatively nascent (Turnnidge

164   & Côté, 2018; Vella et al., 2013). The current picture is largely dualistic with TFL

165   championed as *the* new approach, whilst TSCL is consigned to an 'old school' approach,

166   more aligned with an authoritarian style of delivery. Although Avolio and Bass (1991)

167   introduce a dualism in their model, there is a layer of detail and nuance in their work that

168   affords a more complex appreciation of leadership contexts. In particular, that effective

169   leadership requires the leader to display all aspects of the full range model to varying degrees

170   and that TSCL often contributes to positive outcomes. Furthermore, the notion that a

171   transformational leader can call upon directive or participative behaviours (Avolio, 2011)

172   offers an important level of subtlety in how CEs might view effective practice and suggests

173   that the intent to be transformational is of greater importance than the behaviours per se.

174   The intention that drives leadership behaviour is explored in the wider literature, with

175   considerable work focussed on the concept of authentic versus pseudo approaches to

176   transformational leadership (e.g., Barling, Christie & Turner, 2008; Bass & Steidlmeier,

177   1999; Christie, Barling & Turner, 2011). A pseudo-approach refers to a leader who may

178   express what appear to be transformational behaviours, yet is motivated to do so primarily for

179   personal gain. In contrast, an authentic approach is where the leader is motivated by a

180   genuine desire to develop and advance the prospects of their followers, a position that aligns

181   with a follower-centred approach to leadership, or indeed a learner-centred approach to coach

182   education. This important consideration, that places intention at the heart of the argument,

183   has received limited exposure in sport coaching research. One notable exception is a recent

184   paper by Cruickshank and Collins (2016), which advances the argument that to categorise

185   behaviours as dark (pseudo) and bright (authentic) is unhelpful and unnecessarily dualistic.

186   This position provoked healthy debate (Mills & Boardley, 2017) and supports the notion that

187   we need a better understanding of what behaviours might align with effective

188   (transformational) outcomes.

189   Despite these criticisms, the FRLM provides a useful framework to inform desired

190   coach behaviour however, there is a paucity of literature that explores CE behaviour. As we

191   have already suggested, CEs often have to occupy multiple and sometimes contrasting roles

192   (e.g. educator and assessor), regularly with the same group, on the same course, and there

193   would appear to be an urgent need for a deeper understanding of how CEs might behave in

194   such challenging circumstances. Indeed, related work in the field of medicine has

195   documented the need to better understand how to manage an environment where the intention

196   is for learning and assessment to coexist (Watling, 2016; Watling & Ginsburg, 2019). The

197   limited research on CEs tends to focus on *what* they deliver as opposed to *how* they deliver.

198   For example, part of the CE's role is to assess a candidate's ability to meet standards, yet the

199   literature appears to focus almost unequivocally on educational content and neglects the skills

200   required for the management of assessment. One notable exception is presented by Hay,

201   Dickens, Crudington and Engstrom (2012), who explored the efficacy of assessment in coach

202   education and how assessment can contribute to learning, however, this work drew largely

203   from educational research (Bernstein, 1971; Hay & Penney, 2009) and not from a coach

204   education setting. Given the inexorable prominence of assessment within coach education

205   and the need to positively influence developing coaches during this process, this paper seeks

206   to explore how CE behaviour may best be conceptualised when fulfilling the different roles

207   that exist in formal coach education.

208   **Methods**

209   Nichol, Hall, Vickery and Hayes (2019, p.19) recommend that those conducting sport

210 coaching research make more effort to "explicitly acknowledge and consider the

211 philosophical and paradigmatic assumptions underpinning their research." Embracing this

212 notion, we adopted a critical realist perspective that legitimizes a synergy between

213 ontological realism and epistemological relativism (Bhaskar, 2010). Critical realism allows

214 an occupation of the middle ground between the dominant paradigms of traditional research,

215 promoting what Grix (2010) described as an epistemic border where *hard* interpretivism

216 meets *soft* post-positivism. This position fails to sit neatly within the prevailing paradigms of

217 positivism and interpretivism, but advocates the exploration of a complex social system. It

218 allows us to seek answers so that we might impact on the real world of coaching and coach

219 education.

220 **Participants**

221   Consistent with intensive qualitative research (Sayer, 2010) a purposive sampling

222 strategy was applied (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). Once ethical permission was granted from the

223 lead author's institution, all participants were consulted and informed consent for their

224 involvement in the project attained. The participants were four male coach educators, aged

225 between 40 and 50 years old, working in the French Alps for a national training and

226 accreditation body for snowsport instructors and pseudonyms are used throughout. All CEs

227 had been in post for between 14-18 years, had delivered every level of course including the

228 observed course at least 20 times, were considered expert by candidates and peers in the

229 association, had worked as CE mentors, and had delivered at National and International CE

230 conferences over the past decade.

231 **Data Collection**

232   Drawing from the FRLM (Bass & Riggio, 2006), CE behaviours were observed and

233 examined using the CLAS (Turnnidge & Côté, 2019), which was designed to examine

234   coaches' real time leadership behaviours. Our application of the CLAS deviates from the

235   original conceptualisation of the model in two ways. First, it was used in the field and hence

236   involved event-based coding (Vierimaa, Turnnidge, Evans, & Côté, 2016), as opposed to the

237   video-based continuous coding used during the validation and subsequent deployment of the

238   CLAS (Lefebvre et al., 2019; Turnnidge & Côté, 2019). Second, the CLAS was designed to

239   investigate the coach-athlete relationship, whereas this study explores the coach educator-

240   developing coach relationship. Whilst many similarities exist between these dyads, it should

241   be recognised that significant differences are apparent. However, both coaches and coach

242   educators operate in leadership positions and are subject to similar behavioural options;

243   indeed there is no reason why the CLAS should not be adapted to observe leadership

244   behaviours in any context. These anomalies were discussed with the authors of the CLAS

245   during the design phase of this project and it was agreed that these adaptations did not

246   compromise the appropriateness and integrity of the CLAS as a tool for data collection.

247   The CLAS consists of five higher order dimensions related to the FRLM,

248   *transformational, transactional, laissez-faire, neutral,* and *toxic* coaching and seventeen

249   leadership tone behaviours (cf. Turnnidge & Côté, 2019). Following rigorous training in

250   accordance with the coding protocol of the CLAS (Turnnidge & Côté, 2019), the lead

251   researcher engaged in two separate weeklong data collection periods, observing two different

252   CEs in each week. The four CEs were all delivering technical alpine ski training and

253   assessment courses and were observed for approximately three hours per day. Observation

254   involved the lead author shadowing the course delivery on the mountain, recording every

255   distinct unit of behavioural interaction between CE and candidates.

256

Data collection period	Coach Educator	Level of course delivered	Day				
			1	2	3	4	5
Week 1	Jack	Level 4 course	3hrs	3hrs	3hrs	3hrs	3hrs
Week 1	Garry	Level 4 course	3hrs	3hrs	3hrs	3hrs	3hrs
Week 2	Dean	Level 2 course	-	3hrs	3hrs	-	3hrs
Week 2	Richard	Level 2 course	-	3hrs	-	3hrs	3hrs

257

258   Table 1. Time spent observing and coding coach educator behaviour

259

260   *N.B. Consistent with other coach education qualifications these levels are mapped against National*
261   *Qualification Frameworks. Level 1 is the lowest level of qualification, with level 4 the highest level of*
262   *qualification.*

263

264   The training and assessment courses were focussed on ski performance, not on teaching

265   ability and culminated with a pass/fail decision delivered to candidates on the final day.

266   Although results were announced at the end of the course, this day did not represent *the*

267   *assessment day;* candidate performance was continually assessed throughout the course.

268   A mixed methods approach was taken. Therefore, in addition to observational data,

269   semi-structured interviews were conducted with each of the CEs to gather deeper explanatory

270   data on their leadership behaviours. CEs were asked to reflect on how they behave during a

271   course and to share examples of good practice. Example interview questions were:

272   • *How do you think you adapted your behaviour or style of delivery during the course?*

273   • *Why was it important in your opinion to behave in that way?*

274   The lead researcher was also able to collaborate with the governing body to gain access to the

275   course outcome information that showed pass rates and candidate feedback, which provided

276   supplementary data to further support the analysis process.

277   **Data Analysis**

278   A thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was conducted of the interview data,

279   candidate feedback, and researcher's reflections to help make sense of the patterns in the

280   observational data. This process started with the lead researcher transcribing the data

281   verbatim and (re) reading the transcripts in order to become fully immersed. Once raw data

282   responses had been coded, overarching themes were established via a process of retroductive

283   analysis that drew upon a deeper reading of the full range leadership model (Avolio, 2011;

284   Bass and Riggio, 2006). In addition, observational data was presented using descriptive

285   statistics with the percentage frequency of leadership behaviours used to show trends in

286   behaviour across the course (see Table 2.).

287   Importantly, critical realist research seeks findings and beliefs that *appear* to be

288   truthful (Nichol et al., 2019; North, 2013; 2017), consulting multiple perspectives during

289   analysis, including that of the researcher. Therefore, our discussion of the findings will draw

290   not only upon the themes emerging from the data, but also from the lived experience of the

291   lead researcher. With 15 years operating as a CE in snowsports, the lead researcher had a

292   high level of familiarity and expertise within the research context that to some extent

293   alleviated the "researcher as professional stranger" metaphor (Flick, 2009, p.110) and helped

294   access what Adler and Adler (1987, p.24) refer to as an 'insider perspective' on the reality of

295   being a CE in snowsports. Seeking to embrace researcher opinion, based on contextual

296   expertise, is consistent with previous research in coach development (e.g. Culver & Trudel,

297   2006), and is central to critical realist accounts, whereby researchers are encouraged to

298   abstract meaning from the data (Pawson, 2006) by stepping "outside stakeholder narratives to

299   make independent judgments about coaching structures" (North, 2017, p.227).

300   **Methodological Rigour**

301   To ensure rigour throughout the research process, Tracy's (2010) eight criteria for

302   excellent qualitative research were used. At its heart Tracy's model centres on Karl Popper's

303   concept of verisimilitude, which, as explained by Sparkes and Smith (2014), is concerned

304   with a *version* of reality that is closest to the truth as opposed to a literal truth, with a

305   requirement for authenticity in how the research is presented. Despite the limitations of a

306   relatively small sample size, rich rigor and thick description (Tracy, 2010) was attained

307   through considerable time spent in the field and the privileged access to context afforded to

308   the lead researcher as a result of past experience.

309   **Results**

310   Overall, findings highlighted the dynamic nature of coach educator behaviours and

311   their trajectories over time (see Table 2.). The average number of coded CE events was 60

312   per day (SD = 2.74) and although it was not possible to code every day for each CE, the data

313   presented an overwhelming picture of behaviour moving towards a more transactional mode

314   of delivery as the courses progressed (e.g. Day 1 - 7% and Day 5 – 73.9%). Conversely, the

315   first three days of delivery were characterised predominantly by transformational behaviours.

316   Although the data suggest transactional behaviours dominate the end of the course,

317   transformational behaviours were still deployed on the final two days. Of the four lower order

318   dimensions of TFL, inspirational motivation and individual consideration were used by the

319   CEs to a greater extent than idealized influence and intellectual stimulation. The occurrence

320   of toxic behaviour on day one represents the only occasion toxic behaviour was observed

321   throughout the study.

322
323

		Leadership							
		Transformational							
		II	IM	IS	IC	TSC	Laissez-Faire	Toxic	Total number of coded events
Day	Courses Focus								
1	Development	8.6%	35.7%	41.4%	5.7%	7.1%	0%	1.4%	77 *(2 CEs Observed)*
2		4%	50.6%	26.7%	15.1%	3.6%	0%	0%	251 *(4 CEs observed)*
3		3.7%	45.7%	23.3%	22.8%	4.6%	0%	0%	219 *(3 CEs observed)*
4		4.2%	36.3%	4.7%	19%	35.8%	0%	0%	190 *(3 CEs observed*
5	Assessment	0.5%	12.8%	3.3%	9.5%	73.9%	0%	0%	211 *(4 CEs observed)*

324

325 Table 2. Percentage frequency of higher order leadership dimensions across delivery day
326 where the delivery focus changed from an emphasis on development to assessment *(white*
327 *shading = more development focus, black shading = more assessment focus)*

328
329 *N.B. II = Idealized Influence; IM = Inspirational Motivation; IS = Intellectual Stimulation; IC =*
330 *Individual Consideration; TSC = Transactional*

331
332   Interview data revealed the themes of *intentionality*, *transformational behaviours*

333 *during assessment, directive/participative approaches, authentic/pseudo transformational*

334 *leadership and expressed humility,* which are discussed below. Interview data also suggested

335 that the tone of the CEs' interaction with the developing coaches was largely intentional, with

336 underpinning decision-making processes clearly articulated. The findings are not intended to

337 offer unequivocal answers; instead, the hope is to build a clearer picture of the requisite

338 interpersonal knowledge to guide CE behaviour when occupying different roles within the

339 coach education environment. Supplementary data showed high levels of candidate

340 satisfaction and a number of positive qualitative comments despite varying pass rates. The

341 pass rates represent normative data for these courses where the level 4 is a particularly

342 exacting standard with a lower expected pass rate.

343

344

Coach Educator (CE)	Number of candidates on course	Level of course delivered (Entry level =1, International recognition = 4)	Candidate overall satisfaction with course delivery (%)	% Pass rate	Examples of qualitative comments from candidates
Jack	6	4	81	33	*I liked that trainers were aware and asking about fatigue levels*
Garry	6	4	95	66	*I picked up my mood when Garry gave me a word of encouragement and he does identify when we all need one. It is a great skill he has*
Dean	10	2	97	70	*Lots of positive feedback, which kept morale high*
Richard	10	2	94	70	*...relaxed environment, I felt Richard set a good atmosphere*

345
346 Table 3. Course outcome data
347
348   Finally, the outcomes of the courses appear to have been transformational in nature.

349 This claim requires us to revisit the place of verisimilitude in critical realist research

350 (Polkinghorne, 1986). With a 60% pass rate across the four courses, an overall 91% candidate

351 satisfaction rating, and the positive qualitative comments in candidate feedback, there is

352 verisimilitude in suggesting that the coach education environment was characterised by trust,

353 commitment, and followers who were satisfied with their leader, all of which are outlined by

354 Bass and Riggio (2006) as outcomes of transformational leadership. It was also the position

355 of the lead researcher, having been immersed in the research context, that the outcomes

356 experienced by the candidates were largely transformational.

357   **Discussion**

358   The purpose of this study was to use leadership as a lens to better understand the

359 behaviour of coach educators when delivering a continually assessed coach accreditation

360 course. The findings extend previous empirical research on transformational leadership as a

361 guide for coach educator behaviours, by providing an in depth analysis of how different roles,

362 within a given context, affect leadership decisions. Furthermore, interview data suggests

363 distinctions can be drawn between the conceptualisation of transformational behaviours (Bass

364 & Riggio, 2006; Turnnidge & Côté, 2019) and transformational intentions, with indications

365 that transformational outcomes can be achieved by behaviours not usually associated with

366 TFL.

Effectiveness requires intentionality

368   Despite the continually assessed nature of this coach education context, the two

369 distinct roles of coach developer and coach assessor were clearly observed, with the assessor

370 role characterising delivery towards the end of the courses. CEs were intentional in their

371 choice of behaviour relative to their role, and rather than adopting behaviours that would

372 ordinarily align with a learner-centred approach, in the naïve belief that transformational

373 outcomes would ensue, they favoured transformational behaviours in the role of coach

374 developer and transactional behaviours in the role of coach assessor. The *intention* to be

375 transformational is highlighted by this extract:

376   Everyone who does our job is a coach first and foremost. Before they become an

377   assessor they've necessarily taught skiing for years and years, and trying to get people

378   better at skiing is in their blood and they want people to get better, they care about

379   how people are going and worry if things aren't going well. (Richard)

380   In order to successfully play the roles of assessor and developer, the data suggests

381 CEs also need to articulate their intentions to ensure follower trust and understanding.

382 Turnnidge and Côté (2019, p.8) describe one element of inspirational motivation as

383 "behaviours through which the coach highlights the value or meaning of certain activities and

384 role or provides rationales"; interestingly, it appears in this study that sharing intentionality

385 with followers allows transactional behaviours to provide transformational outcomes. The

386 following extract provides a clear example of shared intention for transactional behaviour.

387   It's about being transparent with the process [*of developing and assessing*]. You've

388   got the job of coach and you've got the job of assessor where you've got to tell them

389   [*candidates*] whether they are good enough or not. When I set a course up I talk about

390   this with the candidates the night before. (Richard)

391 When the rationale for this type of behaviour is not shared, the outcomes appear to be

392 different:

393   Yeah… I think the times I've got it wrong are when I've not got the elephant in the

394   room out there early enough… I might have left it too late [*explaining to the*

395   *candidate that they are below the required level*] or tried to be too nice and that's

396   when it hasn't worked. (Jack)

397   Further evidence of clearly articulated thought processes, which align with intentional

398 decision-making, can be seen when discussing the transformational behaviours that enable

399 high quality coach development.

400   I think all the time when you are coaching you are aware of your behaviour, not just

401   the information you are putting across but how you are interacting with the group, the

402   sort of climate you are setting, whether you are going for a relaxed informal chat or

403   going 'right we need to achieve this task now'. All of those decisions are going on in

404   your head all the time. (Dean)

405 Here, Dean demonstrates genuine self-awareness as to how he exerts an idealized influence

406 and demonstrates individualised consideration in his delivery.

407   As CEs aspire to greater levels of quality in their practice, the notion that intentions

408 should necessarily be articulated is somewhat at odds with previous conceptualisations of

409 expertise. Previous research has suggested that expertise is characterised by intuitive

410 behaviour (Nash & Collins, 2006; Schempp, McCullick & Sannen Mason, 2006), however,

411 our data suggests a situation more aligned with Birch's (2016, p.245) assertion that "skills are

412 intentional actions" where interpersonal interactions are guided by explicit knowledge and

413 clearly articulated intention. As such, intuitive behaviour, governed by implicit knowledge,

414   may contribute to a *level* of expertise, but without conscious intention to guide CE behaviour,

415   subsequent development of CE expertise would be limited. Consequently, we encourage CEs

416   who may view themselves as experts to move beyond this fixed state, and instead continue

417   what should be an unending quest for expertise.

418   **The role of transformational behaviours during assessment**

419   Although the data portrays a more transactional approach in the coach assessor, there

420   is merit in discussing the transformational behaviours that were also present toward the end

421   of the course. As acknowledged by Lefebvre et al. (2019), we recognise that the value of

422   leadership behaviours cannot be purely based on frequency, but must also consider the

423   impact they have in context. For example, one instance of intellectual stimulation may

424   transform the understanding and subsequent development of an athlete, whilst ten episodes of

425   inspirational motivation may serve only to maintain existing effort levels. Nevertheless, of

426   the 4 Is, inspirational motivation and individual consideration featured more prominently in

427   CE behaviour during the assessment context, and the implications may offer further guidance

428   for CEs operating the dual role of developer and assessor. Once in an assessment context,

429   positive outcomes are time-sensitive and in most cases require a short-term approach. Whilst

430   TSCL aligns comfortably with short-term objectives, we argue that elements of TFL remain

431   important for coach assessors to avoid overall transactional or even toxic outcomes.

432   Specifically, motivation and care for the individual remain important considerations for the

433   coach assessor, as highlighted in these interview extracts:

434   I change my behaviour as I see fit for the situation I am in. It might be that on the last

435   day [*of the course*] there are people who are really worried and getting quite stressed

436   [*about the result*], so I'll change my behaviour to get them more relaxed and take

437   their mind away from things. It really depends on the situation, I go minute by minute

438   really. (Gary) – Individualized consideration

439   …we've got to work as a team, if someone is particularly strong in one area, say the

440   bumps *[an assessment activity]*, I might well link you up with someone else who is

441   not as good [*so that you can work together*]. (Dean) – Inspirational motivation

442   In contrast, intellectual stimulation and idealized influence were less manifest during

443 assessment and seemed more relevant to a development focus. We argue that there is good

444 reason why the coach assessor would avoid intellectual stimulation during assessment, where

445 questioning and attempts to share responsibility run the risk of candidate confusion,

446 frustration, and cynicism. Instead, intellectual stimulation is more likely to characterise

447 effective coach development; it promotes learner independence, problem solving and

448 understanding, and is therefore an ideal delivery mode to *prepare* developing coaches for the

449 rigours of assessment and the complexity of real world travails. Equally, idealized influence

450 is more aligned with the role of coach developer and sets the foundation for authenticity and

451 trusting relationships (Turnnidge & Côté, 2019). The humility and pro-social behaviours

452 connected with this dimension of TFL are requisite from the very beginning of any coach

453 education experience and should be in place before assessment, as explained by Dean,

454   you've got to first of all build some relationships with the group, so they hopefully

455   respect you, then when you deliver that information midweek [*their progress in*

456   *relation to the assessment criteria*] they accept it because they like and respect you.

457   (Dean)

458 The previous two themes suggest distinctive CE roles require different leadership

459 approaches, including transactional behaviours in order to maintain a transformational

460 environment and that these approaches are deliberately and consciously deployed by effective

461 CEs.

462 **Directive/Participative Transformational Leadership**

463   Given the suggestion that transactional behaviours can result in transformational

464   outcomes, the distinction between TFL and TSCL warrants further investigation. Rather than

465   seeing behaviours as aligned with different models of leadership, it is perhaps more useful to

466   draw upon Bass and Riggio's (2006) recognition that transformational leadership can be

467   directive or participative. This raises the question as to whether the transactional behaviours

468   deployed by the CEs with transformational intentions, are transactional or in fact just

469   directive transformational behaviours?

470   I will always make a point of finding times in the week when I definitely put that hat

471   on [*assessor*] and let people know where they are up to [*in relation to the criteria*]. If

472   you keep it clear you can do both jobs [*assessor and developer*]. (Richard)

473   Here, Richard has candidate success at the heart of his decision. His intention is to provide

474   clarity, which builds trust and facilitates potential however, his behaviours could be

475   construed as transactional as he is essentially, "searching for and responding to deviations

476   from rules or standards" (Turnnidge & Côté, 2019, p.8).

477   In conceptualising how behaviours change to align with different CE roles, the

478   significance of directive/participative approaches could prove to be more useful than

479   contrasting TFL with TSCL. Indeed, Avolio (2011) made the point that acknowledging

480   directive approaches within TFL proved particularly useful in convincing reluctant trainees

481   that TFL was not a veiled attempt to pursue a purely participative, democratic, and in their

482   eyes ineffectual approach. Although the difference between directive TFL and TSCL may

483   appear subtle, research shows that small changes in behaviour that mark the shift from

484   transactional to transformational can have important outcomes (Barling, 2014).

485   **Authentic/Pseudo Transformational Leadership**

486   In order to avoid an overly simplistic dualism in our approach to leadership in coach

487   education, that TFL is effective and TSCL is less effective, it is important that we continue to

488 avail ourselves of the complexity offered by the original literature. In addition to the

489 directive/participative spectrum the lens of authentic and pseudo motives is also instructive in

490 interpreting the data.

491   As time's moved on I am just more open and honest with the people I am coaching…

492   you know if they are coming down *[the slope]* asking me what they need to work on

493   and I'm not sure I'll say, 'I don't know I need to see you some more, I just haven't

494   got it *[the approach they need for development]* clear in my head yet' (Jack).

495 Here, Jack has the humility to admit he does not yet have the knowledge he requires. In so

496 doing, he embraces a degree of vulnerability and arguably exerts an idealized influence; his

497 behaviour is authentic and honest.

498   Although authentic leadership exists as a stand-alone model (Avolio & Gardener,

499 2005), in his original work on TFL, Burns' (1978) emphasised the importance of leaders'

500 moral standing. Bass and Riggio (2006) elucidated further, distinguishing between authentic

501 and pseudo transformational leaders. The former refers to a genuine proponent of altruistic

502 intentions and the humility required to turn followers into leaders, whilst the latter describes a

503 leader with warped moral principles, who is driven by self-interest. As we see in Jack's

504 account, pseudo transformational behaviour will often backfire over time.

505   The first course I delivered, I tried to be everyone's best friend [*self-interest*] and then

506   towards the end of the week, I realised a lot of them were not passing, so I switched

507   into this really commanding authoritarian figure saying, 'right if you don't do this you

508   are not going to pass' and it just didn't work. (Jack)

509 As a new CE, Jack sought the affirmation of friendship, however, despite the pro-social

510 nature of his behaviour, he was motivated by self-interest and hence adopted a pseudo

511 transformational approach. As a consequence, the candidates became overly familiar, which

512 impinged on Jack's ability to communicate honest feedback in relation to the level and

513 maintain transformational outcomes. As a consequence of a pseudo approach, the

514 environment soured, with the implication of damage to performance.

515   If intention is to be foregrounded over behaviours per se, then every effort should be

516 made to encourage authentic, in place of pseudo, intentions, which at best may be used for

517 what Mills and Boardley (2017, p. 568) termed "tactical impression management." The

518 findings of this study support the notion that CE behaviour is more effective when intentions

519 authentically align with TFL.

520   Research has shown that leaders who exhibit pseudo transformational characteristics

521 often have high levels of inspirational motivation, but low levels of idealized influence,

522 whereby an absence of clear values or moral compass results in inspirational behaviours that

523 are motivated by personal gain (Christie, Barling & Turner, 2011). As expounded by

524 Erickson (1995), authenticity is not an either/or condition Rather, people display levels of

525 authenticity and it is exactly this level that should concern us when considering the desirable

526 behaviours of coaches or coach educators.

527 **Expressed Humility**

528   The final theme was interpreted inductively by the researchers and relates to two

529 particular episodes that provide unlikely examples of expressed humility (Owen, Johnson &

530 Mitchell, 2013), one from the observational data and the other from the interview transcript.

531 On face value, both episodes could be construed as compatible with darkside behaviours (e.g.

532 Higgs, 2009; Judge, Piccolo & Kosalka, 2009). There is an informative body of work around

533 the relative value of bright and darkside behaviours (e.g. Cruickshank & Collins, 2016;

534 Higgs, 2009; Judge, Piccolo & Kosalka, 2009; Mills & Boardley, 2017), with Judge et al.

535 (2009) presenting darkside leadership traits as narcissism, hubris, social dominance and

536 Machiavellianism. In contrast, bright behaviours are those typically viewed positively in

537 society.

538   Both the observational and interview data in this study generated examples of

539   darkside behaviours, termed *toxic* in the CLAS (Turnnidge & Côté, 2019). The example of

540   observed behaviour was consistent with social dominance and involved a member of the

541   public, skiing extremely fast and out of control through the developing coaches. Fearing for

542   the safety of his group, Jack pursued the rogue skier and engaged in an angry exchange.

543   Similarly, in the interview data, Dean discussed an approach to motivating his group that was

544   indicative of Machiavellianism.

545   *Dean*: I kept them very much on their toes and said 'you're doing really well but if I

546   was to make my decision today you wouldn't pass' [*an untruth*] So we worked really

547   hard the following week and we got a great pass rate.

548   *Interviewer*: So, you weren't honest with them?

549   *Dean*: Correct, I was harsh with them. So someone I thought was just a pass on say

550   long turns *[an assessment activity]*, I told them they were borderline *[i.e. not*

551   *passing]*.

552   Despite the apparent darkside nature of these two incidents, if we consider the

553   intention behind both acts, there is a level of expressed humility that suggests

554   transformational outcomes. Expressed humility has been defined as comprising three

555   components: an accurate self-assessment, an other-centredness, and a teachability or

556   willingness to learn (e.g. Austin, 2014; Owen et al., 2013). Although not initially appearing

557   to be the acts of a humble leader, on reflection, and considering related theory in more depth,

558   a case can be made for an other-centredness in both episodes. In Jack's case, although his

559   behaviour was coded accurately as toxic toward the individual perpetrator, it appeared to the

560   lead researcher to have the effect of building respect and trust within his group, contributing

561   to a team spirit and atmosphere of care. Equally, in considering Dean's behaviour, his

562   economical use of the truth was intended to motivate his followers for their own benefit, it

563 helped to realise potential and provide a level of inspirational motivation. Arguably both CEs

564 behaved with authentic, morally laudable intentions that fostered positive, if not

565 transformational, experiences for their followers.

566 It is of essential importance that this line of discussion is not misinterpreted. In no

567 way are we tolerating behaviours that are authentically dark in nature. Rather we encourage a

568 better understanding of how behaviours consistent with the full range leadership model may

569 impact coach education environments. Specifically, it is our contention that intention and

570 influence must be fully explored, so that we have the opportunity to develop coach educators

571 capable of authentically embracing transformational outcomes.

572 **Implications for Coach Developer and Coach Assessor Interpersonal Knowledge**

573 The implications of role and the importance of intentionality, directive/participative

574 approaches, pseudo/authentic TFL and expressed humility are significant in our

575 understanding of how both coaches and coach educators behave. Given the importance of

576 these underpinning concepts and the variability of the context inhabited by coach educators,

577 this paper will now present suggestions as to how the requisite interpersonal knowledge in

578 coach educator roles (coach developer and coach assessor), as outlined by McQuade and

579 Nash (2015), may be addressed.

580 **Coach developer.** The observational data suggests the role of coach developer is

581 particularly aligned to the behaviours associated with the '4 I's' as expounded in TFL.

582 Turnnidge and Côté's coach development workshop (2017) and more recently the CLAS

583 (2019) provide two excellent tools that coaches and coach educators can use to think more

584 deeply about their behaviours and the impact on participant learning and development. In

585 aspiring to deliver coach education in a way that embraces a coach-centred philosophy,

586 surely such clear direction for coach educators is welcome. Despite this helpful work, we

587 suggest the importance of context receives greater attention and that transformational

588 intentions are in the vanguard ahead of behaviours per se.

589   **Coach assessor.** Developing expertise in others differs from assessing expertise.

590 Indeed, the results of this study suggest the role of coach assessor requires a different

591 interpersonal approach that draws upon a directive or even transactional leadership tone,

592 characterised by clarity and instruction to facilitate understanding of assessment expectations

593 (Schedlitzki & Edwards, 2018). The value of assessment in coach education, despite the

594 arguments that link qualification to professionalisation, is disputed in the literature. There are

595 few sources that recognise assessment as providing a benefit for coach learning, with reports

596 of impression management (Chesterfield, Potrac & Jones, 2010), dissatisfaction (Nelson et al.

597 2013) and confusion (Jones, Allison & Jake, 2016) characterising the assessment experience.

598 It is therefore essential to explore ways to improve this element of coach education.

599   Looking outside the limited coach education literature towards education, Bloxham

600 and Carver (2014) make the point that assessment is for one of three reasons: quality

601 assurance, certification, or for learning. It is important to have clear motives behind

602 assessment and we encourage coach education to avoid conflating learning and assessment

603 when activity is about certification. Making this distinction more transparent and explicit has

604 potential to result in a number of positive outcomes. With reduced expectations of learning, a

605 greater emphasis can be placed on the more traditional expectations around assessment such

606 as consistency, reliability and validity (Moss, 1994). For CE behaviour to make a positive

607 contribution to assessment, we suggest that *if* over arching intentions remain transformational

608 and the context is fully considered, effective CEs will have greater success when engaging in

609 a more transactional approach to ensure clarity and purpose for candidates during assessment.

610   **Conclusion and Future Direction**

611   How exactly the interpersonal behaviours required of an effective coach assessor or

612   developer manifest remains unclear and is an area that warrants continued attention.

613   However, it is our assertion that observed behaviour of CEs should be evaluated in multiple

614   sessions, according to contextual variables such as the goal of the session, stage of

615   development, and athletes' background and experience. We also believe that for a fuller

616   understanding of CE behaviour it would be useful to support observations with methods such

617   as stimulated recall (Bruner et al., 2017) that allow for greater accuracy and depth of analysis.

618   Such research aspirations seem well served by a critical realist approach and are

619   appropriately positioned to further develop the excellent contribution made by the TFL

620   workshop (Turnnidge & Côté, 2017) and CLAS coding tool (Turnnidge & Côté, 2019).

621   Finally, although some parallels can undoubtedly be drawn to other sport coaching contexts,

622   this research was characterised by adult coach development and assessment, on a formal

623   coach education course. Given the unique nature of the research setting, views expressed in

624   this paper should therefore be treated with caution.

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