COACHING CULTURES: WHAT ARE THEY AND HOW CAN THEY BE DEVELOPED?

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Abstract

Coaching culture is an increasingly popular organisational development (OD) proposition and one that has sparked academic and practitioner interest. This thesis set out to explore what we know about coaching cultures and how they are developed, and two studies were conducted to address these aims.

Firstly, a Systematic Literature Review (SLR), consolidated definitions of coaching culture and their building blocks, identified through peer reviewed, empirical research. Results suggest that research in this area is still in developing stage. We have some initial evidence on antecedents such as leadership commitment; interventions ranging from executive and team coaching to development of managers-as-coaches and internal coaches; outcomes such as engagement, performance, and personal growth; and measures in the form of culture or engagement surveys. The SLR identified gaps in research, including the absence of the voice of the enacting stakeholder and the lack in our understanding of the assumptions, values, and behaviours that underpin coaching cultures.

The second study addressed these gaps by interviewing 20 participants (10 OD practitioners and 10 coaches) with experience of coaching culture programmes. Four themes were constructed using Braun and Clarke's Reflexive Thematic Analysis: 1. "it flows through the veins of the organisation" describes two cultural patterns embedded in organisational behaviour: psychological safety and learning and growth; 2. "more powerful than anything else is having that one-to-one time" constructs the role of practitioners, leaders and communities of practice, as change agents; 3. "the road map emerges" describes that the plan emerges adapting to circumstances and; 4. "a means to an end and an end in itself" discusses that impact is achieved both by providing a vision and a process to develop organisational culture. A definition of coaching culture is proposed as a dialogic space, developed on grounds of psychological safety, which empowers individuals and the organisation to learn and grow.

A theoretical framework has been developed that sees coaching cultures as complex adaptive systems with distinct cultural patterns embedded by change agents. The findings add the practitioner perspective to our understanding of coaching cultures and offer an evidence-based blueprint and a behavioural framework to develop them.

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Professional Practice Statement

As a Chartered Occupational Psychologist, I am exempt from the first module (Professional Practice Portfolio) of the Professional Doctorate. This thesis therefore satisfies the requirements for Part 2 of the doctorate and reflects research conducted during my two-year part-time study (Research Thesis). I provide a summary of my professional practice as context to this thesis.

I completed my MSc in Organisational Psychology at City University, London in 1997 directly after finishing my first degree in Psychology. I firstly applied the learning from my MSc in the Greek army as part for my compulsory service, where I spent 18 months working as a psychologist, doing psychometric testing for selection of ranked officers, and providing a psychology service to a new recruits' camp. I then worked as an occupational psychology researcher at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece. This was leading me towards an academic career and inevitably I started thinking about researching for a doctorate then.

I moved back to the UK, and pursued a career in human resources and organisational development where I could practice on most areas of occupational psychology practice as an internal consultant: selection and assessment, developing competency frameworks, learning, leadership, talent and team development, employee engagement, inclusion, and wellbeing. I spent the last 15 years specialising in leadership and organisational development. During this time, I completed my chartership and became Associate Fellow of the BPS and was nominated for Occupational Psychologist of the Year award for two years. I also completed other postgraduate studies to complement my practice, a PGDip in HR and a MSc in People and OD, which allowed me to continue to engage in research.

During the last 13 years, I also developed my coaching practice studying for a Diploma in Coaching and contributing to the development of the BPS's Special Group in Coaching Psychology by chairing one of the Peer Practice Groups and I recently gained chartership as a Coaching Psychologist. My motivation to undertake research in this area stems from my experience of leading coaching culture programmes in two organisations. As a field of research and study it also combines my professional identities of organisational and coaching psychologist and that of organisational developer.

Publications arising from this thesis

Kapoutzis, N., Whiley, L. A., Yarker, J., & Lewis, R. (2023). Coaching culture: an evidence review and framework for future research and practice. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice*.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to Coaching Culture and Background to the Research

The focus of this research is coaching cultures in organisations. The term coaching culture gained popularity about 15 years ago bringing together the disciplines of coaching, organisational psychology and management and organisation studies to present a proposition for the employment of coaching approaches in organisations with an intention to change organisational culture. Since then, it has infiltrated the vocabulary of academics, teachers, and practitioners, such as coaches, human resources, organisational development professionals and organisational and coaching psychologists leading to a proliferation of books, articles, conferences, professional practices, podcasts, and case studies exploring or offering services to develop coaching cultures.

This research has set out to explore the empirical evidence that has been produced to explore the phenomenon of coaching culture and bring together and consolidate the building blocks that make up coaching cultures through the unexplored perspective of the enacting stakeholder / practitioner, in service of further research and practice in this area.

This chapter describes the background to this research area and offers an introduction to the concept of coaching culture by initially presenting the two distinct disciplines that make up its foundations: coaching and organisational culture. It then explores how these come together to provide definitions and conceptualisations of coaching cultures, delving into the current literature, and highlighting its limitations. Finally, the research aims, and structure of the thesis are presented.

1.1 The (r)evolution of coaching in organisations

The term "coaching culture" was popularised by Whitmore (1996) in his book "Coaching for Performance". Since then, it has been widely used as a term to describe organisational use of coaching practices. Coaching has evolved from a remedial intervention to an intervention focused on developing executive leadership and more recently to a way

of developing people and teams to help them achieve their objectives and embed sustainable organisational changes. A report from the Chartered institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) showed that although there was a decrease in use of traditional development interventions in organisations during the Covid-19 pandemic, coaching continued to see an increase in demand (Crowley & Overton, 2021). In the UK, in 2022 and 2023, approximately 40% of organisations were offering coaching as a development intervention for their employees. (Overton, 2023). This trend sits within a wider paradigm shift towards a more people-centred and values-based way of leading and managing organisations (Hawkins, 2012). Employers understand, at least more than before, that people are at the heart of their organisations and investing in their development has wider business and societal benefits. This coincides with an increase in relational leadership approaches where emotional intelligence becomes a key ingredient of leadership success and the development of high performing and inclusive organisations (Alotaibi et al., 2020; Goleman et al., 2013).

The number of coaches who operate as executive coaches worldwide has increased by 75% and the line managers or leaders who use a coaching approach in their management by 33% between 2015 and 2020 (ICF, 2020). The coaching profession went through changes and intense professionalisation where accreditation and supervision were formalised. In 2021, British Psychological Society members voted favourably for the establishment of a new Division of Coaching Psychology and part of its expressed vision is "to clarify the benefits of psychological approaches within coaching practice". Professional bodies recognising practitioners have proliferated (e.g., ICF: International Coaching Federation, EMCC Global: European Mentoring and Coaching Council, AC: Association for Coaching, AOEC: Academy of Executive Coaching, etc) and strengthened their membership criteria.

Finally, in the last 15 years, academic and practitioner literature on coaching culture (e.g., Clutterbuck et al., 2016; Clutterbuck & Megginson, 2005; Hawkins, 2012; Passmore & Crabbe, 2020) as well as conferences, podcasts or reports (e.g. British Psychological Society's podcast: The Coaching Psychology Pod (Lancer, 2022); Forbes, expert panel report (D'Anzica, 2022); CIPD, Podcast, (Lamb, 2017); CIPD, Coaching for Business Conference, 2018 (Lowe et al., 2018); Coaching at Work annual conference, 2019 (Arnold & Kehinde, 2019)) have seen a big increase.

Yet, despite its popularity, there is still some confusion as to what we mean by coaching culture. Authors commented on the lack of a shared definition and on the fact that the term has been used to describe different things (Gormley & van Nieuwerburgh, 2014). There seem to be fundamental unanswered questions that need to be explored to help us understand their nature, their unique characteristics, how they are developed and more importantly, whether it is worth investing in developing coaching cultures. These questions are at the heart of this inquiry.

On the surface, coaching culture is the confluence of two constructs: *coaching* and (organisational) *culture*. These two constructs will be explored next and then brought together to explore deeper the phenomenon of coaching cultures.

1.2. Coaching

The practice of coaching in organisations is now widely employed as an intervention for personal, professional, leadership, career, wellbeing, team, group, and organisational development (Overton, 2023). It is situated in the non-directive side of a spectrum of development interventions with didactic and teaching approaches on the opposite end and with mentoring, job shadowing in the middle of that spectrum.

Despite the increase in interest and usage of coaching in organisations, there is no agreed definition of workplace coaching making research and practitioner debate difficult to ground on common characteristics. Coaches come from a variety of backgrounds from psychology, management, human resources, organisational development, counselling, and teaching, which could explain the lack of a shared definition (Lai & McDowall, 2014). Whilst this diversity of disciplines brings plurality in the debate, could also conflate constructs or interventions making comparisons or synthesis of research difficult. For example, coaching is sometimes associated with but is different to other helping interventions such as mentoring, counselling or change agent approaches (Passmore & Lai, 2020). A consistent definition is vital to inform practice, research and coaching education (Passmore, 2019).

Whitmore's early definition "unlocking a person's potential to maximise their own performance. It is helping them to learn rather than teaching them" (Whitmore, 1996) has

been used extensively as a comprehensive and clear description of the construct. More recent definitions emphasize the coaching process, the coaching relationship or the use of coaching strategies or tools:

Table 1.1

Defining Characteristics in Coaching Definitions

Defining characteristic	Example Definition
Coaching process	"a Socratic based dialogue between a facilitator (coach) and a participant (client) where the majority of interventions used by the facilitator are open questions which are aimed at stimulating the self-awareness and personal responsibility of the participant' (Passmore & Fillery-Travis, 2011)
Coaching relationship	"a reflective process between coaches and coachees which helps or facilitates coachees to experience positive behavioural changes through continuous dialogue and negotiations with coaches to meet coachees' personal or work goals' (Lai & McDowall, 2014)
Coaching strategies and tools	"a human development process that involves structured, focused interaction and the use of appropriate strategies, tools and techniques to promote desirable and sustainable change for the benefit of the client and potential for other stakeholders" (Bachkirova et al., 2020)

Passmore and Lai (2019) in their summary of systematic reviews and meta-analyses combine these characteristics and conclude that "coaching is a professional helping relationship with the coachee's motivation to change at the centre, which relies on interpersonal social- psychological interactions".

Notwithstanding the various definitions that exist on the construct of coaching, there are some convergent themes that emerge from the variety of definitions proposed:

coaching can be seen as a goal oriented, structured process, based on the professional relationship between the coach and coachee that aims to develop capacity for behavioural change, resulting from increased self-awareness and personal responsibility.

However, these approaches can be seen as instrumental and positivistic (Louis & Fatien Diochon, 2018); they embed and reproduce neoliberal imperatives (Shoukry & Cox, 2018). Grant (2017) suggests that we have moved from a mechanistic first generation of performance-focused coaching and a second generation of structured "leader as coach" training programmes to a third generation that focuses on both performance and wellbeing of individuals and organisations for sustainable and meaningful change. The previous generations focused on individual performance and personal responsibility, neglecting potentially broader structural or systemic issues. He suggests that this third generation creates the culture of quality conversations needed in contemporary organisations that operate in a volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) world and grapple with uncertainty and continuous change. This systemic approach is seen as a sustainable dialogue that helps individuals and organisations navigate the pressures of today's society. This is particularly relevant in this inquiry, because creating a culture of quality conversations could be seen as the vehicle through which we develop coaching cultures.

Within this emerging paradigm, scholars critique the dominance of neoliberal values in coaching discourse and call for the development of a critical theory of coaching (Louis & Fatien Diochon, 2018; Shoukry & Cox, 2018). They expand the dyadic transactional process to incorporate and emphasize coaching's social and political dimensions. They see coaching as a complex social process that can either perpetuate conformity or empower change (Shoukry & Cox, 2018). Understanding it in that way is crucial for its effectiveness and ethical practice, especially in diverse and challenging contexts and has the potential to transform it into an enabler for change (Shoukry & Cox, 2018). This perspective is particularly relevant in our understanding of coaching cultures as it appropriately positions it as a social and political phenomenon with the potential to effect culture change.

There is a need for a critical understanding of coaching, particularly in relation to power dynamics and social and cultural contexts (Shoukry & Cox, 2018 and Jones,2002). Shoukry and Cox (2018) propose frameworks for analysing coaching within different social

contexts, emphasizing the need for critical reflection and action within the coaching profession. They advocate for the inclusion of diverse voices and integration with other disciplines to foster a more inclusive and socially aware approach to coaching. These studies collectively underscore the need for a nuanced understanding of coaching as a social process, one that takes into account power dynamics, social and cultural contexts, and the role of reflection and understanding.

Within this social conceptualisation of coaching, the concept of power is a complex and multifaceted one, with the coaching space playing a significant role in shaping power dynamics (Louis & Fatien Diochon, 2018). Louis and Fatien Diochon (2018) examine how the coach's experience of the coaching space influences power dynamics within the coach-coachee-organization triad. Three types of power relationships— independent, mediated, and parallel—are identified based on this experience. The coaching space is characterized as either generating, supporting, or analysing power. This conceptualisation is particularly relevant for this thesis as it widens our awareness of conditions that foster empowerment within the coaching space and expands our understanding of coaching as a social process by emphasizing its political nature.

1.3. Culture

The study of organisational culture explored questions such as, what organisational culture is and what is its impact on organisations' and individuals' performance and health (e.g., Kim & Jung, 2022; Sackmann, 2011; Shahzad et al., 2012; Xenikou & Furnham, 2022), and whether it can be measured, assessed, and changed or developed to the benefit of organisations (e.g., Kummerow & Kirby, 2013; Van den Berg & Wilderom, 2004; Wallace et al., 1999).

Several definitions, models, or typologies of organisational culture have been developed (e.g., Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory (Hofstede, 2011); Cameron and Quinn's Competing Values Framework (Cameron Kim & Quinn Robert, 1999); Deal and Kennedy's Cultural Model (Deal & Kennedy, 1983); Denison's Organizational Culture Model (Denison et al., 2014)). These are broadly situated within a continuum of two philosophical positionings: one perspective views culture as something an organisation possesses and can

be measured and changed, whereas the other views culture as something that is always evolving and emerges through human interactions and their dynamics (Cheung-Judge & Holbeche, 2015).

Despite the plethora of definitions and theories there are some common themes that seem to appear consistently. Organisational culture is viewed as a set of self-sustaining and shared behavioural patterns based on what people think and feel, that a system or an organisation has created and learnt as it developed itself. (Hawkins, 1997; Ogbonna & Harris, 2002). In other words, organisational culture is the set of beliefs, values and assumptions that an organisation uses to guide its actions (Odor, 2018) and it is important because it affects the behaviour of people / employees and the performance of the organisation (Scammell, 2018).

Two theoretical frames on organisational culture underpin this inquiry: Schein's model (2010) and Complex Adaptive Systems theory (Eoyang, 2001; Stacey, 1996). These are briefly presented next and their implication in this research is discussed at the research aims section.

1.3.1. Schein's Model of Organisational Culture

Schein's most recent definition of organisational culture is:

A pattern of shared basic assumptions that was learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way you perceive, think, and feel in relation to these problems. (Schein, 2010, p.18)

Schein's Model of Organizational Culture identifies three levels or layers of culture (see Figure 1.1)

Figure 1.1

Schein's Model of Organisational Culture

Assumptions

Values

Artefacts
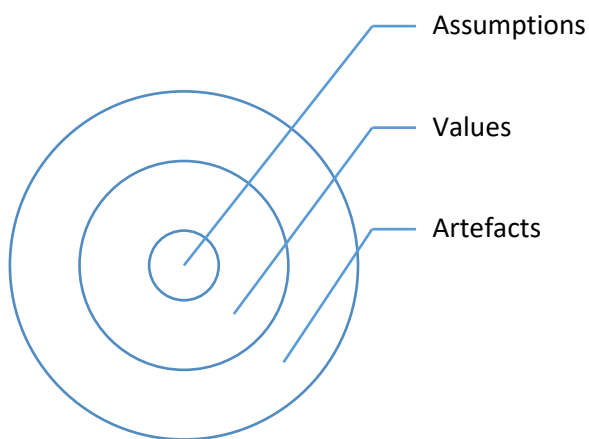
Assumptions: deeper layer of assumptions, principles, ideologies and worldviews that are pervasive in organisational cultures, but people are unaware of.

Values: organisational philosophies, purpose, vision, mindset, and espoused values and beliefs that are not directly observable but can be accessed through behaviours.

Artefacts: visible and readily observable practices, behaviours, stories, language, and structures.

Schein (2010) suggests that understanding these three layers and moving deeper in surfacing underlying and often unconscious assumptions of an organisation are important in making sense of its culture. Assuming that coaching culture is a subculture (Knowles, 2022b) within organisations, then the exploration and inquiry into these three layers would provide us with a window to sense make coaching cultures through.

Schein's model has been widely used, becoming an influential model of organisational culture and has been chosen as a frame for this research because of its high face validity and practical application. The model has limitations, mainly because it oversimplifies the complexity of organisational culture, it assumes a linear relationship between the three levels, and takes a static depiction of culture with no clear understanding of the influence of external factors and how it can be applied to change culture. It has been extended by other researchers to incorporate domains, such as symbols (Hatch, 1993) or emotional ground and motivational roots (Hawkins, 1997, 2012) but despite these

limitations, it provides a clear model to describe cultural elements that practitioners and researchers can inquire into.

Schein's model complemented with other perspectives or models can offer a fuller understanding of the complex nature of coaching culture. That is why Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS) theory, presented next, has been chosen to complement Schein's theory as the underlying theoretical frames for this thesis.

1.3.2. Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS) Theory

Derived from complexity and systems theories, CAS theory (Eoyang, 2001; Stacey, 2015; Stacey, 1996; Wheatley, 2011; Wheatley, 1994) views systems or organisations as "a group of semi-autonomous agents who interact in interdependent ways to produce system-wide patterns, such that those patterns then influence the behaviour of the agents" (Dooley, 1997). According to CAS theory, organisational culture is not a fixed or static entity, but one that emerges from the interactions between individuals, groups, and the wider environment. Culture is therefore viewed within the parameters of a complex system which is made up of many parts (agents) interacting with each other in dynamic and unpredictable ways; they are non-linear, adaptive systems creating cultural patterns that are rooted in a few simple order-generating rules. (Cheung-Judge & Holbeche, 2015; Schneider & Somers, 2006).

CAS theory offers a few constructs that are useful in our understanding of organisation culture and in extend, coaching culture, as a complex adaptive system, such as self-organisation, emergence and polyarchy (Obolensky 2011). More pertinent to this inquiry is the idea of agents, their interaction and how they influence change. Complex Adaptive Systems theory interprets organisational processes from an agent-based approach, paying attention to the rules of interaction between individual entities, agents in a system, seeing culture as a combination of "processes" (Stacey, 1996, Wheatley, 2006) in our case coaching processes, interactions and conversations. Change and adaptation that occurs at all levels – individual, group and organisation-wide – is therefore enabled by these complex adaptive (or responsive) coaching processes, of agents relating to each other in a complex dynamic.

Bringing these two theoretical frames, Schein's model, and CAS theory, together, the assumption is that surfacing the principles (or assumptions), values and behaviours of agents (e.g., enacting practitioners of coaching cultures) within a system, could offer a rich understanding of how these get embedded and reinforced in these systems. In fact, Hawkins, who has developed a model of coaching culture (see next section: 1.4) explains that "culture resides ... in the relationship patterns with all the key stakeholders" (Hawkins, 2012).

1.4. Coaching (AND) Culture

So, is coaching culture the marriage of the constructs of Coaching and Culture? This section provides a summary of the extant literature on coaching culture, discussing a. definitions, b. conceptualisation of the term in existing models and c. the extant empirical research literature.

1.4.1. Definitions

Despite the interest in coaching cultures there is no agreed definition. A number of definitions have been offered each underpinned by different theories or proposing a different focus. Early definitions focused on "coaching" as the defining attribute and defined coaching culture either as a working style: "the predominant style of managing and working together, and where a commitment to grow the organization is embedded in a parallel commitment to grow the people in the organization" (Clutterbuck & Megginson, 2005, p19), or as coaching behaviour:

> A coaching culture is an organizational setting in which coaching occurs not only on a formal but also an informal basis. A large proportion of individuals in the organization informally practice coaching behaviours as a means of relating to, supporting, and influencing one another. (Hart, 2005, p 7).

Later definitions focused on "culture" as the defining attribute, taking a systemic view and conceptualisation of a coaching culture. For example, Hawkins (2012) proposed that a coaching culture:

exists in an organisation when a coaching approach is a key aspect of how the leaders, managers, and staff engage and develop all their people and engage their stakeholders, in ways that create increased individual, team and organisational performance and shared value for all stakeholders. (Hawkins, 2012, p. 21).

Gormley and van Nieuwerburgh (2014), in the only literature review to date on coaching culture, identified a number of common and consistent themes relating to definitions of coaching cultures (these are synthesised in Table 1.2), and they propose the following definition:

A coaching culture exists within an organisation when it has embedded a coaching approach as part of its strategic plans in a transparent way. Coaching cultures should motivate individuals and facilitate cooperation, collaboration and connection within the organisation and with its external stakeholders. (Gormley & van Nieuwerburgh, 2014, p.99)

Table 1.2

Common and Consistent Themes Relating to Coaching Culture

Strategy / Intent	• Coaching is integral in people and organisational development practices • Coaching demonstrates a clear commitment to people development • Coaching provides a holistic approach to unlocking the potential of individuals and their organisations
Process / Implementation	• embedded within existing performance management and feedback processes of organisations • creating coaching cultures can take time
Benefits / outcomes	• indications that coaching can create increased performance within organisations • broad agreement that creating coaching cultures can lead to changes in organisations with rewards for staff, stakeholders and clients

1.4.2. Models

A number of models or conceptualisations of coaching culture have been developed. Some of the prominent models are presented below in table 1.3 in chronological order.

Table 1.3

Models of Coaching Culture Development

Authors	Stages of Coaching Culture Development
Passmore & Jastrzebska, 2011	1. Informal external coaching 2. Professional external coaching 3. Coaching for all 4. Coaching as a management style and 5. Coaching across the network
Hawkins, 2012	1. ad hoc 2. managed 3. proactive 4. strategic use of coaching
Clutterbuck et al., 2016; Megginson & Clutterbuck, 2006	1. nascent: little or no commitment to coaching culture 2. tactical: coaching taking place on ad hoc basis 3. strategic: coaching is an important enabler of achieving business goals 4. embedded: people at all levels are engaged in coaching
Passmore & Crabbe, 2020	1. employment of external coaches 2. internal coaching pool 3. coaching skills for managers 4. coaching beyond the boundaries of the organisation
Whybrow & O'Riordan, 2021	1. coaching as an offering 2. coaching as a style 3. embedding coaching into the fabric of the organisation
Knowles, 2022	1. Coaching as intervention 2. Coaching as HR function 3. Coaching as leader capability 4. Coaching as culture

A common feature amongst these models is that they conceptualise the development of coaching cultures as stages of maturity with distinct characteristics. For example, Megginson and Clutterbuck (2006) and Clutterbuck et.al (2016) present four progressive levels: nascent, tactical, strategic and embedded with characteristics in each level. They have also developed a questionnaire to measure progress against their model. Hawkins (2012) also presents four level of maturity from ad hoc, managed, proactive and finally strategic use of coaching approaches. Finally, Passmore and Jastrzebska (2011), proposed five stages of development: 1. Informal external coaching, 2. Professional external coaching, 3. Coaching for all 4. Coaching as a management style and 5. Coaching across the network. These conceptualisations provide an understanding of the step changes required to progress through the development stages towards mature coaching cultures, however, their linearity fails to represent the emergent and messy nature of organisational cultures.

Another common feature of these models is that they have been developed by consolidating findings from organisational case studies published in books or book chapters. These are helpful to provide examples of different ways to develop coaching cultures in various contexts, but their reporting quality can vary, for example in the detail provided on data collection, intervention characteristics, or the sources of data, making comparison and consolidation difficult.

A shift in more recent conceptualisations of coaching culture is observed, similar to the shift seen on the definitions of coaching cultures from behaviour and style to the cultural elements of the construct. They move from a process-focused conceptualisation to a systemic one, where the interaction of a number of interventions, stakeholders and patterns combine to provide a deeper understanding of the construct. Since the Gormley and van Nieuwerburgh (2014) review, a wider "systems" perspective was introduced in the exploration of the development of coaching culture at work (Clutterbuck et al., 2016; Whybrow & O'Riordan, 2021). In parallel, a Complex Adaptive Systems perspective to coaching has recently been adopted by a few researchers to explore the coaching ripple effect on wellbeing across organisational networks (O'Connor & Cavanagh, 2013) and team coaching (Clutterbuck, 2021) but it has not explicitly been linked to coaching cultures.

An example of this shift is seen in Clutterbuck et al. (2016) who updated the Clutterbuck and Megginson (2005) model by "placing more emphasis on the complexity of culture change" (p. 12). They also introduce the role teams play in developing a coaching culture, as they note that "it is in the work team that coaching behaviours can become the norm" (p. 12). The definition they propose is that a coaching culture is "one where the principles, beliefs, and mindsets driving people's behaviour in the workplace are deeply rooted in the discipline of coaching". In this update of their model, they adopt a systemic perspective to the development of coaching cultures and introduce a Complex Adaptive System lens as a proposition to view coaching cultures through but do not explicitly link their model to the CAS theory.

The second prominent model that has been published since the Gormley and van Nieuwerburgh (2014) review is the model proposed by Passmore and Crabbe (2020). They describe coaching culture as a way of being that is central to cultural and strategic aspects of an organisation:

> An organization that aims to maximize the potential of all who work with it, through its use of coaching as the default style of leadership and employee engagement and where its people are supported and challenged to become more self-aware, with increased autonomy to deliver their workplace goals. This way of being becomes and is integral to the behaviours, values, development, and strategy of the organization (and in time, the distributed network) (Passmore & Crabbe, 2020 p. 25).

Their "LEAD" coaching framework presents a systemic and incremental set of interventions that work together to move an organisation towards a coaching culture. The development zones they propose move from the employment of external coaches for leaders (**L**eaders) to the development of internal coaching capability (**E**veryone), to developing a coaching management approach (**A**pproach) to finally moving coaching beyond the boundaries of the organisation to contractors, partners, and their supply chain (**D**istributed). The framework also provides an audit tool for organisations to review and develop their practices.

This trend is disrupted by Whybrow and O'Riordan (2021) who provide a different perspective on coaching culture based on a cognitive behavioural and multimodal

perspective, and on raising awareness of thinking patterns for individuals and systems. The premise of their proposal is that, in order to change organisational level habits or patterns of thinking and behaviour, an awareness of these patterns needs to be developed to provide the possibility for action, change and experimentation.

Finally, a more recent model has been proposed by Knowles (2022) which combines a process and systemic view of coaching culture. This is based on an understanding of culture in line with dominant models of organisational culture (e.g., Schein) and suggests four stages in the development of a coaching culture: coaching as intervention, coaching as HR function, coaching as leader capability, and coaching as culture. Each stage is characterised by the understanding that organisational leaders have of coaching, their motivation for coaching, the key drivers and how coaching is delivered throughout the organisation.

These models are helpful in giving practitioners tools to develop or evaluate coaching culture programmes and have high face validity as they are grounded in practitioner case studies. They represent a linear development structure when, in reality, their development might follow more disordered and emergent patterns. Further independent empirical research is required to test or validate these models and their applicability across sectors and types of organisations.

1.4.3. Empirical research on coaching culture

Despite the increase in interest and the development of models of coaching culture, the empirical research that inquired into the nature of coaching cultures is still in its infancy (Clutterbuck et al., 2016; Knowles, 2022; Milner et al., 2020). In the absence of agreed definitions for both coaching and coaching culture, it is very difficult to consolidate the evidence base and understand what is known so far about this type of culture or sub-culture (Knowles, 2022b) and its benefits to organisations.

Outcomes: focus on individual or team outcomes. The research on coaching and its effectiveness has intensified in recent years and the focus has mainly been on the

effectiveness of coaching on individuals and more recently on teams (Hastings &
Pennington, 2019; Hawkins, 2022; R. Jones, 2022). Recent systematic reviews and meta-
analyses have supported the findings that coaching is effective for employee development
in organisations, especially when delivered by internal coaches, (R. J. Jones et al., 2016);
coaching, when it is based on psychological underpinnings, is effective on specific outcomes,
such as goal attainment (Grover & Furnham, 2016; Wang et al., 2021) and self-efficacy and
performance as rated by others (Theeboom et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2021) well-being
(Grover & Furnham, 2016; Theeboom et al., 2014), and career satisfaction (Grover &
Furnham, 2016). There is also evidence that certain types of coaching that are
psychologically informed (e.g. CBC cognitive behavioural, solution-focused, GROW and
strength-based approaches) improved emotional intelligence competencies, such as self-
awareness and self-regulation (Theeboom et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2021) as well as self-
efficacy, organisational commitment, and workplace psychological well-being (Lai & Palmer,
2019). Workplace coaching is effective irrespective of whether it is delivered face to face or
via e-coaching (Jones et al., 2016).

Whilst there is now a considerable amount of evidence of the benefits of coaching
on individuals and teams, there is still very little evidence of the impact of this investment at
the organisational level (Grover & Furnham, 2016) and, more specifically, at the cultural,
normative and behavioural fabric of organisations.

Some initial evidence exists that suggests that coaching impacts peer and
subordinate ratings of coachees' leadership behaviours (Grover & Furnham, 2016). This
finding is encouraging as it suggests perceived impact beyond the individual recipient of a
coaching intervention. Some evidence also exists of coaching's role in influencing the
coachee's social environments (Passmore & Theeboom, 2016). This is also an important
finding, and more research is needed to help us understand the nature of these distal
outcomes of coaching, which in turn would provide us with insights into the role of coaching
in organisational culture development or change.

There is also some evidence, mainly observed in case studies, that presents positive
results associated with coaching cultures in the form of improved innovation and
collaboration (e.g., Gormley & van Nieuwerburgh, 2014; Leonard-Cross, 2010).

Understanding how coaching contributes to or impacts these organisational outcomes would advance our understanding further.

Research that presented positive results on organisational level outcomes, assumes that as coaching impacts positively on individuals, these individual outcomes bring about positive organisational changes. If the individuals that experience positive changes attributed to coaching are organisational leaders then these will stimulate culture change at the organisational level (Gormley & van Nieuwerburgh, 2014). This assumption adopts a linear and simplistic understanding of the ripple effect of coaching (O'Connor & Cavanagh, 2013) at the organisational level and does not reflect the complexity of organisational life and the leadership, political and systemic challenges at play when developing culture though leadership behaviours.

The main question therefore is how these positive intra-individual changes that result, supposedly, from coaching interventions translate to changes in collective behavioural norms. One unique study (O'Connor & Cavanagh, 2013) employed the use of social network analysis to examine the distal or ripple effects of coaching. They observed that coaching seems to have a positive impact on the interaction of people that are in the close network of the coachee/ leader, but it is still unclear as to how that happens.

Finally, some of the prominent authors on the subject have linked coaching cultures with organisational benefits. For example, Clutterbuck and Megginson (2016) claim that organisations with a strong coaching culture outperform those that do not have one; they are more agile; they innovate more; and they have higher levels of customer and employee engagement. Similarly, Hawkins (2012) argues that coaching cultures increase individual, team and organisational performance and shareholder value. These claims are promising but the impact of or the process by which coaching cultures help achieve these outcomes remains to be known.

In conclusion, there is little research into the phenomenon of coaching cultures and most evidence is indirect coming from individual or team coaching effectiveness research. Further research across organisations, sectors and contexts would advance even further our understanding of the impact of coaching cultures on the cultural fabric of organisations.

Interventions: focus on manager as coach. The intervention that has seen most academic research is the development of manager as coach (McCarthy & Milner, 2013, 2020; Milner et al., 2018, 2022). In fact, some practitioners equate coaching culture as a construct to a coaching style of management. There is some evidence of positive results when managers adopt of a coaching approach to leading, namely, enhanced performance (Agarwal et al., 2009), empowerment (Fong & Snape, 2015), and engagement (Crabb, 2011). As before, these adopt a linear perspective and assume changes in cultural patterns.

Developing internal coaching capability, in the form of internal coaches has been another popular model of developing a coaching culture in organisations. Like the manager-as-coach intervention, it creates a sustainable model of a coaching "service", amplifies the coaching championing capacity in organisations and effects culture change. The research on whether this strategy is effective is inconclusive (Gormley & van Nieuwerburgh, 2014) but one of its benefits is that it is a cost-effective strategy as it reduces the reliance on costly external coaches. The main benefit that has been observed, however, is the fact that internal coaches have internalised the espoused organisational values and culture of their organisations and integrate them into their coaching conversations (McKee et al., 2009)

Other interventions that have been used to develop coaching culture include more traditional coaching interventions, such as executive coaching and team or group coaching. These are not always seen as part of coaching culture programmes and, therefore, their impact at organisational level may not be explored or captured.

In conclusion, our understanding of coaching cultures comes from the manager-as-coach perspective, which seems to be the dominant intervention in developing coaching cultures in organisations. It is still unclear how effective this and other interventions are in developing coaching cultures. It is also unclear as to whether a number of interventions need to work synergistically, in parallel or in succession, to impact on the culture.

Roles: focus on leadership. A number of stakeholder roles are involved in the development of coaching cultures. The focus has mainly been on the role of leadership in championing coaching as the primary leadership behaviour (Clutterbuck & Megginson, 2005).

As the move towards more systemic conceptualisations of coaching cultures developed, more roles have been identified in the implementation of coaching culture programmes. According to Hawkins (2012) these roles are the CEO, HR Director and Leadership and Management Development manager, the Heads of coaching and coaching champion, internal coaches, external coaches, the manager-as-coach, coach trainers, researchers and writers and those working in Organisational Development (OD). Hawkins (2012) explains that those working in OD have recently become more relevant because of their role in developing strategy, leadership engagement, organisational agility, and culture change.

Knowles (2022) has defined these roles as the enacting stakeholders (or organisational leaders) and distinguished them from the receiving stakeholders, such as organisational members and external stakeholders (e.g. in Gormley & van Nieuwerburgh, 2014; Hawkins, 2012; Passmore & Crabbe, 2020).

Finally, Whybrow and O'Riordan (2021) present three distinct roles in driving coaching culture: senior level sponsors, change agents (internal stakeholders) and external partners in the form of coaches or consultants.

The main stakeholder groups that emerge from these well-known models presented above, are consolidated as: a. leadership, b. enacting stakeholders, c. implementers and d. receiving stakeholders, as presented in Figure 1.2.

Figure 1.2

Stakeholder Groups in Coaching Cultures

Leadership includes decision-makers such as CEOs, People and Culture or HR directors, or other leaders, sponsors of culture change programmes. The enacting stakeholders are organisational developers and coaches that drive coaching culture programmes, whereas implementers or "amplifiers" are managers-as-coaches. Finally, the receiving stakeholders are organisational members, customers, and external stakeholders.

Research has explored the role of the leader (Anthony & van Nieuwerburgh, 2018), the manager as coach, i.e. implementer role (Milner et al., 2020) and the organisational members or receiving stakeholders (Boysen et al., 2021) but has clear gaps in the role of the organisational developers or enacting stakeholders, who Clutterbuck et.al (2016) name as "the unsung heroes of coaching culture" (p. 186). Understanding the perspectives and contributions of each role, as well as their interrelation and interdependencies, is critical to our understanding of coaching cultures.

1.5. Research aims.

Despite the inconclusive nature of the research around the nature of coaching culture, there seem to be a common expectation that coaching cultures can create organisations that are development-oriented, connected, healthier, and high performing. Organisations that have coaching cultures initiatives seem to create "positive and supportive organisational climates for personal and organisational flourishing" (Gormley & van Nieuwerburgh, 2014, p 99). Developing cultures with clear intent and purpose and utilising development interventions that are deeply rooted in principles aligned to coaching may help organisations achieve this (Clutterbuck et al., 2016; Clutterbuck & Megginson, 2005) and exploring this premise, is the motivation for this research.

The aim of this research is:

to advance our understanding of coaching cultures by exploring how they are developed through the perspective of the enacting stakeholder.

The intention is to provide a new perspective in our understanding of coaching cultures and offer practitioners and researchers a framework of the building blocks of coaching cultures that could be used in the design phase of coaching culture programmes and inspire further research. The framework will support organisations clarify their intent and design for their cultural development, in order to maximise on their investment to develop their people and their organisations.

The aim of the systematic literature review (SLR) within this thesis was to explore what is known about coaching culture through peer reviewed empirical research since the

last known literature review in 2014. It sought to explore definitions and the building blocks of coaching cultures (i.e., the foundational elements, interventions, outcomes, and measures employed in research). The focus was on consolidating what we know about coaching cultures through empirical, peer reviewed research firstly because there is no recent review on the literature on coaching cultures and secondly because the practitioner research seems to be either commercially developed or commissioned by professional bodies. (e.g., ICF, AC).

Building on the SLR, the aim of the second study was to explore the fundamental behavioural and normative elements that underpin coaching cultures. This inquiry was conducted through the perspective of the primary enacting stakeholders (Knowles, 2022b) who are responsible for developing coaching cultures in organisations: organisational developers and coaches.

Understanding and integrating the perspectives of these key stakeholders and their contributions in developing coaching cultures will inform how we define, develop and measure progress towards fully embedded coaching cultures. Adopting a Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS) theoretical perspective where these roles are seen as the primary change agents / actors in the system will also help us understand how these critical roles interact to embed emerging behavioural and cultural patterns.

This research will contribute to theory by continuing the academic debate on coaching cultures, how they are defined and developed. It will also contribute to practice by providing an integrated perspective from the enacting stakeholder groups, which will lead to a conceptual and behavioural framework for those developing, evaluating, or researching coaching cultures.

1.6. Thesis structure

This thesis is comprised of five chapters. This first introductory chapter brings together the terms coaching and organisational culture and explores what we know about models of coaching cultures and the research so far, setting the context and justification for the thesis. Chapter Two explains the epistemological position and methodological choices

that informed the research design used. Chapter Three is the first study of the thesis: Coaching Culture: An Evidence Review and Framework for Future Research and Practice and discusses the findings from the Systematic Literature Review following the PRISMA framework. The findings of this study informed the design of the second study, presented in Chapter Four. The second study is a qualitative study using semi structured interviews and the critical incident technique to identify through reflexive thematic analysis the behaviours, values and principles that underpin coaching cultures through the experience of organisational developers and coaches. Chapter Five concludes the thesis with an overview of the findings from both studies, discusses the limitations of the research and highlights its contribution to knowledge and practical implications for research and practice.

Chapter 2: Methodology

This thesis set out to explore the phenomenon of coaching culture and add to our understanding of how coaching interventions support culture development in organisations. Initially, a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) was conducted to review the extant literature and consolidate the evidence produced through empirical peer reviewed research since 2014, when the only published literature review was published. The findings of the SLR then informed the design of the empirical study, which enquired into the enacting stakeholders' lived experience of developing coaching cultures to surface behavioural and cultural patterns and assumptions.

This chapter discusses the methodology that underpins the thesis. The "research onion" (Saunders et al., 2015) is used as a guiding structure and starts with the outer layers of the research philosophy, the onto-epistemological basis of this inquiry. It then describes the research strategy deployed, delving into the rationale for each of the two studies and clarifying the key choices that were made on the techniques and procedures to analyse the collected data. Finally ethical considerations are explored followed by the researcher's reflexive, positionality statement.

2.1. Research philosophy

My philosophical positions and assumptions, in terms of the way I, as a researcher, perceive the world and the nature of reality (ontology) and my assumptions about the nature of knowledge and "the criteria by which we can know what does and does not constitute warranted, or scientific, knowledge" (Symon & Cassell, 2012, p. 16) (epistemology) drove the way I approached this inquiry. Symon and Cassell (2012) claim that we cannot operate outside some epistemological and ontological position and "therefore, it is important that we are aware of them; are prepared to defend them; and also prepared to consider their implications" (p.18)

The epistemological approach at the core of this inquiry is grounded on pragmatism as a research paradigm. Pragmatism as a research philosophy in social research emphasizes the practical consequences and utility of knowledge (Morgan, 2014). It is rooted in the belief

that the worth of an idea or theory is determined by its practical effects and how effectively it solves problems. In other words, pragmatism prioritizes the usefulness and effectiveness of knowledge rather than its abstract truthfulness or adherence to a particular ideology.

In social research, a pragmatic approach means focusing on what works in addressing real-world issues and challenges rather than being tied to rigid theoretical frameworks or abstract concepts. Researchers adopting a pragmatic stance are often interested in interdisciplinary approaches, drawing on insights from various fields to develop practical solutions to social problems (Morgan, 2014).

Pragmatism positions reality and knowledge as continually changing and interpreted constantly as situations evolve or change (Yardley & Bishop, 2017). It, therefore, assumes that a researcher can work with both (seemingly opposing) research paradigms of positivism and interpretivism, seeing them rather as a continuum (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007). Researchers in the pragmatic paradigm suggest that research philosophy choices are driven by the research question (Saunders et al., 2015). In other words, the choice of research method is determined by understanding which method will be most appropriate to address the research question.

Research on coaching culture reflects a diverse mix of epistemological positions. From thought papers, conceptual frameworks, and empirical studies that follow an interpretivist stance at one end to quantitative studies reflecting a positivist position at the other end. Similarly, in this thesis, the first study set out to understand what is known about coaching cultures. A systematic literature review (SLR) was chosen as the most appropriate method to address this wide research question in a manner both systematic and comparable to prior published reviews in this area. A SLR is more closely aligned to a positivist approach because of its systematic way of including and excluding research and because it is concerned with minimising researcher bias to increase validity, reliability, and replicability (Rojon et al., 2021). For the second study, a qualitative interview design was chosen to explore the lived experience of practitioners, underpinned by a critical realist paradigm. Critical realism posits that there are multiple layers of reality (epistemological relativism) that may exist independent of what we know of them (ontological realism) and recognizes and accesses their complexity through the researcher's social context and

reflexive practice (judgmental rationalism) (Pilgrim, 2019). The overarching therefore research philosophy and implications of this research are discussed from a pragmatist viewpoint by consolidating the findings from both studies and surfacing practical implications for researchers and practitioners working in this field.

The choice of pragmatism as an overarching philosophical orientation was strongly influenced by the researcher's desire to contribute useful and practical insights based on the participants' experience and, therefore, of practical application to researchers and practitioners. In this thesis, the adoption of a pragmatist approach was closely intertwined with establishing research objectives. These objectives were shaped by the first study and exploring the make-up of coaching cultures through peer-reviewed research. The second study then aimed to put these into context by exploring the stories of practitioners with lived experience. In this way, pragmatism helped shape the research question to identify actionable insights.

Pragmatism was also instrumental in directing the researcher towards making appropriate methodological choices by unpacking different aspects of the research question at the design stage. Both studies required methodologies that contextualised the research findings. In the first study, pragmatism helped identify the building blocks of coaching cultures through narrative analysis. This was due the heterogeneity of the research methodologies used by the studies included in the systematic literature review. For the second study the aim was to capture the lived experiences of practitioners. This required a qualitative approach with interviews with practitioners to interrogate their practical experience. Hence, semi-structured interviews were included in the research design.

In addition, pragmatism guided the sampling strategy by identifying respondents with practical experience of developing coaching cultures. This sampling decision was made in order to generate knowledge and provide information that could be invested into practice.

Finally, pragmatism necessitated a reflexive stance at all stages of data collection and analysis as respondent perspectives were being shaped by the inquiry processes itself. This worked in synergy with the critical realist approach that was adopted for the second study. Critical realism allowed the researcher to centre the 'lived experiences' of the

participants in developing coaching cultures while also allowing for a reflexive stance on the intersection of the participants' stories and the researcher's positioning.

2.2. Research strategy

Coaching culture is an area of practitioner interest that has received a lot of attention in recent years. However, the review of the literature that is presented in Chapter 1 of this thesis, showed that little empirical evidence has been produced to date to help us understand the phenomenon of coaching culture.

The studies that make up this thesis set out to firstly surface and integrate the recent evidence that has been produced through empirical, peer reviewed research and then to dig deeper into the experiences of professionals who work in developing coaching cultures to understand its cultural foundations (i.e., assumptions, values, and behaviours, of this type of sub-culture). Their insights are accumulative and add to the wider aim of this inquiry, which is to create a conceptual framework of coaching cultures and how they can be developed to benefit organisations.

The respective research strategies, choices and rationale for the studies including the techniques and procedures to analyse the data collected, are presented below. Methods, (i.e., the specific techniques and processes followed to generate and analyse data (Birks & Mills, 2015, p. 4)), are discussed in more detail in the study chapters 3 and 4 that follow.

2.2.1. Study one: Systematic Literature Review

Following the initial literature review, presented at Chapter 1 of this thesis, it was evident that there were many gaps in our understanding of coaching culture. The only published literature review on coaching culture was published in 2014 by Gormley and van Nieuwerburgh. They concluded that "the term 'coaching culture' has been used and understood in slightly different ways" (Gormley & van Nieuwerburgh, 2014, p.99). This seems to have continued and is partly attributed to the lack of an agreed definition which also makes research insights and practitioner case studies difficult to consolidate.

A Systematic Literature Review (SLR) methodology was adopted to explore the evidence that had been developed since the Gormley and van Nieuwerburgh (2014) review. A SLR was chosen as a methodology because of its thorough and systematic way of identifying all studies that address a specific question and minimize selection bias (Nightingale, 2009). A SLR reviews and evaluates what we know from previous research (Gough et al., 2017) by addressing a specific question. According to Briner and Denyer (2012), "it utilizes explicit and transparent methods to perform a thorough literature search and critical appraisal of individual studies, and draws conclusions about what we currently know and do not know about a given question or topic" (p. 112).

According to Gough, et.al. (2017), traditional reviews summarise what is known about a topic, but they do not necessarily explain the criteria used to identify and include studies over others. In that way, a standard literature review can involve some "cherry-picking: published research that supports the rationale for the study is included" (Briner & Denyer, 2012, p 114) as there are no specific pre-set criteria that have been carefully set to respond to the inquiry and guide the selection of studies for inclusion. When literature reviews do not follow a systematic way to identify and select studies, they may be biased and influenced by the researcher's assumptions or experiences. Moreover, standard literature reviews do not provide the methodology followed which makes replicating their research difficult.

The potential for researcher bias and lack of replicability in standard reviews was one of the reasons that led to the choice of a systematic approach. A SLR is different from a traditional, standard literature review in the way that it follows a specific design to answer the research question. Briner and Denyer (2012) describe this design as "appropriate" rather than standardised or rigid, and it follows a rigorous analysis in the same way that any other form of primary research would. They also state that "systematic reviews are guided by a set of "principles rather than a specific, inflexible, and restricted protocol" (p.112). These principles are that systematic reviews are systematic in their approach, explicit in how they describe the method used, and reproducible, synthesising the evidence in question. Its main aim and strength is to establish an explicit and methodical way to synthesise or summarise the literature or evidence base (Briner & Denyer, 2012). Finally, it includes a thorough quality assessment that informs the overall quality of the insights generated.

SLRs too have received critique and challenge. Some potential weaknesses are that they can be seen as reductive by considering relatively few studies (Gough et al., 2017) and sometimes through applying this rigorous (some might say rigid) approach they might exclude studies and discard data that could provide useful insights to the research question (Hammersley, 2002). They are also time consuming and can exclude certain types of literature. For example, for this SLR, it was decided only to include empirical, peer reviewed research, which means that grey literature and practitioner or academic unpublished research were not considered. This decision was driven by the research aim, which was to understand the *empirical* evidence base that had been tested and scrutinised. It was also driven by practical considerations. Practitioner research and grey literature is hard to access and analysing and synthesising the findings from this type of literature, would take a lot of time and would require a team of researchers to achieve within the resource and time constraints for this professional doctorate, a challenge that is common in systematic reviews (Gough et al., 2017).

Finally, common criticisms of SLRs are that they are mechanical, ignoring sense making and meaning (Gough et al., 2017) and that, by their nature, they fall under a positivist research philosophy or paradigm. This is particularly relevant for this review that is underpinned by a pragmatist approach. Briner and Denyer (2012) contest this as a myth, discussing that SLRs can be conducted through different research paradigms, informed by the research questions.

The steps that were followed in this SLR reflect the Briner and Denyer (2012) approach: a. planning the review – by identifying the question from the initial literature review and developing a protocol; b. locating studies through database searches; c. extracting the data and appraising contributions against quality criteria; d. analysing and synthesising information to build the story that emerges from the data and e. reporting the evidence.

Briner and Denyer (2012), offer a critical appraisal checklist to overcome some of the weaknesses of a systematic review and ensure that the review is of good quality. In line with this checklist and in order to capitalise on the qualities that are brought by employing a SLR methodology, (i.e., transparency, explicitness, and replicability; Rojon et al., 2021) a number

of frameworks and tools have been employed, such as the development of a protocol and criteria for considering studies and the Brine and Denyer (2012) quality checklist. How these frameworks have been applied in practice is discussed in the SLR study, chapter 3.

2.2.2. Study two: Empirical Study

The results of the SLR led to the formulation of the research aims and questions of the second study. The empirical study aimed to respond to these points by inquiring into the perspectives of the enacting stakeholders (i.e., organisational and people developers) in order to explore how they sense-make coaching cultures and the values, assumptions and behaviours that underpin them.

The study followed a critical realist perspective where the multiple realities situated in the participants and their contexts are accessed through the accounts of their lived experience. The role of the researcher is to understand and interpret their subjective lived experience and the underlying complexity of their perspectives, how they interact with other roles in their system and the wider system itself and create meaning through their own experience, perspective and reflexive practice.

Data Collection. Semi- structured interviews were used to inquire into the participants' experience and perceptions of coaching cultures and their role in developing them. This was combined with the Critical Incident Technique (Flanagan, 1954; Serrat, 2017) to elicit rich qualitative information about the fundamental elements of coaching cultures, the values, assumptions, and behaviours that underpin coaching cultures through incidents grounded in the participants' experience. Combining semi-structured interviews with the Critical Incident Technique (CIT) gives the opportunity to explore behaviour and experience, both positive and negative, as well as the participants' opinion.

In the process of choosing this method, several alternatives were considered. One of them was an online survey with free text questions. This method has been used in the exploration of coaching cultures (Milner et al., 2020) and its advantage is that it reaches a larger number of participants and provides arguably more generalisable insights (de Haan,

2019). However, interviews were chosen as more appropriate to address the research question because they give the opportunity to prompt and understand at a deeper level participants' experience.

Focus groups or co-operative inquiry was another method that was explored. Focus groups create opportunities for shared understandings and meaning. The reason this method was rejected is because of the tendencies inherent in this method towards normative discourses (Smithson, 2000). The risk is that the exploration of the questions in a group setting could influence the choice of incidents by co-researchers' contributions and potentially dilute the quality and richness of the subjective experiences of the participants.

Similarly, a co-operative action research study in the researcher's organisation was explored: This alternative had advantages because of the opportunity to explore narratives of practitioners and the development of coaching culture over time with creative cycles of action and reflection (Riley & Reason, 2015). It was however rejected because of the challenges and complexities being an insider researcher brings.

Finally, a multimethod approach (survey with free text questions and a focus group) and a Delphi study were explored. These had some advantages in furthering the findings of the SLR but would fall outside the requirements for this Professional Doctorate and would require a longer-term exploration.

Participants. Professionals with experience in working in or with organisations that aspire to develop a coaching culture, such as organisational psychologists, coaches (internal or external), coaching psychologists, HR/OD professionals were interviewed, and they were conceptualised in two separate groups: organisational developers and coaches, or people developers. Twenty participants, 10 per practitioner group, was deemed as appropriate sample for the purpose of this inquiry and is in line with the sample size of 10 -20 participants recommended for doctoral level published research (Clarke & Braun, 2013).

Data analysis. Due to the exploratory nature of this enquiry (i.e. rooted in a qualitative paradigm (Terry et al., 2017)) reflexive Thematic Analysis (TA) (Braun & Clarke,

2006, 2019, 2022a) was used to analyse the data. Thematic analysis is "agnostic" to paradigms and theoretical positions (Braun and Clarke, 2006), but reflexive TA is very closely aligned to the interpretive, critical realist epistemological position that has been adopted for this study. Reflexive TA facilitates the identification of common themes and shared patterns of meaning constructed from participants accounts and through the researcher's reflexive positioning (Braun and Clarke, 2022).

Thematic analysis (TA) was chosen because it enables analysing a large set of complex data to generate themes. The research questions lend themselves to thematic analysis to identify themes, and the underlying behaviours, assumptions, and values of coaching cultures. More specifically, the reflexive TA method (Braun & Clarke, 2019) was adopted. The recursive and reflexive elements of the reflexive TA made it a flexible research methodology to highlight nuances within the data, reflecting the researcher's active engagement with the data.

Themes in reflexive TA are distinct patterns that have a unifying underlying concept, a "central organising concept" (Braun & Clarke, 2022b; Clarke & Braun, 2013) which distinguishes them from "domain or topic summaries" which are descriptive summary presentations of the codes or data that relate to a particular domain (Braun & Clarke, 2019).

Themes are not located within the data waiting to be found but are generated with the active engagement of the researcher, who creates stories about the data and reflects on their positionality and context and how these shape the creation of new meaning. For this reason, the role of the researcher in producing knowledge is an important element that distinguishes reflexive TA from other approaches, for example, coding reliability or codebook approaches (e.g. Boyatzis, 1998; Guest et al., 2011; Joffe, 2011). Researcher transparency, therefore, becomes an important element of rigour in reflexive TA. The researcher brings transparency around their theoretical, personal, or methodological positions or assumptions and how these have shaped the analysis. A reflexivity statement describing the researcher's positionality is included at the end of this chapter.

The process itself is recursive and reflexive throughout following the six steps that Braun and Clarke suggest (i.e., familiarisation with data, generating initial codes, identifying themes, reviewing themes, defining, and naming themes and finally, summarising the

themes). The six steps approach has been criticised as rigid but in fact they are a guide. A researcher often moves back and forth the steps, in their work as a "sculptor" creating new meaning from their interaction with the material (data) and their skills rather than an "archaeologist" looking for themes that are already there (Terry, 2018).

Reflexive TA offered several benefits to this study because of its theoretical flexibility. This flexibility, alongside the method's recursive rather than linear approach, allowed for a critical realist analysis to identify patterns that underpin the data.

Other methods of qualitative data analysis were considered at this stage, namely content analysis and grounded theory analysis. Content analysis was rejected because of the absence of a coaching culture theory that would allow the formulation of categories and codes to structure the analysis on (Willig & Rogers, 2017). Grounded theory analysis provided some opportunities because of its potential to construct theories inductively but it was rejected because it requires the researcher to put aside existing knowledge and experience when analysing the data (Birks & Mills, 2015). In this study, the researcher's existing experience of coaching culture development was seen as a valuable resource (Braun & Clarke, 2023).

Quality. Assessing quality in qualitative research and more specifically in reflexive TA is complex and more nuanced and concepts such a reliability or generalisability are not relevant. Concepts such as trustworthiness and dependability (McLeod 2001) and transparency in the positionality of the researcher (see section 2.4. Positionality Statement) are more pertinent in reflexive TA.

The reporting of the study followed the recommendations for producing and reporting methodologically coherent TA and "being a knowing TA researcher" (Braun & Clarke, 2023). These recommendations include amongst others, alignment with qualitative research values, discussing the exact way a researcher engaged with the data and analysis, producing themes as conceptualised in reflexive TA and not domain summaries, and finally ensuring the language around theme generation reflects the reflexive TA approach (Appendix M (a)). It was finally checked against the 20-question tool for evaluating TA manuscripts for publication (Braun & Clarke, 2021) making sure that the choice of methods

is adequately explained and that the analysis is well-developed and justified. (Appendix M (b))

2.3. Ethical Considerations

The research studies in this thesis have been conducted within the following ethical frameworks: the British Psychological Society Code of Human Research Ethics (2021), the Health and Care Professions Council Standards of Conduct Performance and Ethics (2016) and Birkbeck University Ethics Guidelines. The empirical study ethics submission was reviewed by the Principal Supervisor and received approval by the Department of Organisational Psychology Ethics Committee on the 19 December 2022 (code: OPEA-22/23-04). Key ethical issues that were considered and mitigated against, are presented below under the broad categories of informed consent and participation rights, protecting anonymity and confidentiality and integrity and quality.

2.3.1. Informed consent and participation rights

This study fell in the routine and not sensitive category however, it was important that arrangements were made to obtain the free and informed consent of participants. An information sheet (Appendix A), which provided information about the researcher, the purpose of the study and its methodology and how the data, outcomes and outputs of the study would be used was developed. The purpose of the information sheet was to clarify why participants have been asked to participate and what participation would involve. Voluntary participation was made clear in the information sheet which included the researchers' contact details and was reiterated at every engagement between the researcher and participant.

Participation rights were also clarified, namely that participation in the research guarantees the right to withdraw, to ask questions about how participants' data would be handled and about the study itself, the right to confidentially and anonymity, the right to refuse to answer questions, to have recorders turned-off and to be given access to a summary of the findings.

The information sheet clarified that there were no risks involved in taking part in the research and participants were encouraged to keep the sheet for their records.

An "informed consent" form (Appendix B) was also developed in order to obtain consent from participants to take part in the study by reviewing a number of statements confirming their understanding of the purpose of the study, what is expected of them, their participation rights and that their participation is voluntary. Statements also clarify that interviews will be recorded, transcribed and results may be used for academic publications, including this thesis.

During the interview participants were invited to ask any questions related to the study prior to consenting to ensure that they are entirely happy to voluntarily participate. They also had opportunities to ask the researcher questions during the brief, close, debrief.

Finally, participants were provided with a debrief sheet (Appendix C) which included the researchers contact details so that participants can contact the researcher and/or the doctorate supervisors if they have any questions outside of the semi-structured interview, reminded of the purpose of the research and their rights to withdraw data.

2.3.2. Protecting anonymity and confidentiality

The researcher adhered to the BPS Code of Ethics throughout the research, treating all data in the strictest of confidence and anonymising data. The information sheet informed participants how the data will be collected, recorded, used, and stored for a certain period of time, and it reassured them about their anonymity and confidentiality during the study and in the dissemination of the findings.

Interviews were conducted on Microsoft Teams at home and never in a public space or with anyone else present. Data were recorded and stored without reference to the identity of the participants. All personal identifiers (e.g., name) were removed from files and participants were assigned a pseudonym. The participant's name and pseudonym were held on a separate password protected file, so that is a participant requested to withdraw their data, the researcher would be able to do this by reviewing the password protected file that

includes the participants name and pseudonym. Only the researcher had access to passwords.

In line with participants rights to withdraw and GDPR, participants were informed that they could withdraw their qualitative data up until the point at which the analysis commenced and was amalgamated in the overall dataset whereby the researcher would not be able to identify an individual's data.

Recordings were only retained for the duration of the write up of interviews. They were then permanently deleted from the College OneDrive and electronic recycle bin. The transcribed data were stored securely on Birkbeck Research Data Repository (BiRD) indefinitely as per Birkbeck's Ethical Committee policy.

2.3.3. Integrity and quality

All aspects and stages of the research studies were reviewed regularly by the researcher and the supervisors. Issues, dilemmas, concerns, and risks that became apparent throughout the studies were explored in supervision sessions to help unpack the researcher's assumptions and make decisions that are within research ethical considerations.

Other ethical considerations in this area were competence of the researcher (i.e., having the appropriate skills, knowledge, and experience to conduct the research) and responsibility, knowing when to refer to someone more expert, such as a supervisor.

Responsibility considerations were apparent in the areas of power and influence between researcher and participant. Consideration was given so that the researcher would not influence the participants to respond in a certain way, paying attention to the power dynamic of researcher and participant. Building rapport and approaching the interviews as a dialogue with a genuine interest in their stories and maintaining a curious, non-judgemental stance was important. Finally, it was made clear that their experience and views were of interest, and they were not representing their organisation or their organisational policies.

2.4. Positionality Statement

I came to this research because of a professional passion to develop organisations that are, connected, healthy, and high performing and where individual and organisational outcomes and aspirations are aligned. My educational background and professional practice are rooted in organisational psychology and development. I have worked for most of my career as an internal consultant in the fields of learning, leadership, talent, and organisation development. Coaching and the development of coaching cultures has been a consistent common thread in my practice in the last 12 years.

My early education and career were influenced by positivist notions of objectivity, neutrality, and validity. Early research and practice looked at the individual in organisational settings and was concerned with personality and leadership assessment, occupational stress, and burnout and how to measure these. This positivist view was later challenged by critical thinking on social constructionism, complexity theory and dialogic organisational development approaches. That also meant that the focus of my practice and how I see organisations moved to the organisational level and how the individual influences the collective and vice versa. My practice was concerned with leadership (rather than leader) development, social learning and communities of practice, values-based practice, and organisational and culture development. As an organisational development practitioner, I developed a systemic perspective in how I approach my work and organisations. This shift has influenced the topic of my research and the lenses I have chosen to apply (e.g., I applied a complex adaptive system lens to my inquiry where the system adapts and learns new patterns of interacting, patterns that are rooted in coaching principles).

My experience of working in programmes to develop coaching cultures has inevitably shaped my research. Like many of my participants, the inspiration started with me being coached and developing my coaching practice. I have had the privilege of experiencing coaching culture development from a number of perspectives. In one organisation, I was the initiator and led the development of the programme mainly through equipping and empowering line managers to use a coaching approach. In another organisation, I joined part way through that journey, and contributed to the development of a coaching culture through an internal coaching academy. This experience gave me exposure and confidence in

applying various interventions but more importantly to understand what foundational elements needed to be there for a change programme like that to succeed. In the last two organisations I worked in, I assessed that some of these foundational elements were missing or were underdeveloped and decided to start building those before considering embarking on such an ambitious and challenging journey.

This understanding of the phenomenon of coaching cultures was context-specific and I wanted to widen and test my emerging practitioner "theory" by researching the evidence base of coaching cultures. I was concerned by the lack of theoretical frameworks that underpin coaching cultures. The SLR was an attempt to take a "neutral", almost clinical stance to the evidence that had been produced but it became nuanced and messy because of the various methodologies and conceptualisations of coaching culture that exist.

I see myself both as an insider and outsider researcher in this research. Insider because I am "like" my participants in terms of professional identity and experience and outsider because I am outside my participants' contexts and lived experience. The implications of balancing an insider and outsider researcher viewpoint and how that has interacted with my participants and my data became more present in the second study. Being a practitioner with similar professional background and experience with my participants gave me a compassionate and empathetic stance. Some of these interviews felt comfortable and the language familiar, but it was challenging when a participant would invite me to comment or take position.

I was also conscious of how I might influence my participants and how my participants influenced me and my choices during the analysis and generation of themes. As a white, middle aged, male researcher I might project and evoke certain preconceptions and privileges. All my participants were women and while for me that amplified the feeling of familiarity and comfort I had - I grew up in a seemingly patriarchal, macho society in Greece but, as a gay boy, I was under the protection of many women in my family and that has influenced my relationships with women in my professional life, managers, directors, colleagues - my participants did not necessarily have access to this part of my social identity.

Some of my participants I knew professionally and admired so I had to be aware of how that influenced the way I related to their accounts during the analysis stage (e.g., halo

effect). Participants who might have had access to my views about the subject, either by reading my published case study or heard me talk at conferences, might have offered socially desirable responses.

During interviews I was conscious of listening attentively to all points, of my secondary questions, my own reactions, verbal or non-verbal. I took a curious approach to all accounts, and I was conscious not to encourage a particular position I had about the subject and confirm a personal view. I noticed my reactions when something described was close to my experience and when it was not in line with my experience. Some of these became evident when I was familiarising myself with the data and listening back to accounts.

The research findings reflect my views of organisational culture and how that happens and my own perspective of coaching values. In the process I continually challenged myself about the choices I made especially in how I constructed my themes and what I shed light on over other themes.

I have deep seated values of empowerment and developing others and I wanted to give voice to the practitioner perspective, a community I'm part of and I identify with. But I was conscious that there would be hidden spots because of how that community coalesces around similar values. The opportunity to engage in co-construction of knowledge with them was a big part of my motivation.

Because of these considerations, I felt I needed to have an even more heightened awareness of my assumptions and understand the role they might play as I interact with my participants, my data, my sense of self and identity. The reflexive elements of journaling and as part of the analysis gave space for these assumptions to surface. This surfacing felt at times freeing and creative: a dance between myself, my participants, and my data and the outcome was like a construction that was both familiar and new.

Chapter 3: Systematic Literature Review

Coaching Culture: An Evidence Review and Framework for Future Research and Practice

In chapter 1, coaching culture was positioned in the extant literature and the research aims of this thesis were clarified. The first step in unpacking the research aim of understanding coaching cultures is to explore what we know about this phenomenon applying a systematic methodology, as introduced in chapter 2. In this chapter, a systematic literature review methodology is applied to synthesize definitions of coaching cultures and their building blocks as they emerge from academic peer-reviewed research.

3.1 Introduction

'Coaching culture' has been a widespread construct in both practitioner and academic literature for several years (e.g., Clutterbuck et al., 2016; Clutterbuck & Megginson, 2005; Hawkins, 2012; Passmore & Crabbe, 2020). Yet, the extant literature is inundated with various definitions, models, and frameworks with opaque antecedents and organisational outcomes. Practitioners tend to be interested in applicable frameworks whereas academics have veered towards managers' perceptions of coaching cultures (Milner et al., 2020). The former tends to have little testing or evaluation whereas the latter entail limited perspectives, both of which beg the question – what exactly is this 'coaching culture' that practitioners and academics aspire to create? We seek to explore this question and contribute by pointing out the lack of clarity in the extant literature vis-à-vis the building blocks of said 'coaching culture' and urge for multi-stakeholder research to extend holistic understanding of the principles, values, and behaviours that facilitate a 'coaching culture'.

3.1.1 Towards a definition of 'coaching culture'

The extant literature is prolific with various definitions, all based on different theoretical frameworks (or no theoretical foundations at all). In what seems to be the only

literature review of 'coaching cultures' to date, Gormley and van Nieuwerburgh (2014) propose the following definition:

> 'A coaching culture exists within an organisation when it has embedded a coaching approach as part of its strategic plans in a transparent way. Coaching cultures should motivate individuals and facilitate cooperation, collaboration and connection within the organisation and with its external stakeholders' (p.99).

This definition highlights the potential of coaching cultures to generate connectedness and collaboration in organisations. Hawkins (2012) alternative definition takes a systemic view of 'coaching culture' in that:

> 'it exists in an organisation when a coaching approach is a key aspect of how the leaders, managers, and staff engage and develop all their people and engage their stakeholders, in ways that create increased individual, team and organisational performance and shared value for all stakeholders' (p. 21).

Despite increasing academic and practitioner work on "coaching cultures," little empirical research has been done to explore the nature of coaching cultures (Clutterbuck et al., 2016; Milner, et al 2020). Lack of an agreed definition makes synthesizing research findings challenging. Moreover, the definitions proposed so far fail to highlight the interconnectedness of organisational stakeholders in manifesting a 'coaching culture' and how these influence the organisation and create patterns, as seen from a Complex Adaptive System (CAS) lens (e.g. Clutterbuck et al., 2016; O'Connor & Cavanagh, 2013). This brings us to our first argumentation regarding the necessary building blocks of 'coaching cultures', that is, that coaching cultures are mainly understood through the manager's perspective and fail to consider the rich interactions of all stakeholders.

3.1.2. Coaching cultures understood mainly through manager-as-coach perspective

The dominant coaching intervention in academic research is the development of managers/leaders as coaches. Some focus exclusively on the coaching style of management as the main vehicle to developing a coaching culture (McCarthy & Milner, 2013, 2020; Milner et al., 2018, 2022). While we appreciate the benefits that arise from training

managers to develop coaching skills, we contend that this view focuses only on managerial relationships and does not take into account other stakeholders and their interrelationships (e.g., peers, coaches, teams, and formal and informal networks) that are crucial to the development of coaching cultures. Moreover, the manager-turned-coach premise takes a far too transactional lens to the development of organisational cultures, which we argue is problematic because it ignores the role of informal social networks (Huning et al., 2015) that play an important role in developing organisational culture.

Some early research has also focused on the development of internal coaches within organisations as a sustainable model to offer a coaching service and at the same time effect cultural change. The evidence on the effectiveness of this strategy is not conclusive (Gormley & van Nieuwerburgh, 2014) but there are some benefits observed, such as containing cost but more importantly the fact that internal coaches who have internalised the organisational values and behaviours can embed them into their coaching interactions (McKee et al., 2009).

3.1.3. Limited understanding of (evaluated) organisational outcomes and interventions

A considerable body of knowledge has now been developed on the effectiveness of coaching. However, there is little evidence on organisational outcomes. Research has mainly focused on the effectiveness of coaching on individuals. There is now good evidence that coaching works in the areas of goal attainment, resilience, and wellbeing (Grant et al., 2009). Meta-analyses have also showed that psychologically informed coaching interventions facilitate effective work-related outcomes, such as learning, performance, psychological wellbeing, and goal directed self-regulation (Theeboom et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2021) including a recent meta-analysis based on randomised control trials (de Haan & Nilsson, 2023). There is also some initial empirical evidence on the effectiveness of different types of coaching used in organisations, such as executive, leadership, managerial, team, group, and peer coaching. Research on outcomes, especially organisational outcomes that have been evaluated are, however, rare. They are mainly observed in organisational case studies and practitioner research, and link coaching cultures to increased innovation and collaboration for example (e.g., Gormley & van Nieuwerburgh, 2014; Leonard-Cross, 2010).

Moreover, there is even less evidence on the impact of coaching interventions on the development of cultural norms at the organisational level. This seems to be an area within coaching effectiveness research that is severely overlooked (Grover & Furnham, 2016).

The underlying assumption is that change from coaching at the individual level translates seamlessly to positive organisational changes, which is of course, simply not an accurate reflection of the messiness inherent in organisational realities. There is also an assumption that coaches support leaders to inspire cultural change within their organisations (Gormley & van Nieuwerburgh, 2014), but we have little understanding how and if that actually translates into organisation-wide cultural outcomes. In other words, research studies in the effectiveness of coaching have adopted a linear model of "flow-on effects" or ripple effect (O'Connor & Cavanagh, 2013), which we argue is too simplistic an interpretation of organisational life.

3.1.4. Current models and frameworks require further testing

Given the popularity of coaching, the extant literature is inundated with models and frameworks that promise to create effective coaching cultures. Prominent theoretical development models describe the stages of development (Clutterbuck et al., 2016; Hawkins, 2012; Knowles, 2022b; Passmore & Crabbe, 2020). For example, Clutterbuck et al.(2016) and Clutterbuck and Megginson (2005) propose four stages of development: nascent, tactical, strategic, and embedded, and they developed a questionnaire to help practitioners assess progress towards the development of a coaching culture. Hawkins (2012) presents four stages of development: ad hoc coaching driven by individuals, managed coaching driven by a champion or sponsor, proactive coaching aligned to business need and strategic coaching driven by the talent strategy of the organisation, and suggests three foundational pillars to the development process: 1. development of a coaching strategy, 2. alignment with the wider organisational culture change and 3. creation of a coaching infrastructure with external and internal coaching provision. Passmore and Crabbe (2020) have developed their comprehensive LEAD coaching framework that integrates four zones for development from leadership coaching to coaching for all through internal coaches, management coaching and finally a distributed coaching approach across boundaries that includes stakeholders and

partners and offer a practical implementation and evaluation tool for organisations. These models, supported by cases studies, are helpful in elucidating some of the processes that might be inherent in developing a coaching culture, and further research is required to test and validate these propositions empirically.

3.1.5. The present study

We extend the literature review by Gormley and van Nieuwerburgh (2014) in two ways: first, by conducting a Systematic Literature Review (Briner & Denyer, 2012) and testing it against the attributes for critical literature reviews (Saunders & Rojon, 2011); and second, we focus on the evidence linked to the conditions required for the development of coaching cultures, the interventions being used to develop coaching cultures, the organisation level outcomes, and how progress is measured. An up-to-date literature review is a timely inquiry because of the continued and extended use of coaching in organisations (Crowley & Overton, 2021). This work will be of benefit to organisational development and human resources practitioners, coaches, coaching psychologists, and leaders across organisations interested in maximising the benefits of their investment in coaching interventions to impact on organisational-level behavioural and cultural outcomes.

The primary research question guiding this study is, what is known about coaching cultures in organisations? The sub-questions are:

1. How are coaching cultures defined?
2. What are the antecedents?
3. What are the interventions that are being used to develop coaching cultures?
4. What are the organisational level outcomes?
5. How do we measure change or progress towards the development of coaching cultures?

3.2. Method

The review was guided by the systematic review principles as outlined in Briner and Denyer, (2012) and followed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and

Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 guidelines (Page et al., 2021). It is also informed by the attributes of critical literature reviews developed by Saunders and Rojon (2011).

3.2.1. Search Strategy

The search strategy was developed following a review of the literature and consultation with the research team and a subject librarian. To identify the relevant articles, a computerised search was conducted of the following databases: Psycinfo, Scopus, EBSCOhost Business Source Premier and ProQuest using the following search parameters: (work OR organi* OR employ*) AND (coach*) AND (culture OR organi* culture OR corporate culture OR culture change OR organi* change OR organi* development). These search terms were used in the four separate database searches that were conducted on 28 May 2022. The search was restricted to peer reviewed research articles published from 2014 to May 2022.

Inclusion / Exclusion Criteria. The SPIO (study design, participant population, interventions, outcomes) framework (Robertson et al., 2015), has been used as a framework to determine the criteria for considering studies. Research on coaching cultures is in a developing stage, therefore any empirical type of study set in an organisational context was of interest. Both qualitative and quantitative studies were reviewed. Studies that adopt any definition of coaching culture and workplace populations from any sector were included in the review. All interventions designed and delivered for individuals, teams or groups in organisations were of interest. These may include individual, executive or leadership coaching, team and group coaching, leader as coach, internal and external coaching, and other organisational development programmes. The purpose needed to be to develop or change culture. Similarly, the outcomes needed to relate to impact on organisational or culture change. Searches were also limited to English language, peer reviewed only, and since Gromley and van Nieuwerbugh's (2014) review.

See Table 3.1 for a full overview of inclusion and exclusion criteria that were used to select papers at all stages.

Table 3.1

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Study design	• All empirical research both quantitative and qualitative • Explores intervention/s in organisations • Case studies	• Non empirical studies (purely theoretical or descriptive / no thought or opinion pieces) • Non-intervention studies • Dissertation (PhD) theses that study Coaching Cultures • Books or conference proceedings on Coaching / Organisational Psychology
Participant population	• Adult population (age 18+) • Any sector or country	• <18 years of age • Student populations
Intervention	• Coaching designed for/delivered to individual / teams / groups in organisations • Purpose is to develop or change culture / organisational culture outcomes	• Counselling / Health / Sports coaching interventions
Outcomes	• Includes outcome measures/target variables in which the intervention aims to achieve organisational or culture change	• Individual level outcomes

• Time period: Publication from 2014 onwards (previous literature review was published in 2014 – see rationale below)
• Publication: English language, peer reviewed

3.2.2. Selection of Papers for Inclusion

The papers that were retrieved from the database searches were subjected to a sifting process using the inclusion/ exclusion criteria in table 3.1. Duplicates were removed and the remaining titles were reviewed against the inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure all relevant and valid articles were included and excluded within the review. An independent review of a random 10% selection was undertaken by the second reviewer. An inter-rater reliability check using Cohen's Kappa coefficient was conducted on this selection to ensure consistency of application of the selection criteria. Cohen's Kappa coefficient was 0.62 which indicates substantial agreement between the two reviewers. The selected abstracts

were then reviewed by one reviewer and the ones that met the inclusion criteria (or require review of full paper to determine) were selected. A sample of 10% of abstracts were reviewed by the second author and an inter-rater reliability assessment was conducted. Cohen's Kappa coefficient was 0.7 indicating substantial agreement.

The selected papers were read in full by one reviewer and subjected to a screening process using the inclusion and exclusion criteria (see table 3.1). Those retained for inclusion were reviewed by a second reviewer and disagreements discussed. A third reviewer was consulted to resolve disagreements. A "pearl growing" exercise where citations and reference lists of the retained papers were mined to identify any other relevant papers that have been omitted by the searches. These were subjected to the same review process.

3.2.3. Data extraction and analysis

Data from the retained papers were extracted using the fields from the matrix method (Judith, 2004) The data extraction tool was also informed and adapted from other systematic review papers (e.g., Robertson et al., 2015). Fields included study purpose, study design, method, population or participant details, intervention used, findings and outcome measures as well as contextual information, such as sector and country. The extraction was undertaken by one researcher and reviewed by a second researcher for consistency. A third researcher adjudicated any discrepancies.

A narrative systematic extraction (Doyle & McDowall, 2019) was then used against the research questions by extracting narrative study findings on the definitions of coaching culture used or proposed, antecedents, interventions, outcomes and measures used. This involved identifying and transferring study findings using an approach agreed by the reviewers to minimize error and by keeping a record of the decisions made about the data.

3.2.4. Data synthesis

Findings are presented in a narrative format (Robertson et al., 2015) using the Narrative Synthesis method (Popay et al., 2006). This involved one reviewer conducting a

preliminary synthesis by developing and tabulating themes and then using an iterative method of review and revision to explore further relationships. A second researcher then reviewed the synthesis for consistency of interpretation. Discrepancies were discussed and a third reviewer conducted a final review of the developing narrative themes and how they were synthesised to assess the robustness of the synthesis.

3.2.5. Quality Assessment

Studies were critically appraised in relation to the dimensions identified in the Systematic Mixed Studies Reviews framework (Hong & Pluye, 2019). This framework was selected because it has been developed to address the challenges inherent in reviews that combine quantitative and qualitative evidence. Hong and Pluye (2019) provide a framework for assessing quality for both quantitative and qualitative evidence against three dimensions: methodological, conceptual, and reporting quality. Each paper's evidence was assessed by two reviewers independently against these dimensions using yes/no/can't tell. The evaluation of overall quality of each paper (quality rating) was based on the following scoring system of 'yes' responses: high (scores 6 -7), medium (4 -5), low (scores 2-3) very low (scores 0-1) (Appendix D). The reviewers discussed discrepancies and a third researcher resolved disagreements. The research team then developed quality evaluation tables using the agreed quality scores against evidence statements. (Appendix E)

3.3. Findings

The database searches retrieved 1,453 papers. Duplicates were removed (333 papers) leaving 1,120 papers for review. The number of papers selected for the next stage was 441. Abstracts of all these papers were reviewed against the criteria leaving 42 papers for the third sifting stage, the full paper review. All 42 selected papers were reviewed against the inclusion and exclusion criteria to decide which would be included in the SLR. The "pearl growing" exercise did not yield any further papers leaving nine papers for inclusion in the review – see Figure 3.1

Figure 3.1

Flow Diagram Showing Search and Retrieval Process According to Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA).
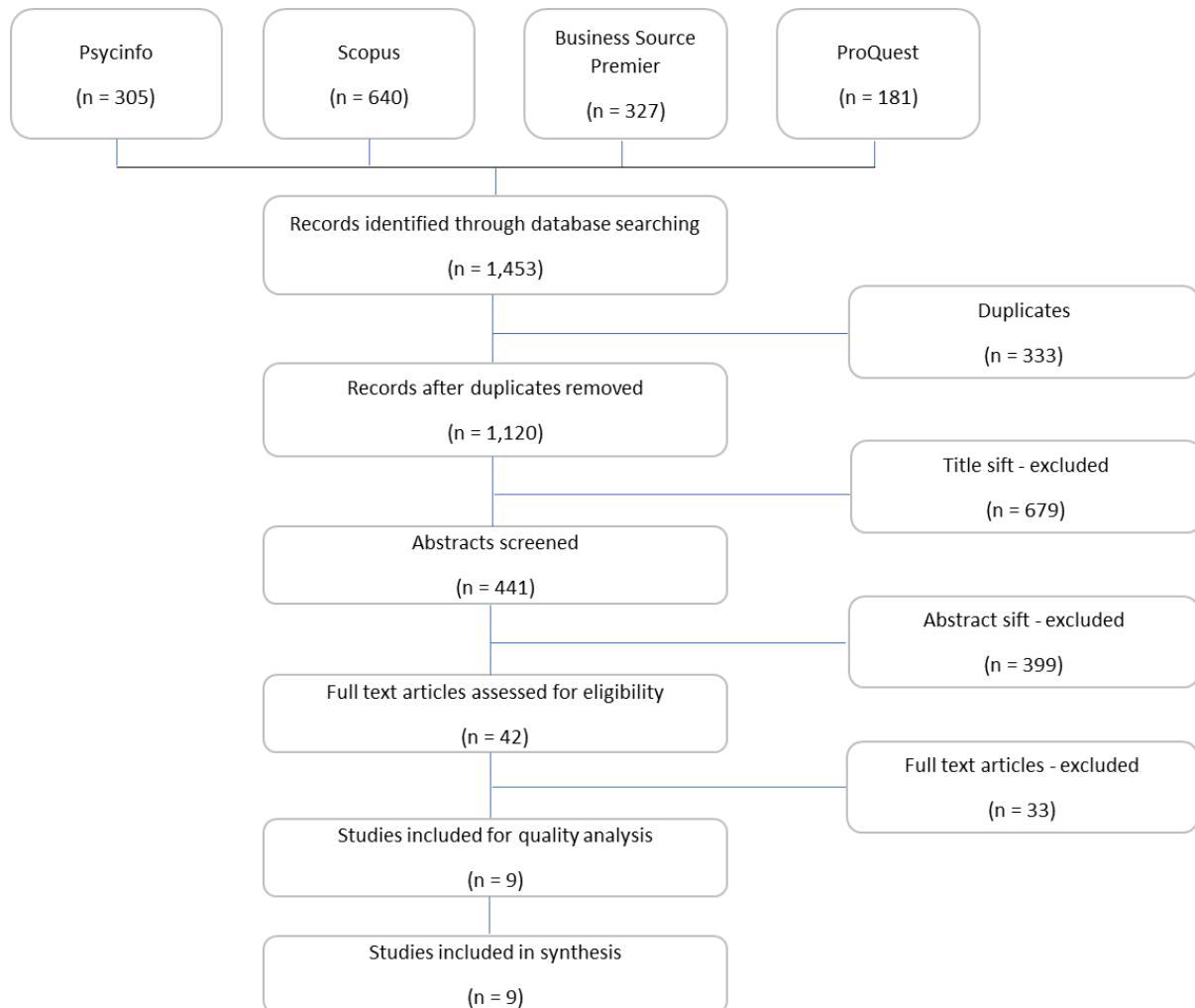
Nine papers (Anthony & van Nieuwerburgh, 2018; Boysen et al., 2021; Hamilton, 2019; Lawrence, 2015; Milner et al., 2020; Rosha & Lace, 2018; Sarsur & Parente, 2019; Vesso, 2014; Vesso & Alas, 2016) were selected to be included in this review. The primary focus of seven of these nine papers (Anthony & van Nieuwerburgh, 2018; Boysen et al., 2021; Hamilton, 2019; Lawrence, 2015; Milner et al., 2020; Vesso, 2014; Vesso & Alas, 2016) was "coaching cultures" in organisations. Two of the nine papers (Rosha & Lace, 2018; Sarsur & Parente, 2019) were focused on the coaching process and were included because they provided extended and explicit insights on the development of coaching cultures.

3.3.1. Study characteristics

Study. Six of the nine papers (Anthony & van Nieuwerburgh, 2018; Boysen et al., 2021; Hamilton, 2019; Lawrence, 2015; Milner et al., 2020; Sarsur & Parente, 2019), utilised a qualitative design, three of which (Boysen et al., 2021; Hamilton, 2019; Lawrence, 2015) were case studies. The remaining three papers (Rosha & Lace, 2018; Vesso, 2014; Vesso & Alas, 2016) conducted quantitative studies.

Four papers (Anthony & van Nieuwerburgh, 2018; Hamilton, 2019; Lawrence, 2015; Sarsur & Parente, 2019) used qualitative design and employed interviews as their methodology; two (Boysen et al., 2021; Milner et al., 2020) employed surveys with open ended questions. The three papers that utilised quantitative design, used scaled and multiple-choice questionnaires.

Thematic analysis was used by five of the six qualitative papers (Anthony & van Nieuwerburgh, 2018;Boysen et al., 2021; Hamilton, 2019; Lawrence, 2015; Milner et al., 2020), content analysis by one (Sarsur & Parente, 2019), whereas the quantitative studies used ANOVA and t-tests (Vesso, 2014; Vesso & Alas, 2016) and correspondence analysis (biplots) (Rosha & Lace, 2018).

Participants. Sample sizes for the qualitative studies ranged from 20 participants to 794. Studies that have used interviews as their methodology ranged from 20 to 30 participants, whereas those who used a survey qualitative methodology ranged from 108 to 794. The studies that employed quantitative survey questionnaires had population sizes from 75 to 399. The total number of participants examined by all studies is 2,234.

The majority of the participants, n= 1384, (62%) were managers, followed by employees at all levels, n= 374, (17%), leaders, n= 332, (15%), and finally coaches or coaching experts, n= 95 (4%). Exploring in detail the populations that were included in these studies is key to our understanding of the perspectives of the stakeholders that informed the findings from the included papers and highlight gaps.

Contextual information. Geographically, there is considerable heterogeneity in these studies in terms of the country in which they were conducted. Two studies were conducted in Australia (Lawrence, 2015; Milner et al., 2020), USA (Boysen et al., 2021; Hamilton, 2019) and Estonia (Vesso, 2014; Vesso & Alas, 2016) respectively and one study in Latvia/ Lithuania (Rosha & Lace, 2018), Portugal (Sarsur & Parente, 2019) and the UK (Anthony & van Nieuwerburgh, 2018). .One case study (Lawrence, 2015) draws from a multinational organisation with presence in Australia, USA and Asia, however, the participants are from the Australian head office.

There is a variety of organisations represented in the studies from both the private and public sector. Sectors include education, third sector (charities), financial services, and they are of various sizes, from small and medium-sized businesses to large enterprises. One organisation is international with presence in Australia, USA and Asia. The key characteristics of the papers reviewed can be found in table 3.2.

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Table 3.2

Study Characteristics

No.	Paper	Study			Population		Contextual information		
	Author and year	Study design	Methodology	Analysis	Sample (n)	Participants details	Country	Location	Sector
1	(Anthony & van Nieuwerburgh, 2018)	Qualitative	semi-structured interviews - responsive interviewing	Thematic analysis	n = 20	Leaders: Headteachers and Deputy Headteachers	UK	Open - same sector	Education - schools
2	(Boysen et al., 2021)	Qualitative (case study)	survey work culture (scaled questions and open-ended questions)	Thematic analysis	n = 108	Employees: all levels	USA	In-house research	Charity
3	(Hamilton, 2019)	Qualitative (case study 1)	Interviews Intervention / training programme	Thematic analysis (post intervention metrics)	n= 794	Managers	USA	In-house	financial services holding company
		Qualitative (case study 2)			n=30	Leaders: Commercial Market Executives			
4	(Lawrence, 2015)	Qualitative (case study)	Interviews (3 times at six-month post intervention intervals)	Thematic Analysis (Systemic evaluation)	n = 25	CEO, senior exec team x 5, exec direct reports x 10, other staff x 9	Australia	In-house	Multinational org (Australia, USA and Asia)
5	(Milner et al., 2020)	Qualitative	Online survey - open-ended questions/ free text comments	Thematic analysis	n=580	Managers and HR Managers	Australia	Open	Australian private and public organizations of 200+ employees
6	(Rosha & Lace, 2018)	Quantitative	Questionnaire survey - closed multiple choice and closed-ended importance questions	Correspondence analysis (biplots)	n = 75	Coaches and coaching clients (70% executive coaches)	Latvia and Lithuania	Open	Various (unspecified)
7	(Sarsur & Parente, 2019)	Qualitative	Bibliographic research and semi structured interviews	Content analysis	n = 20	Coaching experts and experienced coaches	Portugal	Open	Various (unspecified)
8	(Vesso, 2014)	Quantitative	Questionnaire survey using "Coaching Culture Characteristics" (3C model) Vesso, 2014	ANOVA - T-tests.	n= 399	Leaders = 196 Team members = 154	Estonia	Open	Various sectors: • large enterprises = 59 • small businesses = 176 • state-owned = 59 • medium-sized = 61
9	(Vesso & Alas, 2016)	Quantitative	Questionnaire surveys using "Coaching culture characteristics in leadership style" (3C model) (Vesso, 2014) and the "Leaders' impact on culture" (LIC model) (Vesso, 2015)	ANOVA and T-tests. Linear regression and correlation analyses	n = 183	Leaders = 80 Team members = 103	Estonia	Open	Various sectors: • large enterprises = 42 • medium-sized = 41 • small businesses = 33 • state-owned = 67

3.3.2. Definitions of Coaching Culture

All papers, except one (Lawrence, 2015) provide, reference or produced definitions of coaching culture. Synthesis revealed the following common themes and descriptors:

Theme	Descriptors
Intent	• implement and sustain organisational change • people and performance management; organisational management • paradigm for organisational culture; organisational development model
Implementation	• use of multiple types of coaching • coaching becomes preeminent way of leading and managing • development conversations at all levels; coaching becomes ingrained in organisational life
Outcomes	• Individual or team performance; realizing potential • organisational performance

Table 3.3 outlines the coaching culture definitions used or referenced by each paper against these themes.

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Table 3.3:
Definitions of Coaching Culture

Paper	Definition of Coaching Culture	Intent			Implementation			Outcome	
		organisational change	people and performance management	organisational culture; OD model	use of multiple types of coaching	preeminent way of leading and managing	development conversations at all levels	individual or team performance	organisational performance
(Anthony & van Nieuwerburgh, 2018)	'A coaching culture exists in an organization when a coaching approach is a key aspect of how the leaders, managers, and staff engage and develop all their people and engage their stakeholders, in ways that create increased individual, team, and organizational performance and shared value for all stakeholders' (Peter Hawkins, 2012, p. 21)	Y				Y		Y	Y
(Boysen et al., 2021)	'A coaching culture is achieved when developmental conversation is taking place at all levels of an organization and when an organization prioritizes active listening and supporting individuals to realize their full potential…. … It requires specific behaviour and a focused mindset throughout an organization' (Author's definition)	Y	Y				Y		
	'A coaching culture within an organization also is exemplified through Behaviours, Mindsets, emotional grounding and motivational roots' (Peter Hawkins, 2012)			Y					
(Hamilton, 2019)	'… coaching would become the preeminent way of leading and managing throughout the organization' (Author's definition)					Y			
(Milner et al., 2020)	'A coaching culture can be defined as the consistent use of multiple types of coaching across and at all levels of an organization, using a formalized process that includes provision of appropriate training and resources, involvement of top management, clear communication of the benefits of coaching, and alignment with organizational values such as ownership, empowerment, collaboration, respect, innovation, and learning' (Author's definition)		Y		Y		Y		

Table 3.3: Definitions of Coaching Culture (continued)

Paper	Definition of Coaching Culture	Intent			Implementation			Outcome	
		organisational change	people and performance management	organisational culture; OD model	use of multiple types of coaching	preeminent way of leading and managing	development conversations at all levels	individual or team performance	organisational performance
(Rosha & Lace, 2018)	'Behavioural change within the organisational change opens a number of opportunities for coaching as a tool in implementing and sustaining change' (Stober, 2008)	Y							
	'… coaching can add value to organizational change facilitating management development beyond individual and team levels' (Rosinski, 2011)	Y				Y		Y	Y
(Sarsur & Parente, 2019)	'… an organizational management concept based on "coaching culture," that is, with the perspective of policies and practices for people management that involve greater openness to feedback, participation in decision-making and analysis of employees' potential, instead of the traditional performance evaluations. Coaching would be, in this sense, a practice inspired by collaboration, by openness to listen to people and treat them in a more humanized way'. (Author's definition)		Y	Y					
(Vesso, 2014)	Coaching Culture Characteristics (3C model) (Author's model) a. The strength of the involvement, consistency, responsibility, collaboration in the team created by the leader; b. Coaching oriented behaviours and goal orientation; c. Relationship orientation and teamwork norms; d. Trust and distribution of decision-making		Y	Y			Y		
(Vesso & Alas, 2016)	Coaching Culture Characteristics (3C model) (Author's model above)		Y	Y			Y		
	'A coaching culture is a paradigm for organizational cultures in which coaching takes place on a formal and informal basis and has been ingrained in the fabric of organizational life' (Hart, 2005).			Y			Y		
	'A coaching culture is an organizational development model that provides the structure that defines how the organization's members can best interact with their working environment, and how the best results are obtained and measured. A coaching culture needs the discipline of building a shared vision, learning and a desire for personal mastery to realize its potential' (Bawany, 2015).		Y	Y			Y		

3.3.3. Antecedents

Six papers reported on antecedents or foundational elements to the development of a coaching culture. Thematic analysis revealed nine key factors (See table 3.4). Four of these factors, top leadership buy-in and involvement; formalised processes; coaching-style management capability and dialogic processes, were identified by more than one paper. The following five factors have been identified by one paper each: consistent use of multiple types of coaching across and at all levels; clear communication of the benefits of coaching; alignment with organizational values (Milner et al., 2020); the purpose of the coaching programme needs to be aligned to strategy (Lawrence, 2015) and a culture of trust and openness and a learning culture need to exist before a coaching culture can be realised (Rosha & Lace, 2018).

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Table 3.4

Antecedents

Paper	Antecedent/ Foundational Element								
	Top leadership buy-in and involvement	Formalized and planned process that includes provision of training and resources	Coaching-style management / mindset is an important capability of leaders and people managers	Employment of dialogic processes to shift organisational identity and culture	Consistent use of multiple types of coaching across and at all levels	Clear communication of the benefits of coaching	Alignment with organisational values	Purpose of the coaching programme needs to be aligned to strategy	A culture of trust, openness and a learning culture need to exist
(Anthony & van Nieuwerburgh, 2018)	Y		Y						
(Hamilton, 2019)	Y	Y	Y						
(Lawrence, 2015)				Y				Y	
(Milner et al., 2020)	Y	Y			Y	Y	Y		
(Rosha & Lace, 2018)	Y								Y
(Sarsur & Parente, 2019)				Y					

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3.3.4. Interventions

Thematic analysis revealed five main interventions that organisations use to develop coaching cultures as summarised in Table 3.5. Executive coaching and leaders/ manager as coach development have been used or referenced by four of the six studies (Boysen et al., 2021; Hamilton, 2019; Lawrence, 2015; Milner et al., 2020) that used interventions whereas coaching skills training is referenced by two (Vesso, 2014; Vesso & Alas, 2016), team coaching is referenced by one study (Vesso & Alas, 2016) and the development of internal coaching capability by one study (Milner et al., 2020).

Intervention characteristics

Only two studies described the characteristics of the interventions employed to develop a coaching culture (Hamilton, 2019; Lawrence, 2015), both using a case study qualitative design. The first case study (Hamilton, 2019) describes two interventions. First, a foundational coaching skills programme for all managers in one organisation based on a solutions-focused coaching model developed by the researcher. The programme was designed to teach the coaching model to increase the frequency and quality of coaching conversations in the organisation and embed coaching behaviours into the organisational culture. The programme encompassed several learning modalities (pre-work, one-and-a-half-day workshop that included role playing and feedback, an action plan for each participant, a post-programme assignment and reinforcement, facilitated by access to a leader's toolbox). Second, a leadership development programme with a series of one-day leadership workshops spread over an 18-month timeline. The workshops utilised several learning modalities and tools, e.g., psychometric testing (Hogan Leadership Survey and Leadership Versatility Index® (LVI) 360 Survey), coaching practice and peer coaching groups, change models and reflective exercises.

The second case study (Lawrence, 2015) also used two interventions as part of a two-year programme:

(1) executive coaching programme to 15 members of a senior leadership team with the aim to "cultivate the constructive behaviours required to deliver long term sustained performance": the programme comprised seven sessions: one initial two-hour coaching session and debrief followed by six 60mins sessions. Nine coaches were selected using the

following criteria: senior management experience, formal coaching, and behavioural science qualifications.

(2) managers coaching skills workshops: they comprised four modules delivered as two one-day workshops and scheduled 4-6 weeks apart. Each workshop was delivered to 6-10 participants The modules covered the GROW coaching model (Leach, 2020), listening, asking questions, giving feedback, managing emotions and resistance. Fifty people attended a workshop delivered by the author and the OD manager of the organisation.

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Table 3.5

Interventions

Paper	Interventions				
	Executive / 1:1 coaching/ leadership development (external)	Leader/ manager as coach development	Coaching skills training	Team and group coaching	Developing internal coaching capability
(Boysen et al., 2021)	Y	Y			
(Hamilton, 2019)	Y	Y			
(Lawrence, 2015)	Y	Y			
(Milner et al., 2020)	Y	Y			Y
(Vesso, 2014)			Y		
(Vesso & Alas, 2016)			Y	Y	

3.3.5. Organisational outcomes

Seven outcomes were found to have been explored by the studies included in the systematic literature review, presented in Table 3.6. Each of these outcomes has been identified by one study only, apart from engagement, positive communication and consultation, which has been identified by two.

3.3.6. Measures

Four measures were used in five of the papers to measure coaching culture: Coaching Culture Characteristics in Leadership Style model (3C model) was used in two papers (Vesso, 2014; Vesso & Alas, 2016); Leader's Impact on Culture" (LIC model) (Vesso, 2014), a work culture survey (Boysen et al., 2021) and an engagement survey (Hamilton, 2019) as presented in Table 3.7.

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Table 3.6

Outcomes of Coaching Culture

Paper	Outcomes						
	Attraction and retention of high potential individuals	Engagement / Positive communication and consultation	Positive and supportive environment	Performance	Problem solving	Growth / empowerment	Culture change
(Anthony & van Nieuwerburgh, 2018)			Y				
(Boysen et al., 2021)		Y					
(Hamilton, 2019)		Y		Y	Y	Y	
(Lawrence, 2015)							Y
(Milner et al., 2020)	Y						

Table 3.7

Measures of Coaching Culture

Paper	Measures			
	Coaching Culture Characteristics in Leadership Style model (3C model)	Leader's Impact on Culture" (LIC model)	Work Culture Survey	Engagement Survey
(Boysen et al., 2021)			Y	
(Hamilton, 2019)				Y
(Vesso, 2014)	Y	Y		
(Vesso & Alas, 2016)	Y			

3.4. Quality assessment

The results of the quality assessment for each paper against the quality criteria / dimensions identified in the Systematic Mixed Studies Reviews framework (Hong & Pluye, 2019) showed that six out of the nine papers received a "medium/high" quality rating and two studies had a "medium" rating and one a "low" rating.

The average quality scores were considered against the evidence statements in order to inform conclusions. All evidence identified in this review presents initial evidence, apart from: the employment of dialogic processes as an antecedent and culture change as an outcome that both present unclear evidence.

3.5. Discussion

3.5.1. What is known about coaching cultures?

The rising popularity of the term "coaching culture" is evident through the increase in peer reviewed papers since the Gormley review in 2014. For example, the papers that were returned from PsycINFO on the search terms "coaching culture" increased from 29 papers in 2014 to 305 papers in May 2022 and from 37 papers in 2014 to 327 papers in 2022 from Business Source Premier. This is in keeping with the increase in popularity of the term coaching culture in academic and practitioner literature (e.g., Clutterbuck et al., 2016; Clutterbuck & Megginson, 2005; Hawkins, 2012; Passmore & Crabbe, 2020) and practitioner conferences, podcasts or publications.

Yet, whilst the term coaching culture is readily used in peer reviewed papers and popular press, it lacks an empirical foundation. In some cases (e.g., Boysen et al., 2018; Edwards et al., 2016; Grant, 2017; Woods, 2016), papers explored coaching and its effectiveness for individual-level change with an expressed assumption that these changes bring changes in organisational culture, therefore contributing to the development of a coaching culture, a finding that was also discussed at the Gormley and van Nieuwerburgh (2014) review. However, the position that "just as coaching changes people, it similarly changes organisations" (Gormley & van Nieuwerburgh, 2014), is loosely based on secondary

evidence to explain this relationship, for example through engagement survey and employee feedback (Woods, 2016) or measures of job satisfaction (Edwards et al., 2016).

The studies that emerged through the systematic review are from a variety of journals on coaching, management, behavioural science, etc reflecting the multi-disciplinary and theoretical grounding of coaching as a profession and the growing interest from the academic community to examine coaching in all its forms and expand its usage. This also indicates the multidisciplinary approach that is needed to explain the nature of coaching cultures bringing together the professional foundations of coaching, organisational culture, leadership and management, and organisational development. Understanding the perspectives of the various practitioner stakeholders, their theoretical positions, their role, and how they interact in the development of coaching cultures will potentially offer richer insights.

3.5.2. The need for a clear and shared definition of coaching culture

This review, similar to the 2014 review, has highlighted that we still have *no clear and shared definition* (Gormley & van Nieuwerburgh, 2014) of the term coaching culture. There are many definitions and understandings of the construct resulting in lack of conceptual clarity, making research challenging. In terms of this review, it was challenging to synthesise findings emerging from heterogenous methods, which led to the employment of a narrative synthesis methodology (Popay et al., 2006).

The coaching culture definitions used in the included papers, start developing a systemic viewpoint seeing coaching culture as part of a wider system of organisational development strategies (Boysen et al., 2021; Milner et al., 2020; Vesso, 2014; Vesso & Alas, 2016) that involve coaching conversations at all levels (Boysen et al., 2021; Milner et al., 2020) and have an impact on organisational performance (Anthony & van Nieuwerburgh, 2018; Rosha & Lace, 2018) .

A comparison of the common themes that emerged from the 2014 and this review is showing that there is good congruence in how definitions describe the strategic intent of coaching cultures. The themes that are the same in both reviews are that the development

of coaching culture forms part of a wider and holistic people and organisational management or development strategy or plan. Comparing the themes on <u>implementation</u> shows that this area has expanded to describe how a coaching approach can become ingrained in conversations at all levels and not confined to the line management relationship. This is in line with earlier definitions (Clutterbuck et al., 2016; Hawkins, 2012; Passmore & Crabbe, 2020). Finally, the themes around benefits or <u>outcomes </u>point to improved performance at all levels, individual, team and organisational.

3.5.3. Initial evidence on the building blocks of coaching cultures needs further research

Foundational Elements. This systematic review demonstrated that there is some initial evidence on three antecedents of coaching cultures: leadership buy-in, coaching style management, and formalised process but there remains unclear evidence for the fourth antecedent (i.e., use of dialogic processes). These seem to be foundational elements and necessary conditions for the development of coaching cultures. The role of leadership as sponsorship or promoter appears as a necessary condition in organisational change or development frameworks (e.g. Kotter, 2012) and has been widely explored in a recent literature review by (Mansaray, 2019).Comparing these to the themes identified in the 2014 review, there seems to be congruence in these main foundational elements adding to our confidence in these findings.

Interventions. The review identified the five main interventions that organisations use to develop coaching cultures (i.e., executive, leadership, 1:1; team, group coaching; developing internal coaches; leader/ manager as coach development) but did not wield evidence that supports their role, contribution, or effectiveness in changing organisational culture.

The focus on the leader/manager perspective is not surprising and reflects the dominant view linking leadership and organisational culture (Giberson et al., 2009) including that coaching cultures have been explored mainly as a management style (McCarthy & Milner, 2013, 2020; Milner et al., 2018, 2022). It, therefore, corresponds to the prominent view of coaching culture as a leadership/management style and the role that managers play

in establishing and reinforcing cultural elements and ways of working (Kane-Urrabazo, 2006).

The second intervention, the development of internal coaches, is only explored by one study (Milner et al., 2020) in this review. The 2014 review explored this as a main vehicle for developing coaching cultures and provided evidence that this intervention has clear benefits. This discrepancy might indicate a potential gap between practice and empirical research in this area.

Both interventions, leader-as-coach development, and development of internal coaches, are seen as organisational development strategies where coaching behaviours are employed by those who have received the training or development in coaching in their interactions. These behaviours then get embedded in everyday interactions and processes making these interventions a sustainable model for organisational culture change and performance improvement (Clutterbuck et al., 2016; Hawkins, 2012).

Team and group coaching are being explored by one of the papers (Vesso & Alas, 2016) signifying potentially a new area of development. Team and group coaching have seen increasing popularity and recent literature and research has focused on the effectiveness of the intervention on team or group development objectives and their individual members (Hastings & Pennington, 2019; Hawkins, 2022; R. Jones, 2022). Further research on how these interventions impact on the development of coaching cultures would be provide richer insights into the way coaching behaviours become embedded in team, group and organisational cultures.

To conclude, there is still a gap in our understanding of how different types of coaching or coaching approaches contribute to the development of a coaching culture, and how effective they are individually, or which combinations of interventions work more effectively together to impact organisational culture. Organisational development approaches underpinned by coaching principles are not mentioned or examined in the included papers. These could include dialogic organisational development (Bushe, 2013) approaches and interventions that focus on the group or organisation as the "unit" of change and are rooted in coaching principles. Finally, the review highlighted a gap in research that explores the perspective of the "enacting" (Knowles, 2022b) stakeholders (i.e., organisational developers

and coaches). Their perspectives would provide a richer understanding because they have first-hand experience of developing coaching programmes and would have employed a number of these interventions in their careers. Including their experience and "voice" will add a different and nuanced perspective of these interventions and their contribution in developing coaching cultures.

Outcomes. The organisational outcomes that have been identified by this review provide interesting insights into the outcomes of coaching culture programmes. There is little evidence on the impact of coaching interventions on organisational level outcomes, such as performance or engagement, and less so on the development of cultural norms. This is still an area within coaching effectiveness research that has been omitted by research, as was also identified by Grover and Furnham (2016). It is an area that requires further exploration and as the research on the effectiveness of coaching develops will unlock some of the questions that remain unanswered.

Measures. The popular models or measures of progress towards the development of coaching culture (e.g. Clutterbuck & Megginson, 2005; Hawkins, 2012) were referenced but not used in the papers included in this review. One author has developed two models (Vesso, 2014; Vesso & Alas, 2016). The Coaching Culture Characteristics in Leadership Style (3C model) helps organisations plot their progress against the models' stages of development. The second, Leader's Impact on Culture (LIC model), looks at the leaders' impact on culture. The 3C model seems to provide a potentially useful frame to explore coaching cultures through, however, it has not been used and/ or tested since by further independent research. Other measures explored are work culture or engagement surveys. Whilst these do not offer a specific measure for coaching cultures, individual items in these surveys have been grouped together to offer a measure for the purposes of specific organisational case studies.

The absence of an agreed or widely used measure is not surprising due to the absence of agreed definitions or agreement on any of the building blocks of coaching cultures. The current models or measures have some obvious points of convergence especially in viewing the development of coaching culture through maturity stages. Whilst they need further validation, as the authors themselves suggest (Megginson & Clutterbuck,

2006a), they provide useful frameworks for practitioners and researchers and offer a holistic and systemic view of coaching culture, and the interventions and mechanisms by which it develops over time.

Figure 3.2 presents the evidence produced by this review.

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Figure 3.2

What is Known About Coaching Cultures: Summary of Findings

Definition

- Intent: organisational (culture) change or development
- Implementation: multiple types of coaching, through coaching conversations, leadership and management coaching approach
- Outcome: individual, team and organisational performance

Antecedents

- Top leadership buy-in and involvement
- Formalized and planned process - training and resources
- Coaching-style mindset is an important capability of leaders and managers
- Dialogic processes to shift organisational identity and culture

Interventions

- Executive / 1:1 coaching/ leadership development (external)
- Leader/ manager as coach development
- Coaching skills training
- Team and group coaching
- Developing internal coaching capability

Outcomes

- Attraction and retention of high potential individuals
- Engagement / Positive communication and consultation
- Positive and supportive environment
- Performance
- Problem solving
- Growth / empowerment
- Culture change

Measures

- Coaching Culture Characteristics in Leadership Style model (3C model)
- Leader's Impact on Culture" (LIC model)
- Work Culture Survey
- Engagement Survey

3.6. Limitations and Implications for Practice and Future Research

This review highlighted some fundamental gaps that exist in our understanding of coaching cultures through empirical research:

- There is no agreed definition of coaching culture. Despite a decade of progress, similar to the Gormley and van Nieuwerburgh (2014) review, we found that the term 'coaching culture' has been understood in different ways. Part of the problem is that researchers tend to work in disciplinary silos, but this topic (and many others) necessitates a multi-disciplinary collaborative exploration that brings together perspectives from coaching psychology, organisational psychology, coaching, business, human resources, and organisational development to name a few.
- Empirical studies have explored singular perspectives and mainly that of the manager as coach. This means that whilst there has been some initial evidence on the role of the manager, there is a gap in our understanding of other stakeholders more specifically, professionals involved in the development of coaching culture programmes. This gap for further research was also identified by Milner et al. (2020). Bringing together the perspectives and experiences of stakeholders will unlock further our understanding of coaching cultures as a social phenomenon influenced and shaped by each stakeholder and their interactions.
- There is no explicit evidence of the behavioural or cultural patterns underpinning coaching cultures that are grounded in the experience of these stakeholders. Further multi-stakeholder / practitioner research to explore these patterns is required to advance our understanding of the complex and still ambiguous phenomenon of coaching cultures.

We chose to only include peer reviewed articles to specifically understand the scientific evidence regarding coaching cultures and future research would benefit from including practitioner and/or commercially developed research. We recommend a systematic "grey" literature review that would include practitioner research, conference papers, and case studies, as well as research on the perspectives and experiences of

practitioners working in coaching culture programmes to enrich and further our understanding of coaching culture.

The development of an agreed definition, possibly through Delphi studies with experts in the field of coaching culture would facilitate further research and practice. Finally, further research on the practical application of existing models, would help us understand the nature of developmental stages of coaching cultures.

In parallel to progressing towards a common definition and expanding the review of evidence, research would need to address the gaps identified by this review. There is a need to bring together a multi-stakeholder view of coaching culture programmes. To this end, research would need to focus on the experience of stakeholders: leaders, practitioners, managers as coaches and organisational members and stakeholders. Focusing on the practitioner experience, would fill the gap in research identified by this review and would unlock a different perspective in developing coaching cultures. As there are no agreed definitions or models, a qualitative research design with research questions such as, how are coaching cultures developed, what role various stakeholders play in their development and explore their experience in service of widening our view of this phenomenon in organisations.

Further research is also required to strengthen the evidence for the building blocks of coaching cultures identified in this review. To this end, we contribute by producing the first "blueprint" of what is known about coaching cultures through academic, peer-reviewed, research. Recognising that this is still initial evidence, practitioners can utilise this blueprint framework (figure 3.2) as a checklist or prompt to use with other stakeholders to co-create coaching culture programmes for their organisations. The framework offers a number of decisions that need to be clarified in the early stages of designing a coaching culture programme. It prompts practitioners to clarify the intent, desired outcomes and measures of evaluation, to assess organisational readiness in terms of antecedents, and choose interventions that are appropriate and culturally sensitive for their client organisation.

3.7. Conclusion

In conclusion, this review demonstrated that there is still little empirical research into the phenomenon of coaching cultures. We are therefore not much more advanced in our understanding of coaching culture since the last review in 2014. The review identified a number of gaps in our understanding of coaching cultures and provided a first "blueprint" framework on the building blocks of coaching culture based on academic, peer reviewed research.

The next chapter aims to address these gaps identified by the review by exploring the experience of enacting practitioners in developing coaching cultures and the cultural characteristics they are built upon.

Chapter 4: Empirical Study

A Coaching Culture Definition Based on the Enacting Practitioner Perspective

The Systematic Literature Review, presented in the previous chapter, aimed to synthesize the extant evidence on coaching cultures. The review established that despite the popularity of the term, very little is known about the phenomenon of coaching cultures. It concluded that most of our understanding comes from the perspective of the leader or manager but the voice of the practitioner has been less explored. It also identified a gap in explicit evidence of cultural patterns that underpin coaching cultures.

In this chapter, these gaps are addressed with a qualitative study that examines the experience of organisational development and coaching practitioners who work in or with organisations to develop coaching cultures. This is a crucial next step in our exploration of coaching cultures as it adds the missing practitioner perspective to our understanding of this phenomenon and unpacks the assumptions, values and behaviours that underpin it.

4.1. Introduction

"Coaching culture" has become a popular term to describe the deployment of coaching interventions with the intention to develop organisational culture. Various definitions and models have been developed and despite the term's widespread use, there is no agreed shared definition (Kapoutzis et al., 2023). Early definitions present the defining feature as coaching behaviour (Hart, 2005) or working style (Clutterbuck & Megginson, 2005) but more recent definitions offer a systemic view focusing on multiple cultural aspects. These may include a coaching approach being integral to leadership, management, stakeholder, or customer engagement (Hawkins, 2012) or the explicit embedment of a coaching approach in strategic plans facilitating connections within and outside the organisation:

A coaching culture exists within an organisation when it has embedded a coaching approach as part of its strategic plans in a transparent way. Coaching cultures should motivate individuals and facilitate cooperation, collaboration and connection within the organisation and with its external stakeholders (Gormley & van Nieuwerburgh, 2014, p.99).

Gormley and van Nieuwerburgh (2014), and more recently Kapoutzis et al. (2023), identified several common themes across definitions of 'coaching culture'; these are synthesised in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1
Common and Consistent Themes Relating to Coaching Culture Definitions.

Theme	Gormley and van Nieuwerburgh (2014)	Kapoutzis et al. (2023)
Strategy / Intent	• Coaching demonstrates a clear commitment, is integral in people and organisational development practices	• Coaching forms part of organisational (culture) change or development strategy
Process / Implementation	• embedded within existing performance management and feedback processes of organisations	• multiple types of coaching, through coaching conversations, leadership and management coaching approach
Benefits / outcomes	• indications that coaching can create increased performance within organisations with rewards for staff, stakeholders and clients	• benefits manifest in individual, team and organisational performance

Various models have been offered to describe the development process giving practitioners useful insights into maturity stages that build up to create embedded, mature coaching cultures. Some emphasise the levels of coaching interventions' maturity in organisations (e.g., from informal and external coaching to coaching as a management style and embedded within and beyond organisational boundaries (Passmore & Crabbe, 2020; Passmore & Jastrzebska, 2011; Whybrow & O'Riordan, 2021). Others describe how

commitment to coaching approaches move from ad hoc, to managed or tactical to coaching becoming a strategic enabler (Clutterbuck et al., 2016; Hawkins, 2012; Megginson & Clutterbuck, 2006b). A more recent proposition describes the maturity of coaching from intervention to HR function to leader capability and finally embedded in culture (Knowles, 2022b).

These models have been mostly developed through organisational case studies and offer high face validity as they are grounded in organisational experience. They provide practitioners with practical tools to develop plans or evaluate coaching culture programmes. However, further independent empirical research would help validate these models and how they can be applied in organisations.

Despite the increase in the deployment of coaching in organisations and the development of coaching culture programmes, little empirical evidence exists on how these are developed or benefit organisations (Clutterbuck et al., 2016; Knowles, 2022; Milner et al., 2020). Indeed, both Gormley and van Nieuwerburgh (2014) and Kapoutzis et al. (2023) contend that our understanding of coaching cultures is still in its infancy. The little existing evidence comes from research focusing on individual or team interventions rather than organisational outcomes or effectiveness or from research that delves into singular stakeholder perspectives when the phenomenon of coaching culture or any type of organisational culture is a social construction.

4.1.1. Outcomes

Research on coaching effectiveness is prolific and substantial evidence now exists that links coaching to goal attainment, resilience, (Grant et al., 2009) and wellbeing, learning, performance, and goal directed self-regulation (de Haan & Nilsson, 2023; Grant et al., 2009; Theeboom et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2021). This provides the business case for organisations to invest in developing their leaders and their people, but little is known about the benefits that may occur at the cultural fabric of an organisation. Some research links coaching interventions to increased innovation and collaboration (e.g., Gormley & van Nieuwerburgh, 2014; Leonard-Cross, 2010) and this comes from secondary research or organisational case studies. There is also some initial but promising evidence on the distal

outcomes of coaching (O'Connor & Cavanagh, 2013) and this is an area of research that would progress the debate on coaching culture even further.

4.1.2. Stakeholder perspectives

There are several stakeholder roles that interact in organisations to embed coaching cultures. Scholars in the field have identified a number of roles that contribute to coaching cultures such as the CEO, Director of Human Resources, professionals in Leadership and Management Development, Coaching and Organisational Development, internal coaches, external coaches, managers, coach trainers, etc. (Hawkins, 2012). Whybrow and O'Riordan, (2021) identify three distinct roles: senior sponsors, internal change agents, and external partners such as coaches or consultants. Finally, a more recent categorisation by Knowles (2022) distinguishes roles as the enacting stakeholders (i.e., organisational leaders and developers of people, such as coaches and managers), from the receiving stakeholders (i.e., organisational members and external stakeholders) (Gormley & van Nieuwerburgh, 2014; Hawkins, 2012; Passmore & Crabbe, 2020).

The perspective of the manager has been explored through research on interventions that aim to develop managers as coaches. This seems to be the dominant intervention employed to develop coaching culture and some evidence is linking managers adopting a coaching approach with increased engagement (Crabb, 2011), improved performance (Agarwal et al., 2009) or empowerment (Fong & Snape, 2015). The perspective of the manager has also been explored in defining coaching culture characteristics (Milner et al., 2020). The evidence from practitioner or academic research comes mainly from the perspectives of managers (McCarthy & Milner, 2013, 2020; Milner et al., 2018, 2022) and leaders (Anthony & van Nieuwerburgh, 2018), but other stakeholder perspectives have been less explored.

The other intervention organisations use more and more is to develop internal coaches through qualification programmes that sees organisational members develop a coaching practice that they offer on top of their substantive roles. Although the evidence is not conclusive (Gormley & van Nieuwerburgh, 2014), these programmes have been seen as a cost-effective way to promulgate coaching as an approach in organisations with the added

benefits of internal stakeholders supporting the application and embedding of corporate values and behaviours (McKee et al., 2009) whilst they develop a new professional skill.

Alongside the perspective of the manager, some evidence exists on the role of the leader in introducing coaching cultures (Anthony & van Nieuwerburgh, 2018), the role of the leader to champion and role model coaching behaviour (Clutterbuck & Megginson, 2005; Hamilton, 2019; Milner et al., 2020) and some initial evidence on the views of "receiving" (Knowles, 2022) stakeholders (Boysen et al., 2021).

Practitioners' experiences have been explored as part of organisational case studies that have informed books on coaching culture but there is a clear gap in academic research that delves into the perceptions and experiences of practitioners who develop coaching cultures in organisations (Kapoutzis et. al, 2023). Hawkins (2012) notes how those working in Organisational Development have become more "relevant because of their role in developing strategy, leadership engagement, organisational agility and culture change" (p. 8) whereas Clutterbuck, et. al. (2016) calls them "the unsung heroes of coaching culture" (p. 185).

Finally, there is little shared understanding of the fundamental normative elements (e.g., behaviours, values and assumptions (Schein 2010)) that underpin coaching cultures. Practitioners in enacting roles play a pivotal "change agent" role, as interpreted from a complex adaptive systems perspective (Eoyang, 2001; R. D. Stacey, 1996a), in establishing cultural norms in organisations. Therefore, understanding the behaviours, values and assumptions these practitioners hold and facilitate the embedding of, would offer access to these elusive cultural foundations of coaching cultures.

4.1.3. Study aims

This study aims to respond to these gaps by inquiring into the perspectives of the enacting stakeholders (i.e., organisational leaders and developers), in order to explore how they sense-make coaching cultures and the behaviours, values and assumption that underpin them.

Primary research question:

- How are coaching cultures developed?

Secondary research questions:

- What role do enacting stakeholders play in developing coaching cultures?

- What are the behaviours, values and assumptions that underpin coaching cultures?

- How are coaching cultures defined?

4.2. Method

4.2.1. Design

The study employed a qualitative interview design to explore participants' experience of coaching culture development; the data were analysed with reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2019, 2021, 2022), used inductively and underpinned by a critical realist onto-epistemological framework (Braun & Clarke, 2022b). Within this framework, the data is regarded as a "*mediated reflection*" of the participants' situated realities, interpreted through cultural context and language (Braun & Clarke, 2022b).

Ethical approval was granted by Birkbeck, University of London Ethics Committee. Semi-structured interviews were chosen as most suited to inquire into the less explored perspective of organisational development practitioners and coaches' experience of working in or with organisations that implement coaching culture programmes. The interview topic areas and schedule were developed to provide insights to the research questions (Willig, 2013). The schedule served as a frame rather than a rigid set of questions to encourage participants to talk about what was important to them (Appendix F). The schedule followed the question format developed by Anthony and van Nieuwerburgh (2018), who explored leaders' experiences of coaching cultures and contains three topic areas:

Table 4.2

Interview Topic Areas

1. Participants experience of coaching cultures	Questions to elicit participants experience in coaching culture development
2. Incidents or examples that exemplify (or not) coaching culture	Questions to elicit critical incidents that demonstrate positive and negative examples of coaching culture
3. Consolidation of experience and role and conceptualization of coaching culture	Questions to elicit reflexivity on practitioner role, conceptualization and sense-making of coaching culture

4.2.2. Participants

To take part in the study participants needed to have worked in or with organisations in the United Kingdom (UK) that use coaching to develop the organisation or have coaching cultures programmes. These could come from any of the following areas of practice: coaching (in an internal or external capacity), organisational development, human resources, organisational or business psychology, consultancy, coaching psychology, etc.

The population was conceptualised around the following characteristics which formed the recruitment inclusion criteria:

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Table 4.3

Criteria for Recruitment

Participant Group	Role Category	Role description	Examples
A	Organisational Developers	responsible for strategy, and building coaching programmes	organisational development or human resources practitioners, organisational psychologists, consultants
B	People Developers	responsible for implementation	external or internal coaches, coaching psychologists

Recruitment of participants was done initially via purposive convenience sampling (Robinson, 2014) because of the specialised experience required (see Appendix A: Information Sheet for Participants). Subsequent participants were recruited with snowballing (Handcock & Gile, 2011) where participants nominated others from their networks to take part in the study. This allowed the researcher to reach out to a wider pool of practitioners who met the criteria.

A total of 20 participants (see table 4.4) met the criteria for recruitment in table 4.3 (participant group A n=10, participant group B n=10). All participants were women, which is line with gender representation statistics in the HR/OD profession and the occupation's "feminine image" (Ainsworth & Pekarek, 2022; Reichel et al., 2020).

Pseudonyms were assigned to them and the cultural heritage (fourteen from white British background, four from British Asian or mixed ethnic background and two European) is reflected in the number of names selected from each heritage but does not correspond directly to the participants' heritage to protect anonymity.

Participants worked in a variety of sectors and the average years of coaching experience was 15.3 years ranging from 5 years to 28 years. Their current role was used to determine their participant group recognising that their experience was rich and encompassed experiences gained from other roles.

Table 4.4

Participants

Pseudonym	Group	Current role	Previous or secondary role	Years of experience	Sector
1. Annie	B	Coach (internal)	Academic	10	Higher Education
2. Bryony	A	OD Professional	Coach (internal and external)	21	Charities; Higher Education
3. Carol	B	Coach (external)	Supervisor (OD lead)	21	Various: Financial services; Education; Healthcare
4. Diana	A	OD Professional	Coach (internal)	25	Higher Education / Housing Associations
5. Evelyn	A	OD Professional	Coach (internal)	12	Higher Education; Healthcare (NHS)
6. Freya	A	OD Professional	Coach (internal)	15	Charities; Higher Education
7. Georgia	A	OD Professional	Coach (internal)	7	Higher Education; Charity
8. Ingrid	B	Coach (external)	Coach (internal) & OD Professional	13	Higher Education; Housing association
9. Jenny	A	OD Professional	Coach (internal)	5	Local authority
10. Kapila	A	OD Professional	Coach (internal)	14	Higher Education; Health (NHS); Legal Services
11. Laura	B	Coach (external)		25	Various: SMEs; start-ups; Financial Services; Higher Education; Retail - global brands; pharmaceutical; consultancies; biotech.
12. Mona	B	Coach (external)	OD Professional; HR Director	23	Healthcare (NHS); Higher Education; Banking; Legal sector; Third sector - Charities
13. Norah	B	Coach (external) OD Consultant		28	Housing; Financial Services; Charities; Membership Organisations; Media
14. Oprah	B	Coach (internal)	OD Professional	24	Higher Education
15. Prisha	B	Coach (external)	L&D Professional	5	Media; Technology startups; Professional Services (Training and Consultancy)
16. Rita	A	OD Professional	Coach (internal)	18	Higher Education, Healthcare (NHS)
17. Stella	A	OD Professional	Coach (internal)	10	Banking; Retail
18. Tina	B	Coach (external)	Academic	10	Higher Education; Financial Services
19. Vicky	B	Coach (external)	HR / L&D Professional	5	Professional Services (Training and Consultancy)
20. Zsofia	A	OD Professional	Coach (internal)	15	Further Education; Higher Education

4.2.3. Data generation and analysis

Data generation was done by NK as research for his Professional Doctorate with primary supervisor LW and secondary supervisors JY and RL. NK is an Organisational and Coaching Psychologist and has held OD and internal coach roles similar to some of the participants' roles.

Interviews were conducted via Microsoft Teams between January and April 2023 and lasted between 45 and 60 minutes. Interviews were recorded and transcribed using the Microsoft Teams functionality. Transcripts were checked and edited where errors in automatic transcription were observed.

Reflexive Thematic Analysis (TA) (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2019, 2022b, 2022a) was chosen to analyse the data due to the Big Q (Braun & Clarke, 2022b), exploratory nature of this study and the underlying intention to give voice to the unexplored practitioner perspective. Reflexive TA is suited to the generation of common themes and patterns of meaning from qualitative data and reflects the active role of the researcher in engaging reflexively with the data and story crafting themes. (Braun & Clarke, 2022b)

Analysis was informed by a critical realist (Braun & Clarke, 2022b) perspective to explore and interpret semantic (descriptive) and latent (conceptual) meaning practitioners have developed through their experience. Data analysis was guided by Braun and Clarke's (2006, 2019, 2021, 2022) positioning of reflexive TA and followed the six phases of analysis they recommend in a recursive and iterative process:

Phase 1. Data Familiarisation: Analysis started by first watching and then listening only to each participant interview a few times to become familiar with the data; initial notes were made (refer to Appendix G: initial notes from interviews). During this process of listening to participant accounts' over and over again, multiple times, nuances in the data became more evident, this helped to reach a deeper understanding for each of the participant's stories, more so than during the interview. A journal was used to make notes of reflections on statements that felt interesting or important, things that felt familiar and things that were new – even noticing reactions whilst listening to these accounts again.

Phase 2. Coding: The process started with generating initial codes from the transcripts using the Delve platform (see Appendix H). Codes were generated based on what, in the researcher's opinion, carried meaning. Sometimes this involved going back to the recording to check understanding through the actual voice of the participant to capture both the meaning and spirit of each quote. Codes were semantic and latent (Braun & Clarke, 2022b) reflecting the participants accounts of their own experience. The researcher's own reactions to the data were noticed, what felt familiar or surprising whilst keeping reflective notes throughout the process. This process was time consuming; it felt unstructured and chaotic at times but layered with a strong sense of responsibility to the participants and what they chose to share as important part of their experience.

Phase 3. Generating Initial Themes: This stage involved noting down patterns of shared meaning between participants. Codes were moved around in Delve and grouped in initial preliminary themes (see Appendix I.1). Some themes, such as the stakeholders' underpinning experience of coaching (see Appendix I.2), felt more robust than others, in that there was a clear unifying central concept that underpinned the codes. For others, the central concept did not feel as strong, for instance in the critical moments participants shared that affected the development of coaching cultures, these were held lightly and remaining open and curious.

Phase 4: Developing and Reviewing Themes: At that point there were too many themes (approx. 12 – see Appendix J) to form a coherent story grounded to the data. Some themes that the researcher became attached to, had to be reconsidered in order to rebuild the story still grounded to the data and that showed clearly each theme's contribution. This involved going backwards and forwards between transcripts, the codes, and the reflective notes to help the researcher understand what was meaningful and important to synthesize and include in relation to the research questions.

Phase 5: Refining, Defining and Naming Themes: Thematic synopses were generated with themes, subthemes, and quotes that supported the essence of the theme and its underlying concept. The themes were changed and refined over time with definitions and names through discussion and a reflective supervision/ coaching process with LW and then further with JY and RL (see theme synopsis with example quotes at that stage, in Appendix

K). A thematic map was also generated during this phase to visualise the relationship between the themes (see Appendix L) which informed the next phase of writing.

Phase 6: Writing up: Further refinement of themes took place during the write up of theme reports, for example, the theme about coaching cultures being developed through a network of interventions was initially pointing to both a planned and emergent approach but it has been refined to bring out the emergent nature of culture change. The sub-theme structure was removed as it was not adding anything meaningful to the narrative and the nuances within each theme were integrated into the main discussion of that theme. The final theme structure was therefore made up of four themes and is presented in table 4.5 in the results section that follows. Links were made to literature that offered opportunities to further reflect on the interpretation of the themes and their applicability and usefulness for academics and practitioners interested in coaching cultures.

4.2.4. Researcher reflexivity in relation to analysis process

At all stages of the data generation and analysis process, the researcher's own subjectivity and reflexivity (Gough & Madill, 2012) was regarded as a valuable resource when interviewing, coding, theming, and exploring shared meaning among the participants' stories and relating that to his own experience as researcher practitioner who played similar roles in organisations as them. The researcher was conscious of the ways he shaped and impacted on the research by relating to his own phenomenology and unpacking awareness and assumptions of his own experiences. That led him to engage with the participants and the data in a curious and empathetic way. For example, he engaged with his own experiences and assumptions when participants described critical moments of success or challenge that felt familiar or when organisational politics or leadership influence were identified as confounding factors.

A thorough analytical process was used, as discussed in the previous section and reflective notes and workings of the researcher's process were kept. During the whole process, the researcher had to move in and out of an "insider" and "outsider" position (Le Gallais, 2008) and "catch" his assumptions at each position as a valuable resource to the

analysis process. Insider position because he shared experience in the field but outsider as experience is subjective and situated in the participants' context.

4.3. Results

Exploring the careers of the participants, it became evident that, as they moved roles during their careers across the professional disciplines, the group categorisation was not as clear cut as initially envisaged. For example, all participants identified as coaches (internal or external), which makes coaching as the experiential underpinning of the population. That also meant that there was substantial convergence in their accounts making differentiation between the two groups less meaningful.

Through the analytic process a structure of four themes was developed. The four intersecting themes (see table 4.5) unpacked are: 1. "it flows through the veins of the organisations"; 2. "more powerful than anything else is having that one-to-one time"; 3. the roadmap emerges, and 4. a means to an end and an end in itself. These themes are presented as "assumptions" or cultural patterns that practitioners hold, grounded in how they make sense of their experiences of working in or with organisations that use coaching to impact organisational culture.

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Table 4.5
Thematic Synopsis

Theme	Unifying central assumption	Description
1. "It flows through the veins of the organization"	A coaching approach is embedded in "the way things are done around here"	Coaching cultures are organisational "containers" where a coaching approach is embedded in organisational artefacts, people processes and interactions, underpinned by principles of psychological safety and empowerment.
2. "More powerful than anything else is having that one-to-one time"	Coaching is a powerful intervention, and you need to experience it to believe in its power to deliver development and change.	Coaching cultures are grounded in first-hand experience of coaching, which fuels practitioners' passion for coaching, leaders' commitment to champion coaching and the promulgating role of communities of coaching practice in organisations
3. The roadmap emerges	Coaching cultures are developed by a network of interventions that emerge through circumstance	Coaching cultures support wider organisational aims and utilize a network of interventions that emerge, adjust and respond to organisational or external changes.
4. A means to an end and an end in itself	Coaching culture is a change process, but it can also describe a destination.	Coaching impact is obvious at the individual or team level but less obvious at the organisational and cultural level. It is a change process but describing the destination focuses organisational effort.

4.3.1. Theme 1. "It flows through the veins of the organisation".

Participants articulated an organisational environment and culture where a coaching approach is embedded in "the way things are done around here" (Carol), a commonly used phrase as a shorthand definition for organisational culture. A coaching approach is one that reflects the principles, values, assumptions, and overall philosophy that coaching practice is based on.

Participants referred to visible organisational "artefacts" that refer to coaching explicitly or align to a coaching approach. These could be strategy documents, frameworks that support attraction, recruitment, or performance management, such as competency frameworks or performance criteria. For example, Rita mentioned that coaching is "a cross-cutting theme in their People Strategy". Prisha and Vicky explained that coaching and "coachability" is embedded in the competency framework that prospective employees are assessed against during the selections process. This is then continuously reinforced in performance and development conversations, 360-degree feedback reviews and underpins the "culture of feedback" (Prisha) that exists in their organisation. Another participant described artefacts as visible manifestations of the culture: "… you see it on paperwork, you'd see it in the structure with roles [coaching champions or ambassadors], you'd see it being demonstrated by leadership and management (Annie).

A coaching approach is also embedded in leadership and management development programmes (Evelyn), with coaching skills development; in learning workshops (Georgia) with individual or group coaching-based exercises; in appraisal or career development conversations (Prisha, Evelyn) in the form of guidance notes or questions that act as prompts in appraisal forms or workshops or to wider performance frameworks built to encourage "positive performance conversations" (Rita).

Embedding a coaching approach in frameworks is however not enough and a coaching approach needs to be experienced in behaviours in order to infiltrate the culture. This concept of "embeddedness", when it comes to behaviours or cultural patterns, was articulated by participants in the form of metaphors or expressions, such as "it's in the fabric of the institution (Kapila); "coaching had become part of the currency and the language" (Ingrid); "it gets embedded into the psyche of leaders and managers" (Kapila);

"you need to live and breathe it" (Evelyn); "coaching conversations happening in the flow of our work" (Rita); and that becomes "the secret sauce to company culture and positive company environments". (Vicky). It is about "helping people to be more comfortable, to be transparent and authentic with each other because then that would flow through the veins of the organisation" (Carol).

Two distinct sets of principles, values and behaviours that underpin coaching cultures were constructed through participants' stories, *psychological safety for genuine inquiry* and *learning and growth through empowerment*.

The concept of psychological safety describes the first cultural pattern of behaviours, values and assumptions that is constructed through participants stories. The underlying assumption is that like coaching itself, coaching cultures create "spaces" for genuine inquiry where it is safe to question and challenge. "A coaching culture is a psychologically safe culture" (Vicky) where there are high levels of "trust" (Freya, Ingrid) across the organisation or at team level: "We role model the positive aspects of having open conversations… it couples with a sense of psychological safety and a curious, compassionate mindset … there is an openness to trying different ways of asking questions and sharing thoughts" (Rita)

A psychologically safe culture gives permission to people to voice their views and ideas and becomes a shared organisational learning behaviour grounded on principles of non-judgment and openness to learning by taking risks. Operating in an embedded coaching culture "feels very safe … people can trust that their feedback will be heard, and that action will be taken" in contrast to a setting where a coaching culture is absent: "people didn't feel able to share their feedback, to share their concerns, to share their ideas even. … conversations could be quite confrontational because it was you versus me rather than us, together, looking at a problem from the same values, from the same beliefs" (Vicky).

Participants described a setting where colleagues "embody coaching as a mindset" (Evelyn) that is expressed in behaviours such as: "listening more in depth" (Georgia), "posing things as questions rather than directives or fait accompli" (Evelyn), "questioning and being curious" (Freya, Georgia), "respectful, where you can learn from trial and error" (Georgia). They juxtaposed that setting with an environment where there is "no trust, no vulnerability, which often becomes dysfunctional and traumatic" (Jenny)

The role of the practitioner and the leader then becomes that of holding a "non-judgmental" (Evelyn) frame, a psychologically safe space for these conversations to happen. A thinking space for constant inquiry where questioning assumptions is encouraged and that creates "a compassionate, caring and supportive culture" (Tina).

The second cultural pattern constructed from the participants accounts is that of learning and growth, which is enabled by the first pattern of psychological safety and is amplified by strong values and practices of empowerment. It is underpinned by the "underlying belief that we are capable" (Vicky) and assumptions such as "seeing others as adults with the solutions already within their gift" (Evelyn) and "everyone is able to thrive, understand their worth and their value, and feel empowered" (Jenny). This then "drives top performance where innovation and experimentation can thrive" (Stella) as exemplified by the following account of a line manager's approach to when things went wrong:

> They only had two questions: how do you think that went, which is immensely powerful and empowering …and what would you do differently next time. There was no blame so then you could take risks and you could risk being high performing (Ingrid).

Participants articulated an environment where "you're constantly developed in a positive way and expected to have an appetite to develop" (Vicky). An environment that encourages "ongoing learning, evolution and growth, with an orientation towards strengths and reciprocity" (Vicky) and with a "strong feedback mechanism" (Prisha). Participants described the inherent power of coaching to empower others and this is replicated in coaching cultures through leadership or colleague behaviours such as: "reading the room to draw out the strengths" (Evelyn) where the leader "puts learning front and centre " (Mona) where discussions are about "possibility and progress" (Georgia) and where there is "generosity of spirit" (Kapila) where leaders and colleagues give time and space to enable other people's learning and growth.

There was also a strong sense from participants of the role of coaching cultures to give voice and "encouragement" (Tina) and empower underrepresented groups. This can be seen in the aspiration behind coaching culture programmes to offer "a coaching experience to all" (Ingrid, Oprah) rather than just the top of the organisation as it was traditionally

offered through executive coaching. It was also presented through specific interventions that are part of the roadmap to get to a coaching culture, such as coaching or development programmes specifically designed to empower women, (Kapila, Vicky, Bryony) or minority ethnic groups (Kapila, Tina, Zofia,). Participants were motivated by coaching's potential "to do social good, to add social value" (Tina): "what drove me was empowering individuals to make a positive change" (Kapila).

4.3.2. Theme 2. "More powerful than anything else is having that one-to-one time".

The underlying assumption that underpins participants accounts is that coaching is a powerful intervention, and you need to experience it to believe in its power to deliver development and change. This belief fuels practitioners' motivation to initiate coaching culture programmes in their organisation, the leaders' commitment to role model and champion a coaching approach and the connection that bonds communities of coaching practice.

> We can pay thousands of pounds for people to go on amazing courses, but actually that one to one interaction, it does make such a difference to people … it is so powerful, more powerful than anything else having that one-to-one time… it's hugely rewarding (Kapila).

A theme that connects the participants stories is personal experience with coaching, either being coached, coaching others, developing their own coaching practice or getting inspiration from others on the proposition of coaching cultures.

All participants are coaches and operate either in an internal capacity alongside their organisational development or learning and development roles or as independent coaches. Participants, especially those in organisational roles describe their positive experiences in vivid terms and how it transformed them and their practice.: "… once I did my coaching qualification, I was utterly in love with it …and I really enjoyed studying and I enjoy coaching and I really value being coached (Zsofia).

> I think coaching is so powerful, and it has certainly been for me… because I've been coached and that made me realize a number of things which I would never have

thought about in terms of my own potential, in terms of my confidence, in terms of how to work through issues (Freya).

Oprah shared the story for how she introduced the idea of a coaching culture to her organisation. She was already "really passionate" about coaching and studied for a postgraduate practice-based coaching qualification. She went to event where a known scholar in the field spoke about developing a coaching culture and "thought it was phenomenal" and motivated her to research and establish how this proposition would help deliver her organisation's new strategy and the new leader's vision: "So, I made a big business case, got the funding and we established an external coaching bank that would help us experience good quality coaching and... to develop some internal coaches so that more people can experience coaching" (Oprah).

Participants in internal roles positioned their role at the start of their journey, as the "architect" (Stella) and expressed their desire to promulgate this way of working. They become evangelists for coaching because of their passion for it, which is based on personal experience and that makes them a critical change agent to "pollinate" coaching behaviours in their settings: "coaching helped me considerably in a number of things in my career, my personal life... It was really powerful and it's something I would like to mirror for other people" (Freya). At the start it is seen as a skill that they use in their interactions and their practice but as they go through their life-long development as coaches it becomes more about "who I am, how I am, how I be, something I'm striving for ... to be in the room for people to experience it from me in the moment" (Oprah).

The importance of leadership buy-in, commitment and role modelling of coaching behaviours was commented on by all participants: "I truly believe that the culture of an organisation is created top down and it trickles down" (Vicky). Some placed emphasis on the role of leadership to embed new cultural patterns whereas others focused on the negative impact of leadership behaviours that are not consistent with a coaching approach.

Participants provided examples of leaders who had experiences of coaching, have been on development programmes to develop a coaching style of leadership or to become internal coaches themselves, and how that experience cemented their role in, and commitment towards developing a coaching culture. These leaders display behaviours that

are aligned to a coaching approach, and which create a ripple effect in the people and settings they interact with:

> It was how it changed the room… the invitation that they extended into the room and how that helped other people to be in the room, how it changed their patterns of thinking, how they then sort of almost co-inquired into what was going on … and how thoughtful they became then… and how they were more able to explore things from different perspectives rather than just their own. So, there was a ripple in the room in those examples that I have observed (Oprah).

The negative influence of leaders' behaviours have also been explored by participants. "I think it's very hard to change the culture within an organisation if the senior leadership team …are not living and breathing what they want to see" (Vicky). This was evident in leadership teams who were split in the way they supported or even understood their role in developing a coaching culture (Evelyn, Carol) or line managers or leaders at the top of the organisation who were either getting in the way with controlling behaviours: "there was a micro-management culture … control being kept by the most senior people in the organisation, unfortunately, which is where the efforts to then change were quite diluted … because they didn't see the benefit or value in working in that way" (Vicky) or damaging any effort to develop a coaching culture by presenting incongruent behaviours:

> On the one hand, the senior leadership team would be talking about the thing that it had done to demonstrate it becoming kinder and more considerate, became at odds with how people experienced those individuals in a day-to-day…. People are more likely to remember the one time out of 20 that someone did not act, did not treat them, did not have a conversation in that spirit… rather than the 19 when they did. (Bryony).

When leaders espouse to creating a coaching culture, their behaviours have to be authentic, they have to "live and breathe it" (Vicky) and that comes from having experience of it: "it's always more embedded and authentic if they had experience of it" (Zsofia). The leaders who exemplify a coaching approach integrate it authentically into their leadership presence: "it wasn't that they come away from a coaching session and thought "I'm going to try that out". It just seemed to become part of who they were and how they are" (Oprah)

Carol described the leadership style of a CEO whose predominant leadership style was a coaching one, who was giving time to individuals and listening to them as a whole being and was investing in their development and "therefore that trickles right down to the organisation. I bet you anything that the chief executive doesn't really think about it anymore. It's just what she does". (Carol). These authentic behaviours need to be "constantly repeated and constantly reinforced … so we don't have a chance to deviate from the coaching rails (Vicky).

These patterns of relating are then sustained by communities of colleagues who have been "enlightened" with the coaching approach. "If enough people are doing enough of it, then and it becomes more of the way that we do things, and it trickles down through the layers" (Carol).

These could be leaders or managers who are developing a coaching style of leadership or colleagues who are developing their coaching practice to operate as internal coaches in their organisations. Following an initial development intervention, these communities are supported either through "coaching academies" (Evelyn, Diana), group supervision or other coaching schemes. Some of these enlightened change agents go on to develop their own local schemes (Kapila)

> By far the majority of individuals had experience of being coached… that was immensely powerful and a huge intervention, hugely resource heavy but in terms of actually embedding it as a culture, having that many people having had experience of it …. was absolutely priceless (Ingrid).

4.3.3. Theme 3: The roadmap emerges

Participants stories supported a view that coaching cultures are not developed in isolation. There needs to be an intention, a direction, a wider programme or strategy that they aligned to. These could be implicit objectives such as "helping junior doctors develop their communication skills with patients and in order to do that, you needed to be managing them in the way that you wanted them to manage their patients" or explicitly sign up to

bringing in a coaching culture "to help academic staff take more of a coaching approach with their students" (Mona).

When the wider aim is explicit, there is deliberate planned approach to using coaching interventions. This could be to support the implementation of a new strategy (Oprah) or support culture change programmes (Ingrid, Kapila, Evelyn, Freya), mergers "by bringing the leadership team together … to develop a way of doing business that was more humane" (Bryony), or "they were aligning it (coaching intervention) to a restructuring… it was tied to very particular organisational outcomes in terms of progression up the (sector) rankings" (Laura).

Participants described an ideal planned approach that requires a systemic conceptualisation of interconnected interventions linked to achieve the expected outcomes, for example organisational performance, embedding of new values, increased leadership and management capability or improved engagement. This becomes the "roadmap" (Zsofia) that utilises a number of planned interventions to effect change across various levels of the business, e.g., development of internal coaches, managers as coaches, external coaching for leadership development, use in development programmes and in change programmes aiming to create change readiness. These examples are, however, rare: "I think the X (organisation) example is an extreme example because it was a huge culture change programme" (Ingrid) or "there was a big investment in programmatic coaching … introduced at scale to develop particular competencies linked to improvements in organisational performance … this was one of very few times when it was linked to an OD strategic intervention" (Laura).

Most of the time this conceptualisation is not pre-planned but emerges over time and reacts to individual or collective motivations. It starts with coaching schemes or a specific plan that might include offer of coaching to leadership teams and a programme to develop internal coaches or manager as coaches. As the organisation and the programme matures, the need for other interventions emerges to sustain the culture. Some of these interventions are team or group coaching (Evelyn), the establishment of coaching academies (Evelyn, Georgia) or communities of practice (Zsofia) action learning sets (Zsofia, Rita), supervision (Ingrid, Freya, Rita) or group supervision (Tina) etc. In most cases coaching

becomes an underlying compass for all development work for individuals, leaders or underrepresented groups. (Kapila, Jenny, Tina)

In these scenarios, the roadmap emerges and develops from individual motivations, for example, when leaders want to embed a coaching culture in their own functions (Kapila). These interventions are prone to changes or critical moments in development. The changes brought by the Covid 19 pandemic in ways of working caused many changes in coaching programmes. It shifted the focus from the team, group or organisational long-term benefit to the individual and the immediate return (Evelyn). The most obvious change, however, is the move to virtual coaching that took away the opportunity that external coaches had to connect with their clients and understand the organisational culture.

> Pre-pandemic I felt more connected to the organisations where I was working… I had a sense of what was going on in the organisation more, I think, which I have lost. … how people are talking to each other or how they're talking to the team or how they interact with their PA … you sort of get more sense for the learning mood or motivation or picking up the culture, which of course you don't get on Zoom at all. (Laura)

Participants also discussed the impact of leaders-champions of coaching or OD practitioners who initiated coaching programme leaving their organisations: "we relied obviously on one key sponsor and when that sponsor moves on, things don't necessarily last because the people around them aren't lasting or are necessarily committed to the same things" (Evelyn) or "when we came back (from lockdown) … life had moved on different things, which meant that we stopped that programme and in fact the fabulous leader that led it retired. So again, it was sort of circumstance (Kapila)

4.3.4. Theme 4: A means to an end and an end in itself

Participants articulated benefits of coaching interventions to individuals and teams. This power of coaching to drive growth and development in individuals has been expressed with clear examples: leaders advancing their careers, having more impact in organisations or taking on more challenges as an outcome of investment in coaching.

The evidence of impact at the organisational or cultural level was less clear. The impact of a coaching "academy" that was set up to develop internal coaching capability was described as: "impact on individuals, high; on leadership style, medium; on culture, low". (Evelyn)

Those working as independent coaches had little evidence of the impact of their work in spaces outside the coaching "room". Those closer to the organisation and the programme articulated impact other than that on individuals, for example in performance, wellbeing, or organisational health. These were either measured by engagement surveys (Stella, Diana) or through the implied diversity benefits that come from empowering underrepresented groups. However, they often expressed that "it must have had an impact" (Carol) but links were difficult to establish. Even some of those who initiated coaching culture programmes found hard to articulate evidence beyond the individual or team and they talked about the difficulty in creating change in complex organisations.

> My overriding thought would be about defining it and giving it its rightful place, where it can definitely deliver the goods, because it it's powerful for individuals, it can be made powerful for groups, I'm not sure it has the same (.) once you get to organisations which are bigger than groups. How do you make coaching powerful and impactful for a huge organisation? That needs a lot of thought and it's one of many rather than a single (intervention). (Bryony)

The intention is to impact on the systemic, relational level but it gets dented when it collides with entrenched, ingrained systems. Participants commented on the systemic change coaching needs to effect but how difficult that is: "if you think about nested systems, the system that they manage within the organisation, they're doing what they can to create a coaching culture …and trying to protect their sphere of influence from the toxicity that's outside" (Mona). Participants offered examples of working with clients who made personal transformations through their coaching work but who then had to operate in a dysfunctional system: "if coached individuals go back to toxic teams, the impact is not going to penetrate back in the workplace. We need to work with the context as well or higher up to make the conditions right for the culture to change" (Freya).

Participants grappled with whether the term 'coaching culture' is even helpful. "Is it about the intervention or is it about the culture", pondered Georgia. Rita wondered if the word 'coaching' "gets in the way" as people need to unpack what coaching is, "when it is just about conversations that are not limiting" (Rita). Indeed, Bryony had strong views that the term "coaching culture" might do a disservice to coaching.

Yet, others thought that coaching culture gives intention, focus and clarity to what the change they are trying to create looks like but recognised that it is more suited to organisations or sectors where this way of working is already in their "culture", otherwise it requires a difficult "sea change" or "fundamental mindset shift" (Rita). Two participants who worked in organisations that aspired to a "coaching culture" or had "priced for it" as a piece of consultancy work, agreed that it might be an unhelpful term. One of them called it a "fantasy of a solution to the complexity of organisational life" (Norah) and the other that the term "means everything and nothing". They recognise that coaching prepared the ground for other things to happen (e.g., reverse mentoring) and is one more strand in our desire to create a culture that is effective and respectful and urged to "stop using the term in this global sense" (Bryony). It is "a different way of saying: relational work, wellbeing, relationships, quality of conversations – another code for culture or dynamic (Norah) or a "culture that values quality interpersonal relations", explained Bryony.

Finally, participants discussed that the term is less important. What is more important is to have clarity about what we mean and why we are doing it. The term could be a proxy for something else and in certain contexts it would be more impactful to focus on what the intention is, for example improving quality of conversations, empowering or giving voice; or creating more meaningful relationships at work.

In organisations where coaching is not part of the language or practice, participants discussed the need to introduce a "coaching language" and explicitly describe how a coaching culture connects with the ability of the organisation to achieve its strategic aims. A coaching culture becomes then the mechanism or the enabler through which these aims can be realised: "what difference will that make to people's experience and people's ability to do their best work, that is the bit that we need to describe" (Rita).

So irrespective of whether the term "coaching culture" is used with colleagues in organisations, it could be both a means to an end and an end in itself: "it is about the striving not the arriving but there has to be a purpose, there has to be some kind of vision for it, because otherwise we don't strive in the first place". (Oprah)

4.3.5. Additional Critical Themes

Internal and external practitioners. Participants' current roles in coaching culture programmes spanned through the internal and external practitioner continuum. Most participants occupied a number of roles throughout their careers across this continuum (e.g. external coach, internal coach, organisational development practitioner, leader) and their experiences were described as an amalgamation of these perspectives making comparisons less meaningful. Despite this, some nuances were observed in how participants presented their experience of coaching cultures that are worth exploring.

Those in internal, organisational development roles were responsible for creating the business case and the development of coaching culture programmes. They were therefore closer to the strategic intent for the programme and to defining the expected outcomes. They had access to resources and played a coordinating, decision-making role in planning the programme, selecting interventions and those who will become the enacting stakeholders: leaders in sponsor roles, external coaches, developers of coaching practice and participants to develop an internal coaching practice. As we saw earlier, they described this role as "architect" (Stella) or "the organiser, the instigator, motivator" (Oprah). Those in organisational development roles expressed a focus on the organisational dimension and had evidence of organisational impact.

Coaches on the other hand, whether internal or external expressed a focus on the individual within the wider system and they had some distance from strategy. Moreover, there were some differences in participants' stories of impact between internal and external coaches. Some evidence of organisational impact was accessible by internal coaches but less so by external coaches and developers of coaching practice. Laura, for example, explained: "I haven't got any evidence of ROI (return on investment) from that work". Internal coaches had some stories of impact on a systemic or cultural level because of the opportunities they

have to observe leaders who have been through a coaching intervention in action. For example, Oprah observed a ripple effect of coaching-aligned behaviours in group or team settings. Whilst they might not have hard evidence, there were able to see impact of the programme beyond the individual. Bryony, for example, described how being part of the coaching academy in her organisation as an internal coach, was part of a wider programme to effect culture change and used a metaphor to describe the catalytic nature of coaching: "if we use the garden analogy, coaching prepared the ground for other things to happen" (Bryony).

External coaches had little access to impact evidence beyond that of their individual coachees and the stories they shared with them. Laura explained that she aims to meet with HR or the talent practitioner "to clarify the organisation's stake" but the "experience of the external coach depends on the person holding the coaching remit". Carol explained that this person is often "passionate about coaching, passionate about developing a coaching culture but the executive team is extremely resistant", which stifles their influence or impact. Indeed, those who played a number of roles in their careers, e.g. internal and external coach or within one coaching culture programme, developer of internal coaches and external coach) commented on the importance of a close relationship that organisational stakeholders need to have with their external coaches.

Internal coaches are also connected between them and their organisation through interventions like communities of coaching practice, a forum to connect, support each other and share organisational intelligence, which also have the benefit of "breaking down organisational barriers" (Zofia). For external coaches, this opportunity to connect with other stakeholders is not always available. The impact of the pandemic meant that some of the work offered to external coaches is delivered though online platforms. This move to the online coaching space, created a physical distance from the organisation, which prevents external coaches from engaging with and understanding their coachees' organisational context.

Internal coaches "have internal context knowledge" (Ingrid) and have developed a shorthand for the espoused organisational values "helping to embed them" (Diana). In this sense there is a "passing of trust to internal coaches" (Freya). External coaches on the other

hand are often left without the organisational contextual knowledge to help them accelerate impact on their coachees: "sometimes I don't even know what their organisational values are" (Laura).

Gender. All participants were women. This makes inferences about differences that pertain to gender hard to make. However, there were a couple of areas that are worth highlighting that point to examples of a potentially gendered response.

The first one is in leadership qualities that embody a coaching approach. Participants gave examples of incidents that exemplify a coaching culture. Some participants chose to describe the leadership style of female leaders who embodied these coaching principles. Carol for example, talked about the impact of a female leader who exemplified a coaching approach by listening and developing her senior team. Tina described female leaders who are compassionate, caring, supportive and challenging in equal measure.

On the other hand, some of the challenges participants described had to do with behaviours of male leaders: "the Head of HR, he wasn't ally" (Bryony). The line manager of one of the participants "he is not a natural coach" (Zofia) which made it harder to influence the senior team to champion the programme.

The second area that presents a gendered nuance is that of empowerment, as described in the theme: "It flows through the veins of the organisation". Participants described the power of coaching to increase confidence and give voice to colleagues from underrepresented groups to bring social justice (Jenny) or add social value (Tina).

Participants were motivated by empowering women, in particular. Vicky started her career as a coach by coaching female executives and business owners (Amy). Participants described how they participated in programmes to support women in leadership (Bryony) women in academia (Kapila, Rebecca) or women's career progression (Evelyn). Kapila explains how the programme started with targeting "professorial women and it evolved into this massive complex network of coaching conversations". She continues to describe an example of a leader who embedded it in her department and ended up championing it for the whole organisation.

Given that all participants were women, it is difficult to draw any firm gendered conclusion but nevertheless the themes above were identified as interesting avenues for further research.

4.4. Discussion

4.4.1. How coaching cultures are developed.

The focus of this research was to explore how coaching cultures are developed through practitioners' experiences of working with or in organisations that explicitly aspire to develop coaching cultures or use coaching for organisational development purposes.

The participants' accounts enabled us to analyse the meanings they constructed and ascribed to coaching practices in organisations either from internal or external practitioner perspectives. Their rich experiences come from different organisations, sectors and their roles span interventions focused on the individual, team, and organisational level. All participants were women which is in line with gender trends in the OD profession in the UK but interestingly, against gender trends in the business coaching profession where women are underrepresented (Stout-Rostron et al., 2013).

Accounts of "ideal" coaching culture programmes describe a planned approach to introducing coaching interventions to support a strategic intention or programme of organisational development or change. These idealised accounts reflect popular models of coaching culture where this planned approach requires developing a common mindset about the role of coaching, champions in the form of leaders, and a campaign to communicate the role of coaching in delivering business outcomes (Passmore & Crabbe, 2020). Participants, while they recognised and supported this view, commented that these examples are rare. Most coaching culture programmes are messy, emergent (Whybrow & O'Riordan, 2021), and react to events (e.g. pandemic, leaders departure from organisations, etc) in line with Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS) theory, which recognises the messy and complex nature of adaptive challenges where there are too many variables to consider . The strategy, therefore, that is proposed by CAS theory in leading emergent change, and which is similar to the participants stories, "requires mobilizing stakeholders to self-initiate action,

then monitoring and embedding the most promising initiatives" (Bushe & Marshak, 2016, p. 43). Enabling or allowing this emergence to occur, creates the opportunities for new interventions to spring up from the motivations of other "enlightened" change agents in the system, leaders or practitioners who have been exposed to coaching interventions, attended a coaching programme, been coached, etc.

The impact of coaching cultures has been discussed by participants who claimed that coaching schemes or interventions enabled positive organisational or cultural outcomes. The evidence comes from indirect sources, such as engagement surveys or organisational performance indicators. Evidence, however, of the role coaching culture programmes play in organisations is not well documented. This, as well as the fact that "culture" as a term seems intangible and therefore difficult to define and measure, probably taints the view of a few practitioners who call for stopping using the term coaching culture in a global sense. Even though this was only expressed by a couple of the participants, it was decided to give voice to this position as it brings us back to the lack of a shared definition of coaching culture. It also goes to heart of the debate as to whether it is a process, a means to an end, (Hawkins, 2012) or a destination, an end in itself. It is argued that it can be both and the term could be used mainly amongst academics and practitioners to give focus to people or organisational development programmes but unpacked, explored, or even co-created when used with the recipient stakeholders in organisations, i.e., colleagues, customers, partners, or external stakeholders.

4.4.2. The role of the enacting stakeholders in developing coaching cultures

In developing coaching cultures three "enacting" (Knowles, 2022b) stakeholder roles were discussed by participants: a. the role of the organisational development practitioner and coach, described as the architect, instigator, the developer; b. the role of leadership, as the driver and champion of coaching cultures and; c. the role of coaching communities of practice, internal coaches or managers as coaches, who become those who promulgate and sustain coaching cultural patterns.

These three roles become the "agents" for behaviour change, which according to Complex Adaptive Systems theory is socially and culturally situated (Gomersall, 2018). They

generate rules and assumptions, as seen in the coaching principles discussed earlier, that "govern social action" (Gomersall, 2018, p. 405). They become a system in its own right "nested" in their wider organisational, complex adaptive system that exhibits emergence and continuous adaptation (Holland, 2000).

The underlying experience of coaching seems to be a strong foundation for enacting stakeholders' motivation (Anthony & van Nieuwerburgh, 2018). In fact, experience of coaching is a common frame shared by all participants in their enacting roles, as well as those in implementer or amplifier roles (e.g., managers-as-coaches, internal coaches). They become change agents (Lunenburg, 2010; Passmore & Lai, 2020) and pollinators of this way of doing and being. They become '*passionate*' and '*evangelistic*' (Whybrow & O'Riordan, 2021) and integrate it into who they are and practice from a position of "self-as-instrument" (Cheung-Judge, 2001)

Those with current or previous experience in learning and development or organisational development roles overlay frames and concepts commonly seen in organisational change and change management literature, including the role of leadership. (Kotter, 2012; Westrum, 2004). The transfer from individual learning through coaching to collective learning has been observed, "through enacting behaviours, enacting a coaching approach and embedding collective learning processes" (Swart & Harcup, 2013, p. 337) and leaders have been discussed as "owners" of culture in organisations (Passmore & Crabbe, 2020).

The importance of the leadership role in championing and role modelling coaching behaviours has been a consistent theme identified in empirical research (Anthony & van Nieuwerburgh, 2018; Hamilton, 2019; Vesso & Alas, 2016) as well as case studies and book chapters on coaching culture (e.g., Whybrow & O'Riordan, 2021). It is also a common and consistent theme identified in evidence reviews of coaching cultures (Gormley & van Nieuwerburgh, 2014; Kapoutzis et al., 2023). Those who have first-hand experience of coaching or witness the transformation it can create in individuals are likely to evidence the kind of leadership that is akin to a coaching culture, creating a coaching "ripple effect" (O'Connor & Cavanagh, 2013). The way the ripple effect manifests itself, and its impact is still unclear, and it would benefit from further exploration.

The communities that are created with those who have engaged in developing a coaching practice, either as managers-as-coaches or internal coaches, become an important vehicle through which the coaching "gospel" can proliferate and is used in organisations to capture tacit knowledge and develop organisational capability (Wenger et al., 2002). Members of these communities proliferate the coaching approach, as well as organisational values (Gormley & van Nieuwerburgh, 2014; McKee et al., 2009) and are driven by an altruistic motivation (given that most internal coaches are voluntary roles) to share their practice, do public good (Ardichvili et al., 2003), add social value.

While the findings support the notion that internal coaches support the embedding of organisations values (Gormley & van Nieuwerburgh, 2014; McKee et al., 2009), we need to be aware of the sensitivities that come from internal coaches being part of the "*power system (power agent) that may be perpetuating specific rationales or ideologies without realising it*" (Diochon, p 713). Shoukry and Cox (2017) actually argue that "*coaches should no longer view themselves as neutral technical experts but recognise they are active political agents*" (p 185).

4.4.3. Behaviours, values and assumptions underpinning coaching cultures

Coaching cultures were constructed as organisational settings that have embedded a coaching approach or mindset. The concept of "embeddedness" is tied into theories of organisational culture were behaviours, norms and values become ingrained in the system and shape organisational behaviour (Agwu, 2014; Kotter, 2012; Schein, 2010). A coaching approach becomes a style or behaviour pattern (Donnell & Boyle, 2008; Odor, 2018) that is based on coaching principles, as found in many definitions of coaching or coaching frameworks (e.g., the goal of coaching is to increase self-awareness and self-responsibility; this is achieved through expansive questions; in a non-judgmental space; and assumes client's resourcefulness (Whitmore, 2010)). Schein's (2010) model of organisational culture has been applied to construct the two cultural patterns (behaviours, values, and assumptions) that underpin participants accounts of coaching cultures.

Firstly, participants accounts presented coaching cultures as psychologically safe (Edmondson, 2018; Newman et al., 2017) dialogic containers, "intangible yet real spaces in

which the potential and possibility of a group can unfold" (Corrigan, 2016, p.31), and where growth and empowerment can take place. Psychological safety seems to be an outcome of coaching cultures (Egan & Kim, 2013) and is centrally tied to learning behaviour (Edmondson, 2011). Behaviours such as listening, questioning, being curious and allowing time and space for genuine inquiry to occur alongside trust, create supportive and compassionate cultures and the conditions for a "coaching culture for learning". (van Nieuwerburgh & Passmore, 2018)

Learning and growth through empowerment was the second central theme for interventions or programmes participants described in their accounts. These coaching principles are integral to a diversity perspective (Baron & Azizollah, 2018; Filsinger, 2021) and support diversity and inclusion objectives, giving voice and an invitation to members of underrepresented communities to develop and present themselves and their contributions in organisations.

4.4.4. A coaching culture definition

A coaching culture definition and conceptualisation using the Kapoutzis, et.al. (2023) framework (Figure 4.1) is offered based on the enacting stakeholder assumptions / themes that were generated by this study:

> Coaching cultures are psychologically safe organisational "containers" where a coaching approach is embedded in organisational artefacts, people activities and interactions, and where exploration and growth can take place. They are developed through planned or emergent interventions to develop internal coaching capability in the form of managers-as-coaches, internal coaches, or communities of coaching practice. The coaching "way of doing and being" is then promulgated by them as they interact with others in their organisations, with the aim of improving engagement and creating a supportive and inclusive environment.

Figure 4.1

Conceptualisation of Coaching Culture as per Kapoutzis et al (2023) Framework

Definition

- Intent: organisational (culture) change or development
- Implementation: multiple planned or emergent interventions to develop internal coaching capability
- Outcome: individual and team performance

Antecedents

- Coaching experience
- Leadership commitment and involvement
- Coaching skill and coachability are important competencies of leaders and managers.

Interventions

- Executive / 1:1 coaching/ leadership development
- Coaching skills training
- Team coaching
- Developing internal coaching capability (manager as coach / internal coaches)
- Coaching supervision
- Communities of practice
- Action learning sets

Outcomes

- Psychological safety
- Learning and growth through empowerment
- Engagement
- Supportive and inclusive environment

Measures

- Engagement Survey

4.5. Further research directions and practice implications

4.5.1. Research implications

This study contributes to our understanding of coaching cultures by giving voice to the practitioner perspective, which has been overlooked by empirical research. The emergent nature of coaching culture development was highlighted, giving an indication of the systemic and complex adaptive nature of coaching cultures. This study also offers a definition and conceptual framework, which will benefit from further testing. There is a need for further research to explore the phenomenon of coaching cultures focusing on organisational members and how they experience and benefit from organisations that have mature coaching culture programmes. Further research on the interaction of the "enacting" and "receiving" stakeholders would offer insights on the embedding process of a coaching approach in organisations. Finally, more research on the benefits of coaching cultures for example on retention and performance, would strengthen the business case for investing in this type of organisation development strategy.

4.5.2. Practice implications

As discussed earlier, the models that derive from this study need to be tested, they, however, offer practitioners useful insights and tools to use in the development of coaching cultures. Practitioners will benefit from these insights in the process of developing coaching culture programmes.

Firstly, this study provides a nuanced understanding of the values and behaviours that underpin coaching cultures. It is important to align the organisational culture change programme with these values and behaviours that have emerged from this study, in order to facilitate the development of a coaching culture. Secondly, this study highlighted the importance of positioning coaching culture as a methodology as well as a vision. This positioning needs to be tailored and adapted so that it is culturally sensitive and can be usefully used to focus change effort in organisational settings.

Finally, this study highlights the role of the enacting stakeholders as change agents. Practical implications emerge in terms of the development of the change agent groups

identified in the study, for example, the importance of offering these groups direct coaching experience. This will create wider organisational change capability and embed a coaching approach at the cultural, relational level. Creating the conditions for communities of practice to develop will then form the vehicle through which a coaching culture will be maintained and evolve.

4.6. Conclusion

Coaching culture is a term that is used to describe the use of coaching approaches to create individual and system change focusing on the relational aspects of an organisation's design and development. If done intentionally it can be embedded in ways of working, managing, and relating.

Coaching cultures are psychologically safe dialogic containers where a coaching approach is embedded in organisational artefacts, people activities and interactions, and where exploration and growth can take place. Important change agents in promulgating a coaching approach are those with first-hand experience of coaching: OD practitioners or coaches who create the opportunities and/ or hold these spaces for coaching conversations to happen; leaders who role model and reinforce the coaching "way" of being and relating; and those who have engaged in developing a coaching practice (managers or internal coaches) who become the conduits that help sustain these behavioural patterns. Coaching cultures are planned or emergent programmes of activity that support wider organisational goals and they react and respond to organisational or external changes. Change or development is mainly observed at the individual or team level but there is an assumed benefit stemming from the "enlightened" interacting with others in their organisations to embed coaching behavioural or cultural patterns. Coaching cultures can be both a destination and a process and the term should be used sensitively and thoughtfully. Finally, more empirical research would help unpack even more coaching culture as a construct and an organisation development practice.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Implications for Theory, Research, and Practice

This final chapter acts as a point of consolidation of the findings and as a point of reflection on their implications for theory, research, and practice. Firstly, the aims and overall findings from the two studies are consolidated and summarised. Implications for theory, research, and practice are then considered, highlighting strengths and limitations, and signposting to directions for future research and practice. The chapter, and thesis, concludes with a reflection on the contribution of this thesis to our overall understanding of coaching cultures.

5.1. Aims and overall findings

This thesis set out to explore the nature and development process of coaching cultures. It aimed to add to our understanding of this increasingly popular organisational development strategy by looking at the evidence-base and shedding light to the practitioner perspective that has been so far overlooked by research.

The thesis aimed to answer the following questions:

- What is known about coaching cultures from a peer-reviewed research standpoint? More precisely, what has research shown about the antecedents, interventions, outcomes, and measures of coaching cultures?
- What are the cultural (i.e., behaviours, values, and assumptions) underpinnings of coaching cultures and what role do the enacting practitioners play in embedding them?

Table 5.1 provides a snapshot summary of the characteristics and key findings of the two studies that make up this thesis:

Table 5.1:

Summary of Key Findings of the Two Studies

	Study 1	Study 2
Key Aims	• To identify what is known about coaching cultures • To examine definitions and the building blocks (antecedents, interventions, outcomes, and measures) of coaching cultures through empirical, peer reviewed research	• To answer the question: "How are coaching cultures developed"
Method	• Systematic Literature Review • Database search identified 1,120 papers	• Qualitative research • Semi structured interviews analysed with reflexive Thematic Analysis
Sample	• Nine papers were included in the synthesis. • Six were qualitative studies and three quantitative. • Total number of participants across all studies was 2,234 of which 62% were managers; 17% were employees at all levels; 15% were leaders and 4% were experts.	• 20 individuals working in the UK. • 10 organisational developers and 10 people developers (coaches) • All participants were women. • Average years of coaching experience: 15.3 years ranging from 5 to 28 years

	• Study 1	• Study 2
Key findings	• There is no agreed definition. • Common themes: intent: organisational change or development; implementation: multiple types of coaching; outcome: performance • Antecedents: top leadership buy-in; formalised process; management capability; dialogic processes* • Interventions: Executive / 1:1 coaching/ leadership development (external); Leader/ manager as coach development; Coaching skills training; Team and group coaching; Developing internal coaching capability • Outcomes: Attraction and retention of high potential; Engagement / Positive communication; Positive environment; Performance; Problem solving; Growth / empowerment; Culture change* • Measures: Coaching Culture Characteristics in Leadership Style model (3C model); Leader's Impact on Culture" (LIC model); Work Culture Survey; Engagement Survey *Unclear evidence	• Coaching practice as the experiential underpinning of participants. Themes: • It flows through the veins of the organisation: a coaching approach is embedded in artefacts, people processes and interactions. Two cultural patterns underpin coaching cultures: psychological safety and learning and growth through empowerment. • More powerful than anything else is having that one-to-one time: those in enacting roles have first-hand experience of coaching. Three roles: practitioner, leader, community of practice • The roadmap emerges: the plan consists of a number of interventions that emerge through circumstance. • A means to an end and an end in itself: evidence of impact on individuals and teams – less so on organisational culture. Coaching culture is both a change process and a destination.
Limitations	• Peer reviewed papers only included - grey literature was not included. • Both qualitative and quantitative methods used in the studies included in the review making synthesis of evidence difficult - reductionist approach and missing nuance.	• Exploratory study • Need to add the organisational member voice (recipients) to our understanding. • Need to explore how the enacting and recipient stakeholders interact to understand the embedding process

5.1.1. *Findings from study one – the systematic literature review*

Kapoutzis et al (2023) synthesised the evidence in relation to the building blocks of coaching cultures. The role of leadership in committing to the development of a coaching culture was highlighted as a foundational element for coaching cultures. Other foundational elements identified were the existence of formal training or resources, the expectation of a coaching management style, and the use of dialogic processes to create culture change.

Interventions that are being used to develop coaching cultures include traditional coaching interventions such as, executive or leadership coaching, coaching skills training as well as team and group coaching. More specific interventions to the development of coaching cultures were that of manager as coach development and development of intern coaches. The outcomes that were synthesized by the review SLR were varied and included retention, employee engagement, positive communication and environment, improved performance and learning through problem solving. Culture change was also included in the findings, but evidence was unclear.

Finally, a number of measures were identified: specific models such as the Coaching Culture Characteristics in Leadership Style model (3C model) and Leader's Impact on Culture" (LIC model) as well as more generic measures derived from employee surveys measuring work culture or engagement. It was evident that several gaps remained in the extant literature, namely the lack of an agreed definition, the exploration of the practitioners' experience and the evidence on cultural patters underpinning coaching cultures.

5.1.2. Findings from study two – the empirical study

A qualitative empirical study was then conducted to address these gaps. The research questions focused on the behaviours, values, and assumptions that underpin coaching cultures and what role the enacting stakeholders play in developing them.

Four themes were generated using reflexive Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2019, 2022b, 2023). The themes are seen as assumptions or principles these enacting practitioners hold and spread in organisations through their practice. The first theme, "it

flows through the veins of the organisation", describes the way coaching principles get embedded in artefacts, such as strategies, people processes and competency frameworks and in interactions though behaviours. Two sets of cultural patterns were constructed that are inextricably linked with and embedded in coaching cultures: psychological safety and learning and growth.

The second theme, "more powerful than anything else is having that one-to-one time", carries the assumption that those who have had experience of coaching understand its power and are best placed to become change agents of this way of working and interacting. These change agents are practitioners, (i.e., our participants), leaders, and communities of coaching practice.

"The roadmap emerges" is a theme that describes the emergent nature of coaching culture programmes. This is in line with complexity theory that sees emergence as a quality, a characteristic of complex systems and where the role of the practitioner is to notice where new seeds are planted across the system (Bushe & Marshak, 2016).

The final theme, "a means to an end and an end in itself", discusses the impact of coaching culture programmes. The study urges to regard these seemingly polarities as possibilities and concludes that coaching culture is both a change process and a destination.

5.1.3. Overall findings

The findings from this thesis suggest that we are starting to develop a deeper understanding of coaching cultures, but we are still very much at the start of that journey. The findings from both studies are brought together to build the overall picture and contribution of the thesis on the exploration of coaching cultures, namely by offering a comprehensive framework of their building blocks and their cultural make up. These contributions are explained below.

Definitions. The SLR synthesized the definitions used by the papers included in the review, whereas the empirical study constructed a definition of coaching culture grounded

on practitioners' experience. The definition elements that emerged from each study are presented in table 5.2 below:

Table 5.2
Definition Elements from Both Studies

Theme	Study 1: SLR	Study 2: empirical study
Strategy / Intent	• Coaching forms part of organisational (culture) change or development strategy	• Organisational culture where exploration and growth can take place
Process / Implementation	• multiple types of coaching, through coaching conversations, leadership, and management coaching approach	• a coaching approach is embedded in organisational artefacts, people activities and interactions. • planned or emergent interventions to develop internal coaching capability
Benefits / outcomes	• benefits manifest in individual, team and organisational performance	• improvement in engagement • supportive and inclusive environment

Some of these characteristics are in line with other early definitions of coaching culture where a coaching approach is embedded in strategies, working and management styles and interactions (Clutterbuck & Megginson, 2005; Hart, 2005). Other characteristics, for example the emergent nature of interventions and the impact on engagement and inclusion, reflect more recent definitions that take a systemic view of coaching cultures (Gormley & van Nieuwerburgh, 2014; Hawkins, 2012).

Building Blocks

Antecedents. The antecedent or foundational element that has seen the strongest evidence from both studies is leadership commitment and involvement. The empirical study shed light to the roots of this commitment suggesting that it stems from personal, first-hand

experience of coaching. This is in line with popular theoretical frameworks of organisational or culture change (Kotter, 2012; Senge, 1990) and previous research on coaching culture (Anthony & van Nieuwerburgh, 2018). The inclusion of coaching competencies in leadership and management frameworks gives direction and permission for this management style to be employed and a signal to everyone in an organisation of behavioural expectations. Finally, there is some initial evidence that suggests that dialogic processes used in culture and organisational development could create the conditions for a coaching culture to start developing.

Interventions. The first study identified a number of coaching interventions that are used predominantly in organisations, such as, executive and leadership development, manager as coach development and development of internal coaches. The second study moved further than these popular interventions and surfaced interventions that are used to sustain the impact of these initial interventions, for example with coaching supervision, action learning sets and the establishment of communities of coaching practice.

Outcomes and measures. The outcomes that both studied identified were varied and quite abstract. These are initial findings that require further empirical exploration. The outcomes with the strongest evidence was employee engagement and learning and growth. Employee engagement survey was a measure that has been highlighted by both studies as indicators of progress towards a coaching culture. Learning and growth was a common theme and could be argued that it has a relationship with and affects other outcomes, such as performance and problem solving. Psychological safety is another theme that was generated in the second study which could be a factor influencing other outcomes, such as positive communication and consultation, and a positive, supportive, and inclusive environment leading to culture change.

Other measures that have been developed, such as the Coaching Culture Characteristics in Leadership Style model (3C model) (Vesso, 2014; Vesso & Alas, 2016) and Megginson and Clutterbuck (2006) questionnaire to assess progress towards a coaching culture are promising and would require further validation.

The findings from both studies are presented in Figure 5.1 according to the framework produced by the first study (Kapoutzis et al., 2023).

Figure 5.1
Overall Findings

Definition

- Intent: **organisational (culture) change or development***
- Implementation: **multiple types of coaching**, planned or emergent interventions: management coaching approach and development of internal coaching capability
- Outcome: performance**,** engagement, supportive and inclusive environment

Antecedents

- **Leadership commitment and involvement**
- **Coaching skill and coachability are important competencies of leaders and managers.**
- Coaching experience
- Formalized and planned process (training/ resources)
- Dialogic processes to shift organisational identity and culture

Interventions

- **Executive / 1:1 coaching/ leadership development**
- **Manager as coach development**
- **Developing internal coaches**
- **Coaching skills training**
- **Team and group coaching**
- Coaching supervision
- Communities of practice
- Action learning sets

Outcomes

- **Learning and growth through empowerment**
- **Engagement** / Positive communication- consultation
- Positive, **supportive,** and inclusive **environment**
- Psychological safety
- Attraction and retention
- Performance
- Problem solving
- Culture change

Measures

- **Engagement Survey**
- Work Culture Survey
- Coaching Culture Characteristics in Leadership Style model (3C model)
- Leader's Impact on Culture" (LIC model)

***in bold**: findings from both studies

The Development Process. To complement the building blocks presented earlier, the second study also explored the process through which coaching cultures are developed. Coaching cultures are conceptualised as dialogic containers (Corrigan, 2016) or subcultures (Knowles, 2022b) with strong cultural underpinning of psychological safety that enables learning and growth. Table 5.3 presents these cultural patterns that have been constructed through the second study.

Table 5.3
Cultural Patterns Underpinning Coaching Cultures

	Psychological Safety	**Learning and Growth**
Assumptions	• An environment that feels safe encourages voicing opinion, giving feedback, questioning, and challenging	• Psychological safety enables taking risks and consequently learning, growth and innovation
Values	• Trust • Respect • Compassion • Non-judgmental stance	• Empowerment • Generosity of spirit • Learning orientation / growth mindset • Possibility and progress
Behaviours	• Listening in depth • Posing questions rather than directives • Being curious • Showing vulnerability • Engage in open conversations	• Putting learning front and centre • Strengths-spotting • Giving voice, encouraging, empowering others • Allowing risk-taking. • Experimenting and innovating

Coaching cultures have also been described as a process, a means to an end (Hawkins, 2012). This findings from this thesis contend that coaching cultures are both a process *and* a destination. The destination or vision becomes a description of a subculture in

organisations where the cultural patterns above are embedded in an organisation's ways of working, managing, and relating, inside and outside of organisational boundaries.

The second study gave also a deeper understanding on the role and contribution of the enacting stakeholders. Their contribution is based on experience of coaching. They become change agents with authentic motivations and "carriers" of those cultural norms. Another interesting finding is the role of the communities of coaching practice in sustaining these norms, which has not been recognised or explored before. Exploring their role even further could advance our understanding of the way culture change evolves and is sustained.

Finally, coaching culture programmes start with a plan to inject coaching practice through traditional coaching interventions, but the actual roadmap then emerges through the agents' evangelistic motivations.

Figure 5.2
Conceptualisation of Coaching Culture from Empirical Study
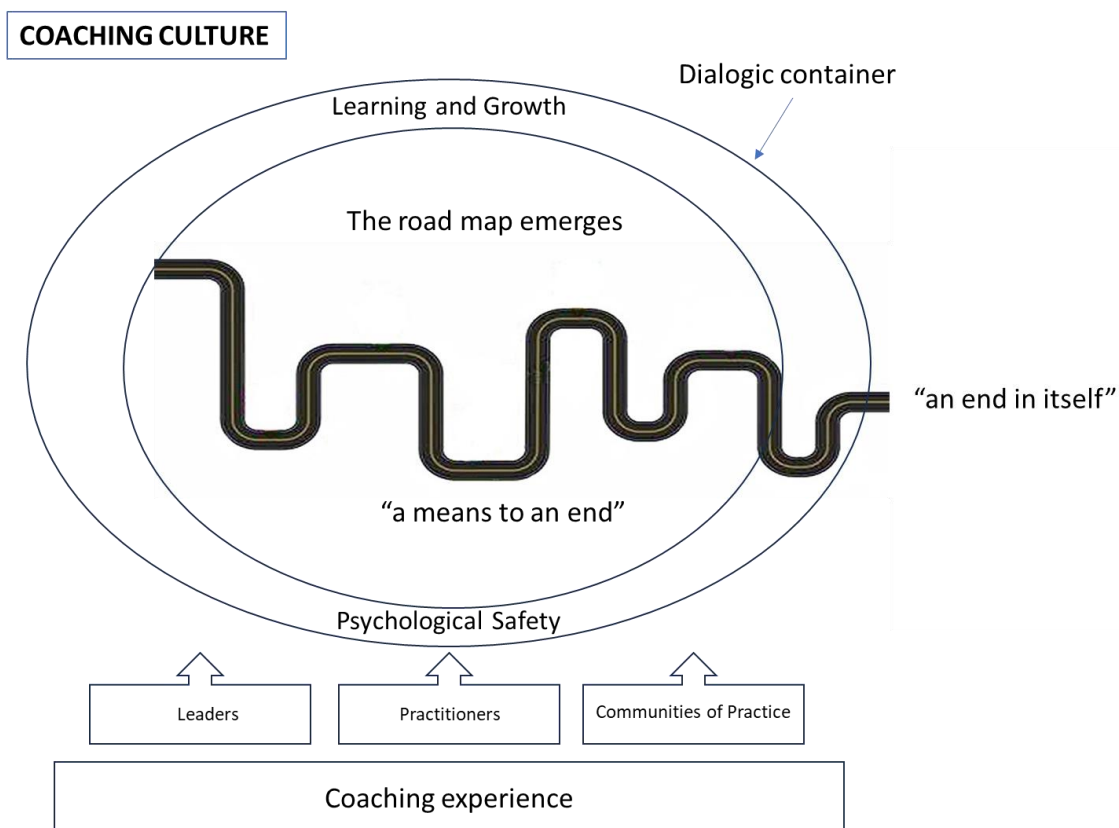
5.2. Implications for theory, research, and practice

Workplace coaching continues to be a popular development intervention and its benefits become more and more evident as more research is conducted. Empirical research and theory development on workplace coaching is still in developing stage and a "true science of coaching has yet to be developed" (Cannon-Bowers et al., 2023, p. 1). At the same time, research on the effectiveness of workplace coaching on individuals is becoming more mature with meta-analyses showing that it is effective especially on skills and affective outcomes (Cannon-Bowers et al., 2023; de Haan & Nilsson, 2023). As coaching continues to be a widely used development strategy in organisations, maximising the benefits that come from this investment will have positive results for individuals, teams, and organisations.

Moreover, many organisations invest in culture change as means to remain competitive, adjust, or change their value proposition and transform how they deliver it. The underlying premise is that shaping organisational culture would not only impact on the employee experience and employee value proposition but also as a means of improving performance, creating customer value, and achieving organisational aims. As cultural adaptation is becoming an increasingly important quest for organisations, understanding the benefits of coaching interventions on the cultural level would strengthen the case to develop coaching cultures and make their proposition even more powerful.

5.2.1. Implications for theory

As has emerged from this inquiry, our understanding of coaching cultures comes from practice and lacks a theoretical framework. Models have been proposed in the extant literature; some are based on theoretical frameworks, such as cognitive behavioural theory (Whybrow & O'Riordan, 2021) and systemic theory (Hawkins, 2012), while others are based on practice and practitioner research (Clutterbuck et al., 2016), but a consolidated theory of coaching cultures has not yet been developed.

This thesis contributes to the development of a theory of coaching culture by applying Schein's (1990, 2010) theory of organisational culture and seeing coaching cultures as subcultures with distinct sets of beliefs or cultural patterns (Schein, 1990, 2010).

Although this had been suggested by prior scholars in the field (Hawkins, 2012; Knowles, 2022b), there remained a gap in empirical research to start developing this theoretical framework. This research has generated two sets of cultural patterns (i.e., assumptions, values, and behaviours - see table 5.3) that underpin coaching cultures. In exploring these patterns, this thesis highlighted the concept of their "embeddedness", which has been described as a coaching approach or mindset embedded *in the fabric of the organisation* (Whybrow & O'Riordan, 2021). More research is needed to explore how the embedding process works and how these patterns become part of the "way things are done around here".

Moreover, using Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS) (Eoyang, 2001; Stacey, 2015; Stacey, 1996; Wheatley, 2011; Wheatley, 1994) as a theoretical framework highlights the complexity of culture change and offers a theoretical lens that sees coaching cultures as adaptive systems. Although Clutterbuck et al. (2016) have suggested CAS as a useful framework vis-à-vis coaching cultures, as a relatively new field in coaching, "the complex adaptive systems approach likewise is thin on empirical study" (Clutterbuck, 2021, p 311). As Clutterbuck (2021) explains, "a limitation of all complex, adaptive systems approaches is that we can never see the whole system. The patterns we do see may not be the patterns that have most potential for positive change—they may simply be the most obvious from the perspective we take at the time" (p. 312). There is certainly a limitation in applying a novel framework to a novel discipline, but perhaps a novel discipline requires a novel framework.

CAS can contribute to an emerging theory of coaching cultures by providing empirical evidence of CAS properties, such as emergence, and agent-based development. Most coaching culture models (Clutterbuck et al., 2016; Passmore & Crabbe, 2020; Passmore & Jastrzebska, 2011) describe a linear maturity progression from a coaching offering or service in organisations, to working or management style, to a subculture (Knowles, 2022a). However, if we apply adaptive behaviour principles as seen in complex systems, the development process that follows, is more emergent than planned. Indeed, our findings corroborate this. For example, interventions could move up and down the maturity scale as stakeholders react to events, such as the departure of a significant driving stakeholder or leader, or external events, such as the recent COVID 19 pandemic. Our

finding provides further insight into CAS theory by highlighting the fluidity of coaching interventions as stakeholders react to events outside of their control.

Leveraging CAS theory also adds to our understanding of the enacting stakeholder role as a change agent. Emergence is enacted upon practitioners, change agents' actions that lead to further adaptation of the system, in this case coaching culture as organisational subculture. The role of agents in coaching cultures, as in all complex adaptive systems in organisations, is therefore crucial because they enable the subculture to evolve and be flexible and responsive to change. Specifically for coaching and coaching culture, the findings extend CAS theory by explaining that practitioners as change agents, enact change through adopting and embodying specific behaviours, in this case aligned to a coaching approach.

Previous thinking highlighted the importance of "self-as-instrument" (Cheung-Judge, 2001) in coaching practice but suggested that it is less important for coaching change agents (Passmore & Lai, 2020a). Our findings, however, evidence that the role of the change agent's "self" in the change process is critically important. Indeed, it forms part of the evolution of their coaching practice and their contribution to the development of coaching cultures in organisations.

CAS theory describes systems as "nested", "in the way that Russian dolls are encased within each other" (Clutterbuck, 2021, p.305). Our research extends CAS theory by elucidating who is nested how in coaching cultures. The change agent, practitioner working with their coachee is a system, nested in various team systems, the system of a coaching community, the leadership system and the wider organisational system. Exploring and integrating all these systems' perspectives, as this research has attempted to do, gives us a better chance of making sense of whole system (Clutterbuck, 2020). More research is needed to surface these perspectives and explore how they relate to and integrate with each other in the context of coaching cultures.

Finally, the findings in this thesis reconfirmed the link between psychological safety and learning (Edmondson, 2011) and its importance in developing a coaching culture (van Nieuwerburgh & Passmore, 2018). Further research would be needed to further explore the role of coaching in developing organisational learning (Knowles & Knowles, 2021) and the

similarities and differences between coaching cultures and *learning organisations* (Senge, 1990) and *deliberately developmental organisations* (Kegan & Lahey, 2016). Connecting these concepts and fostering a multidisciplinary approach, that brings together perspectives from coaching, business, social and organisational psychology and organisational development will deepen our theoretical understanding of coaching cultures.

5.2.2. Implications for research

Research in this area is still very much in developing stage. As research on coaching effectiveness and coaching interventions matures, our understanding of coaching cultures will expand and become more nuanced. However, we should not rely on coaching effectiveness research to make inferences about coaching cultures. A separate body of research is needed to look at the phenomenon of coaching cultures, informed by coaching effectiveness research and grounded in systemic and social and organisational behaviour theory and research.

The main contribution of this thesis is the consolidation of the empirical evidence to date and adding the voice of the practitioner, which was a gap identified from Kapoutzis et al (2023). It also offers a framework for research by conceptualising the building blocks of a coaching culture, which needs to be tested and further developed to incorporate insights from various research methodologies and organisational settings.

This thesis also identified gaps in research, opening research avenues that would add to our body of knowledge. Developing a shared definition of coaching culture, possibly through a Delphi study, will enable further synthesis of research. Consolidating practitioner or commercially developed research and grey literature would help identify practice-led knowledge that has been generated, helping to bridge the theory and practice gap and add to the evidence base of coaching cultures.

Longitudinal research in organisations that employ coaching interventions with the intention to develop a coaching culture, would offer insights on the development process. It would also allow to explore some relationships that this thesis has provided initial evidence for, for example the relationship between coaching culture and wellbeing and inclusion.

Research on the ripple effect from coaching would add to our understanding of the process by which coaching individual outcomes translate and transform team and organisation outcomes. This type of research would require methodologies closer to systems thinking, like Social Network Analysis used by O'Connor and Cavanagh (2013).

Participants implied that there might be sector differences in how coaching cultures are developed. They suggested that there are sectors where it would be easier to embed a coaching approach (e.g., therapeutic and health care settings) and others where the shift would mean a step change from the current patterns of working and interacting (e.g., retail and education). Research in different sectors would offer a deeper understanding of the interaction of current organisational behaviours with coaching culture behavioural patterns. The underlying hypothesis is that in some sectors, embedding a coaching approach would mean unlearning or deconstructing current organisational behavioural patterns before you can develop new, coaching-informed ones. Similarly, research on cultural differences would also be an important research avenue to help us understand whether coaching cultures are aligned to specific country or geographical cultural characteristics and whether these manifest in how coaching cultures are developed in global organisations.

Finally, more research is needed to understand the outcomes of coaching culture programmes. Our thesis found that some claims are abstract and not substantiated with strong evidence. Research on the recipients (organisational members) would add the perspective of how coaching cultures are perceived and their impact on employee engagement and experience. Multi-stakeholder research that incorporates organisational members is also needed to explore the relationship between individual and organisational, cultural outcomes. The development and validation of measures is also needed to unlock our understanding of the benefits of coaching cultures. Case studies in organisations with embedded coaching cultures and in those without such programmes or ambitions, would also add to our understanding of the benefits of coaching cultures.

5.2.3. Implications for practice

Suggestions for organisational development practitioners. The findings from this thesis provide an evidence-based framework for practitioners to draw upon when

developing coaching culture programmes. Practitioners can use the framework as an outline specification to co-create a development plan with other stakeholders in their organisations ensuring that all building blocks of a programme are explored. Following the sections of the framework they can start by defining the intention and then interrogate on the current situation of important antecedents, such as leadership buy-in and the existence of resources. They can then identify interventions that build on an organisation's existing employee development and coaching offer, and which are culturally sensitive and appropriate. Finally, they can solidify the expected outcomes and how these will be measured.

In terms of measurement, engaging with the framework, can also inform the way engagement surveys are constructed by including specific questions (e.g., in regards to antecedents such as leadership commitment and behaviours or the use of coaching-related training or resources and; outcomes such as supportive environment and a learning orientation) in order to provide evidence of progress towards a coaching culture.

The values and behaviours framework that was generated by the empirical study can be embedded in organisational or people strategies and processes, such as people and organisational strategies, competency, or leadership frameworks, performance management processes or 360-degree reviews. Furthermore, the embedding process could be accelerated if these behaviours and values are aligned to the espoused values of an organisation.

Finally, OD practitioners can develop mechanisms to integrate external coaches and stakeholders into the coaching culture programme. This could be via regular meetings or briefings with individuals or groups and by inviting external coaches to participate in the activities of internal communities of coaching practice.

Suggestions for organisational leaders. The insights generated by this thesis can inform the way organisational leaders and change agents champion and support the development of coaching cultures. For example, securing leadership buy-in seems to be an important step and one that needs to be continually monitored and tested. Leadership behaviours need to align to the vision for coaching culture and translated into benefits for colleagues, customers, and external stakeholders.

The emergent nature of coaching cultures calls for an initial plan to offer an experience of coaching to enacting stakeholders, including organisational leaders. The same principle applies to prospective change agents. Their development starts with first-hand experience of the power of coaching.

The practical implication of this finding is important as it suggests that the first action for leaders, is to experience coaching offered either through a leadership development programme or 1:1 executive or leadership coaching. This encourages an iterative development process and requires a different leadership approach, a distributed model of leadership (Canterino et al., 2020), where trusted change agents lead the next iteration of the development programme. It requires a "letting go" of control as encouraged by leadership models inspired by complexity science (Bushe & Marshak, 2016), noticing where interventions have ripple effects and reinforcing and amplifying them by motivating new change agents to bring the proposition to their local settings.

Suggestions for coaches and educators/ developers of coaching practice. This thesis also made a contribution by identifying interventions to sustain coaching cultures adding to our toolkit of interventions. Mobilising a community of change agents is a first step but sustaining that energy requires group-based interventions that need planning and resourcing. It requires paying attention to, and investing in, their ongoing development and facilitating connections between them. Supervision is an important step to further develop coaching practice for coaches and group-based interventions such as group supervision, action learning sets and communities of coaching practice, help create a consistent coaching practice and bring institutional knowledge back to the coaching community.

There are also implications on how we develop these communities. Education and training of managers-as-coaches or internal coaches needs to reflect and prepare them for their role as ambassadors of the change. It needs to offer explicit links with the espoused organisational culture and values, highlighting the role of the manager and internal coach beyond the dyadic relationship and their agency for collective change.

External coaches can strengthen their interactions with organisations by incorporating tripartite goal setting, progress or evaluation meetings into their practice. This could be incorporated in the education and training of coaches and coaching psychologists.

Finally, the thesis gave very initial nods to the relationship of dialogic group interventions, based on coaching principles, in developing a coaching culture. A practice-based exploration of this relationship would create new synergies and areas of practice for coaching and OD practitioners and developers of organisational culture.

5.3. Conclusion

This thesis concluded that developing a coaching culture is a culture change proposition that is built on developing coaching skill in organisations and embedding it into all aspects of organisational life. It becomes a shared belief that developing organisational psychological safety facilitates learning and growth and creates cultures that allow innovation and collaboration.

Investing in developing cultures the same way we invest in designing and developing organisations (strategies, structures, and processes) is becoming more and more essential. Culture change, however, remains still ambiguous and unrealistic leaving some organisations with anxiety on how to tackle it. The proposition to develop a coaching culture does not only amplify the benefits of coaching as an intervention but it provides a practical and tangible tool to shape organisational culture.

Developing organisational culture is challenging and takes time, but this thesis suggests that articulating an intention and a first stage intervention is key. The culture then becomes self-sustaining as long as there is a hub of "enlightened" change agents who continually evolve their practice and organisational behaviour.

The initial evidence we have on the outcomes of coaching cultures make it a potentially powerful strategy for organisations as there are implied benefits in attracting and retaining talent, creating positive and inclusive environments, and adding value to customers and external stakeholders.

In conclusion, our understanding of coaching cultures is still in its infancy. Understanding and creating a theory and body of research to support it would require bringing together practice and research to provide a deeper understanding of coaching cultures. This thesis has added to our understanding of coaching cultures by consolidating

the evidence and offering a framework for future research and practice. It constructed a cultural framework and unpacked the role of the enacting stakeholder. More importantly, this thesis has highlighted gaps and what still needs to be done to advance our understanding of the phenomenon of coaching cultures.

Chapter 6: Reflexive Process Report

Reflexive process report

1. Scoping out your research idea

What challenges did you face and how did you overcome them?

Scoping my research idea was probably the most challenging part of this doctorate. The process I followed to decide on my research idea started with a very wide exploration of my career interests, passions, and achievements on one hand and previous research projects or interests on the other. From burnout and stress to culture change and EDI, communities of practice and identity development, culture change and transformation and allyship in organisations. I was looking for the common thread. Excerpt from my journal: *"I am noticing a temptation to try and incorporate and synthesise interests throughout my career. I'm putting too much weight in this Professional Doctorate for my future career and professional identity. What do I want to be an "expert" on? What do I want people to recognise my expertise for? What do I want to contribute to practice? Main emotions: excitement and fear".* What helped me overcome these challenges was talking to my supervisors who helped me become unstuck, offered ideas, and gave me reassurance that these feelings are common at this stage and part of the process.

Did your initial idea change during this stage? If so, how and why?

Deciding on my research topic was difficult and I was holding and exploring a few ideas in the early stages. During the last few years of my career, I have been attracted to areas of practice that impact on organisation-wide outcomes. I am curious to understand how the individual translates, transforms into the organisational. Also, as a late returner to academia to do my doctorate, I notice a need to consolidate my knowledge and experience.

My career, education and professional development has always been in the intersection of four areas of practice: organisational psychology, organisational development (culture change), leadership and management, and coaching. Therefore, the frame through which I see the world of work and how people and organisations develop, has been shaped by the integration of these interrelated but sometimes disconnected, in practice, lenses. I wanted

to work in an area that merges somehow all these aspects of my experience and professional identity.

I decided to work on coaching culture because it brings together these four professional identities I hold and try to integrate in my practice: the strategist, the developer, the leader / manager, and the coach. A few years ago, I led on a programme to develop a coaching culture. I remember feeling excited, fulfilled, and stretched by this experience but at the back of my mind I was always questioning the evidence base that I was basing the whole programme on. I managed to evidence impact at the time mainly through increases in indicators like engagement, management capability and feelings of belonging and inclusion.

At the time, coaching culture was very popular in practitioner conferences and publications, but my observation was that there was very little empirical evidence. The British Psychological Society and the Division of Occupational Psychology were promoting evidence-based practice. For many years I equated, wrongly, evidence-base with empirical, academic research.

How did this process differ from your expectations?

I was expecting to be feeling motivated and energised at that stage. Reading widely on the subject was fun but felt unproductive. Excerpt from my journal: *"This phase feels weird. Lots of motivation but little focus. I don't know where to start, what to focus on first and looking forward to having a plan - although my natural preference is the opposite of planning and knowing what comes next. It feels like time is passing unproductively".*

What were your key learnings from this stage?

The main learnings at that stage were to balance my enthusiasm and excitement with my anxiety and at times inner dialogue of not being good enough to work at that level or that I have left it too late in life. I quickly "quietened" the critical inner voice and started making a plan for how I was going to tackle this.

I was interested to find the literature review of 2014 of coaching cultures. I noticed that very little academic research had been conducted since then and I noticed I felt lost in the

definition of empirically derived knowledge, practitioner-led research or publications, grey literature and thought pieces.

There was a big gap between the two and I couldn't understand why that was: is it a time lag between academic research and practice; has the interest in coaching cultures faded? My supervisor helped me reframe how research and practice can work in a complimentary way. On one hand I felt disappointed and on the other, intrigued, and motivated to dig in deeper.

What would you do differently if you were to go through this process again?

Reflecting back on this early stage, things I would do differently are: I would have explored the practitioner aspect of my work; I would have had more conversations with colleagues, academics, practitioners about their experience; I would have used these conversations to narrow down my research question and maybe focus my work on something that would have some real practical application and would help colleagues in their practice. The wide lens I have chosen to employ is however appropriate and reflects the nature of the subject matter and that our knowledge is both coming from practice and research.

2.   The systematic review: Developing a protocol

What challenges did you face and how did you overcome them?

Developing the protocol was very technical and I needed the support of others to understand how to develop the search strings. The SLR, as a methodology, was new to me and I started with a very naïve understanding of it and quickly had to develop my knowledge of what it entails and understand how the insights that come from it can move the debate in my chosen area, forward. I engaged in lots of reading around the methodology and other published SLRs to build my confidence in how I was shaping my protocol. Again, I needed guidance from my supervisors along the way.

How did this process differ from your expectations/ plan?

I didn't have any expectations for this stage. As everything was new, I immersed myself in the process and the literature and I was enjoying learning. Like in the earlier stage, things felt chaotic and there were too many possibilities, which was exciting but also stressful.

What were your key learnings from this stage?

The main learning is that investing time and effort in developing a robust protocol pays off in the long run. Be ready for many iterations and for the protocol to evolve continually throughout the early stages of the SLR. The development of the inclusion / exclusion criteria felt counterintuitive. I wanted to know and include everything, but I was reminded that the aim here is to go deeper and deeper. My supervisors used the funnel analogy which helped me understand the importance of exclusion criteria.

What would you do differently if you were to go about developing a protocol again?

I would be more systematic in capturing insights from the literature. I read so much at that stage, and I could have capitalised on that early reading for later stages of my doctorate. I would also discuss my idea widely first with colleagues, practitioners, or professionals from other disciplines to open my eyes to other avenues before deciding on the final elements of my protocol.

2.1. The systematic review: Conducting searches

How did you come to a decision on the keywords, databases and inclusion/exclusion criteria to use? What challenges did you face and how did you overcome them?

Developing the search strings and making important decisions at each step was quite stressful. I had attended the upgrade presentations from last year and I remember vividly the advice from fellow prof doc students then: trust the process! So, I did and approached this as a "dance" between doing the immediate next step and looking at the wider aims at the same time.

At that early stage, there were many challenges with technology: referencing tools, databases, research management tools, etc. These coupled with doubts as to whether what I was doing was right and would wield the outcomes I was hoping for, made that stage tricky. The librarian was extremely helpful in my decisions on keywords, search strings and databases.

The rest of the SLR process and methodology (title/ abstract /paper sifting, developing evidence statements, quality assessment) were surprisingly satisfying albeit ridden with self-doubt at all stages. I, again to my surprise, enjoyed the structure of the SLR and it gave me a sense of progress.

How did this process differ from your expectations/plan?

The sifting process took a lot longer than I had expected as it brought to life the complexity of the construct I'm looking at and it helped me crystallise the inclusion/ exclusion criteria. The process was different to my initial expectations. It felt very clinical, ruthless sometimes and felt counterintuitive to the task at hand, both because I was excluding interesting research papers and because my subject matter is not a solid, well-defined construct.

What were your key learnings from this stage?

The second researcher sifting process was very helpful. Although we had a very good level of agreement between us of which papers to include / exclude, there were a few discrepancies. We had a few articles at abstract stage where we discussed how the criteria need to be applied, which helped me clarify my position. These discrepancies provided opportunities for reflection, and it helped me challenge my assumptions: what needs to be included was maybe influenced by my interests.

The extraction process was very detailed and time consuming but incredibly useful and it brought out the complexity I was looking for, which was insightful and valuable.

What would you do differently if you were to go about conducting systematic searches again?

The biggest challenge was doing this on my own so, if I had to do it again, I would reach out for help earlier in the process. I might also include grey literature, if I had to do it again, although I was warned that combining searches of academic research and practitioner literature, would be a time-consuming exercise and outside of what was possible in the timeframes of this doctorate.

2.2. The systematic review: Assimilation and write up

How did you come to a decision on the way to cluster the data and tell the story? How did you make the choice of target journal?

I created an extraction spreadsheet based on the SPIO framework. I also extracted all the evidence from my final papers against my research questions. This was the most helpful exercise that led to me starting to see patterns and a framework emerging from my data.

The choice of target journal was easy to make. My supervisor and I agreed that it would be appropriate and interesting to publish in the same journal as the last literature review on coaching culture, helping continue the academic debate.

What challenges did you face and how did you overcome them?

I needed to make decisions along the way to help me find the evidence that was out there and then create my own "story" to describe my findings. I was often confused on what each paper presented as antecedent and what as outcome. I contacted my supervisors a few times during this stage and their reflective, coaching questions and pragmatic solutions helped me continue.

How did this process differ from your expectations/plan?

I thought the answers to my research questions will jump out of the evidence, but it required a lot of qualitative analysis to synthesise the findings. Some of it was subjective and again my supervisors' guidance unlocked some questions I had.

What were your key learnings from this stage and what would you do differently if you were to go about writing up again?

The main learning for me had to do with the quality assessment of each paper. It helped me understand and bring a more critical perspective to research outputs.

If I had to do this again, I would pay more attention and earlier to the qualitative elements of the research I was synthesising.

3. Research Study

3.1. Research Study: Design

How did you come to a decision on the study/studies you were going to undertake?

I was keen to add "my little bit" to the body of knowledge around coaching cultures and I was guided by the findings of the SLR and the gaps in research. There were a few avenues I could have taken my research study towards and the criteria that I used to help me decide, were: a. how motivated, excited I was by each option and b. how feasible and realistic these were. For example, one of my supervisors suggested doing a Delphi study and whilst that excited me, it didn't feel realistic to complete in the timeframe of the doctorate.

Why did you decide to use the particular methodology/analytical process?

Reflexive thematic analysis was one of the most appropriate methodologies because of the exploratory nature of my research. I was also drawn to the reflexive element and I'm glad I did because it pushed me to apply a pure qualitative methodology, challenging my previous preconceptions of what constitutes good knowledge and research.

What challenges did you face in the design process and how did you overcome them?

While researching on methodologies, you can never appreciate how it would feel applying them. I felt I was blind in my choices. My supervisor helped me crystalise my choice. The scholars who developed the method call it a theoretically flexible method, but I only understood what that meant when I started unpacking my own ontological and

epistemological assumptions. Their position on reflexive thematic analysis has developed depth over the years and there were many dos of don'ts. Making sure I understood and was applying the method "correctly" was challenging. For example, I wasn't sure if using a critical incident technique would clash with the reflexive thematic analysis approach. Finding a study that did just that gave me confidence and validated my intuitive choice.

How did this process differ from your expectations/plan?

I didn't have specific expectations but what was surprising was how much I had to immerse myself in the writings of Braun and Clarke and really understand what made reflexive thematic analysis different to other TA approaches.

What were your key learnings from this stage?

The key learning at this stage what to deep dive into the methodology first, understand its principles and values, and then think through how I would go through the suggested steps. This structured approach gave me confidence to be creative in my approach at later stages.

3.2. Research Study: Gathering data

How did you go about gathering data and accessing participants? Why did you choose this route?

My participants were practitioners in roles similar to mine, so I started with my professional contacts. I send them the information sheet I created to allow them to self-select, and I then used the snowballing technique where my contacts very helpfully reached out to their contacts. I chose this route because I was looking for very specific type of experience and it was the best way to locate that experience.

What challenges did you face when gathering data/accessing participants and how did you overcome them?

It's always difficult to get people to contribute their time for research without any tangible outcome for them. Many of my contacts volunteered because they were interested in the subject. Some of them didn't get back to me but luckily the snowballing technique worked well, and I ended up with more participants than I needed.

I also realised that I had too many interview questions. I did a pilot interview, which helped me polish my interviewing skills and explore the main topic areas I was interested in.

How did this process differ from your expectations/plan?

The interviews brought up some reflections that I wasn't expecting. I was seen as an expert, and I was wondering if my participants were giving socially desirable accounts of their experience. Most of my participants, however, were very open and honest, sharing personal and sometimes challenging stories for example, with their line managers or leaders in their organisations. Some double-checked at those points that their interviews were completely confidential.

I also noticed that participants approached my questions differently. Some accessed their experience through what they did so they shared a lot of detail on the interventions, whereas others focused on the complexities of culture change or on the feelings, thoughts and challenges they faced as a practitioner.

What were your key learnings from this stage? What would you do differently if you were going to begin this stage again, and why?

The key learning was that I needed to create an interview schedule but be prepared to be flexible, reacting and adapting to my participants' style. I would also allow more time for the interviews. Some participants had a lot to share and a few of them commented that it felt good to talk about their experience and it helped them appreciate the impact they've had in their organisations more.

I was trying to imagine how this stage would have worked if the data were gathered through a cooperative inquiry methodology or focus group. If I could put all my participants together in a room, how might the sharing process generate deeper insights?

3.3. Research Study: Analysing data

How did you go about analysing your data? Why did you choose this route?

As I was using Reflexive Thematic Analysis for the first time, I took a systematic approach to go through my data with care and to build my confidence in the method. I watched the video recordings first, once, or twice. I then listened to the recordings, read the transcripts, and made notes of anything that felt important, that I was relating to. I generated codes and I started theming them. I was looking for meaning. I followed the steps described in the method developed by Braun and Clarke hoping that patterns will start formulating.

What challenges did you face when analysing your data and how did you overcome them?

This stage took a long time to complete. Excerpt from an email to my supervisor: *"Reflexive TA is a lot more difficult than I imagined. I've been buried in these stories for such a long time".* I analysed each transcript to every little detail, and I ended up with too many codes. Some codes were repeated amongst transcripts but very few appeared in all. I was grappling with notions of objectivity and generalisability, but I immersed myself in the method which helped overcome doubts about what I was producing was of high quality. My supervisor helped me reframe and appreciate the rich and nuanced quality of my work.

How did this process differ from your expectations/plan?

The reflexive element was freeing and creative and completely different to what I was expecting or have done before. I enjoyed this feeling of painting of a picture, of creating new meaning from the stories of my participants and my own experience. I reconstructed my notion of research endeavour and opened my eyes to qualitative methods.

What were your key learnings from this stage?

The main learning came from employing reflexive thematic analysis and appreciating its potential to generate new meaning. I also learnt to appreciate the value of my position as a researcher and my experience as a practitioner.

What would you do differently if you were going to begin this stage again, and why?

I would spend more time and care when defining my participant groups. I divided my participant groups based on internal or external roles they play in coaching culture programmes. In reality, most participants have played both roles at some points in their careers, so the distinction did not generate any useful insights.

3.4. Research Study: Writing up

What challenges did you face when gathering writing up your study and how did you overcome them?

The writing up stage was challenging. The overriding feeling was that I was missing a lot of the richness of my participants stories. I felt I was doing a disservice to my participants accounts by reducing their incredible stories to only four themes. I wanted to include as many codes and quotes from my transcripts as possible to stay true to their accounts.

I ended up with far too many words in the findings section and after a few revisions to balance data with interpretation, the feedback from my supervisor was *"you juggle really beautifully between data description (this is what participants said) and data interpretation (this is what it means)".* That gave me confidence in my write up and is in line with Braun and Clarke's guideline of approx. 50% data and 50% analysis/ interpretation.

How did this process differ from your expectations/plan?

I hadn't appreciated how much story crafting I would engage in. It felt like I was a building a new story through the voices of my participants. I was the 21st participant and the write up was the golden thread that runs through our collective experience. Braun and Clarke compare the work of the Reflexive Thematic Analysis researcher as that of an artist in comparison to other methods where the researcher acts as an archaeologist looking for the truth through the data. At the start, I approached the task as a jigsaw puzzle but during the write up I saw it more as baking, creating something new out of a vast number of ingredients, my data.

What were your key learnings from this stage?

I ended up with too many themes / subthemes and writing them up took a lot of energy and words. I had to push myself and shine a light to the most important or interesting findings.

The key learning was the importance of surfacing my own positionality and using it as a resource and a lens to analyse and write up my findings. My supervisor also pushed me to answer the "so what" question. I revised my write up a few times trying to articulate the contribution of my research. This exercise helped me see the value of my research and of research in general.

What would you do differently if you were going to begin this stage again, and why?

I used Delve, a thematic analysis platform, which helped me be systematic in coding and theming my data. Looking back, I would probably use a more creative approach to how I would synthesize my write up. Maybe approach it as creating a story made from individual incidents, maybe reflected in post-it notes that I would move around to find the best, more engaging way to tell the story.

4. Overall Doctoral Process

Reflecting on your doctorate, how do you feel you have developed (e.g. technical expertise, theoretical knowledge)?

Doing this doctorate helped me develop as a practitioner and researcher. I have developed technical expertise in research methods from the application of the two methods I used in my studies, systematic literature reviews and reflexive thematic analysis. I have learnt about other research methods through my research for the most appropriate method for my research aims as well as from my fellow doctorate students' research. I appreciated the value, contribution and complexity of qualitative research and the role of the researcher.

I have also developed theoretical knowledge and appreciation of ontological and epistemological positioning. I developed my knowledge further in the areas of

organisational culture and complex adaptive systems theory and have immersed myself in the latest research in coaching psychology and coaching effectiveness.

More importantly, my confidence in questioning and critiquing research and practice increased considerably and deepened my commitment to evidence-based practice.

Can you see any changes in your practices and/or professional plan as a result of undertaking this doctorate and associated learnings?

Through the learnings from my research, I have changed the way I see the role of change agents / stakeholders in any culture development work. I engage with external coaches differently and introduce the wider cultural benefits we aspire to, through coaching interventions. I have also developed a deeper appreciation of different levels of listening through using reflexive thematic analysis.

The doctorate also brought up questions of professional and career identity. I often toyed with the idea of moving my career towards consultancy, especially after this doctorate. Whilst I still grapple with these thoughts, I have also recognised a preference in working as an internal consultant in sectors where there is appetite for deep culture change.

What has been the most useful element of the process for you?

Seeing others' journey and getting inspiration from current and previous students. The way the programme is structured worked really well for me because of my preference for independent working with regular checking in points that also served as a vehicle to maintain momentum and increase motivation.

What has been the most rewarding element of the process for you?

Learning and seeing my research taking shape. The upgrade process was a turning point for me as it gave me confidence that I could complete my research. It gave me the direction and plan I needed.

The fact that my first study was published was very rewarding, but probably more rewarding was the encouragement from my supervisors and the fact that they believed in me, more than I believed in myself.

What has been the most challenging element of the process for you?

Time and balancing life, work, and study. I felt at times that I was compromising all three. The start of the journey was stressful as in parallel to starting the doctorate I was starting a new job, got married and reached the big 50 milestone. On top of these, the impostor syndrome was always surfacing at the most difficult times.

What has been the most frustrating element of the process for you?

The beginning was the most frustrating element. As I wrote earlier in this reflective report, deciding on my area of research and the focus of my SLR was frustrating, slow and stressful. In retrospect, I should have asked for more help and direction at that stage.

What would you tell someone beginning this process? What are the key things they should know/avoid/prepare for?

Trust the process. The pace and structure of the programme is carefully designed to get you through your doctorate. Try and keep to the advisory deadlines as much as possible and work at pace, making decisions along the way and sticking to them. There are thousands of routes you can take in your research but pushing yourself to narrow these down and sticking to your plan is important.

Finally, you will need a plan. I spent the first few months without one and had to really step up my work before the upgrade process. For the rest of the time, I developed a realistic plan (against my preference), I allocated time, and I was maintaining motivation by meeting my own deadlines and seeing my plan come together.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Information Sheet for Participants

Developing Coaching Cultures: exploring stakeholders' perspectives

I would like to invite you to participate in this research project, which is part of my Professional Doctorate in Organizational Psychology at Birkbeck, University of London. This project has received ethical approval. To make an informed decision on whether you want to take part in this study, please take a few minutes to read this information sheet.

Who is conducting this research?
The research is conducted by Nick Kapoutzis, an Organizational Psychology Professional Doctorate Student from Birkbeck, University of London, under the guidance of supervisor Dr Lilith Whiley, from the University of Sussex.

What is the purpose of the study?
The aim of the study is to explore stakeholders' perceptions of coaching cultures, their lived experience of the values, principles and behaviours that underpin them and their role and contribution in developing them.

Why have I been invited to take part?
I am inviting professionals with experience of working in or with organisations in the UK that use coaching to develop the organisation or have coaching cultures programmes, to take part in this study. These could come from any of the following areas of practice: coaching (in an internal or external capacity), organisational development, human resources, organisational or business psychology, consultancy, coaching psychology, etc.

What are the procedures of taking part?

If you decide to take part, you will be asked to take part in a one-to-one interview through the virtual online platform Microsoft Teams. (Please find here the Microsoft Teams Privacy Statement: [Microsoft Teams Privacy - Microsoft Teams | Microsoft Learn](#))

The interview will last between 45 and 60 minutes and the questions will explore your experience and role in designing, developing or contributing to the development of coaching cultures in organisations. You will also be asked to recall incidents, in which you either observed or experienced something that would represent, in your view, positive and negative examples of coaching cultures.

Upon completion of your participation, you will be provided with a debrief and offered the opportunity to have access to a summary of the findings, once analysed, by contacting the research team (details below).

What are my participation rights?
Participation in this research guarantees the right to withdraw, to ask questions about how your data will be handled and about the study itself, the right to confidentially and anonymity (unless otherwise agreed), the right to refuse to answer questions, to have recorders turned-off and to be given access to a summary of the findings.

What if I want to withdraw my information?
If you wish to withdraw responses or any personal data gathered during the study, you may do this without any consequences. You can ask for your data to be removed up until the point of analysis, which will take place on approximately the 31st of March 2023 onwards. If you would like to withdraw your data, please contact the researcher (details below).

What will happen to my responses to the study?
Data collected in this study will be analysed and used for the research student thesis. Data may also be used for academic publications and no identifying information would be released.

Will my responses and information be kept confidential?
All information will be treated with the strictest confidence throughout the study. All information will be kept in secure folders on a password protected computer. Access to such information will only be allowed to the researcher and researcher supervisor. During the marking process, external examiners of my project may also have access.

What are the possible risks to taking part?
There are no risks involved in taking part in this research.

Any further questions?
If you have any questions or require more information about this study before or during your participation, please contact either of:

Nick Kapoutzis
nkapou01@student.bbk.ac.uk
Research Student
Department of Organisational Psychology
School of Business, Economics and Informatics
Birkbeck, University of London, London, WC1E 7HX

Dr Lilith Whiley
L.Whiley@sussex.ac.uk
Research Supervisor
University of Sussex Business School
Department of Management
Jubilee Building, Falmer, Brighton, BN1 9SN

For information about Birkbeck's data protection policy please visit: http://www.bbk.ac.uk/about-us/policies/privacy#9
If you have concerns about this study, please contact the School's Ethics Officer at: BEI-ethics@bbk.ac.uk.
School Ethics Officer
School of Business, Economics and Informatics
Birkbeck, University of London, London WC1E 7HX
You also have the right to submit a complaint to the Information Commissioner's Office https://ico.org.uk/

Appendix B: Informed Consent Form

Developing Coaching Cultures: exploring stakeholders' perspectives

RESEARCHER'S COPY

Please read the following items and tick the appropriate boxes to indicate whether you agree to take part in this study.

☐ I have read the information sheet in full; I understand the purpose of this research is to explore the experiences of professionals who have worked in or with organisations in the UK that use coaching to develop the organisation or have coaching cultures programmes.

☐ Any questions I had have been answered, and I understand I may ask further questions at any time.

☐ I understand what is involved in participating, that it is voluntary, and that I may withdraw without consequences and penalty by 31 March 2023

☐ I agree/do not agree to the interview being recorded by the Microsoft Teams function

☐ I understand that I have the right to ask for the recording to be turned off and/or stopped at any time during the interview

☐ I understand the data will be transcribed word-by-word using Microsoft Word functionality

☐ I understand the results may be used for academic publications, such as thesis or journal articles.

Name _____

Signed _____   Dated: _____

Appendix C: Debrief for Participants

<u>Developing Coaching Cultures: exploring stakeholders' perspectives</u>

Thank you very much for taking part in this research project, which is exploring the experiences of professionals who have experience of developing coaching cultures or working with or in organisations that have coaching culture programmes as part of my thesis for the Professional Doctorate in Organizational Psychology at Birkbeck, University of London.

The primary research question of my research is:
>   How are coaching cultures designed and developed?

The secondary research questions are:
>   a. How are coaching cultures defined?
>   b. What are the behaviours, principles and values that underpin coaching cultures?
>   c. What role do the enacting stakeholders (organisational developers and coaches) play in designing and developing coaching cultures?

The results of this research will provide an important contribution to my thesis and will be theoretically beneficial in advancing our understanding of the nature of coaching cultures, their definition and building blocks. It will also be practically useful as the intended impact is to help those responsible for designing, developing or evaluating coaching culture programmes by developing: a framework that describes the behaviours, principles and values that underpin coaching cultures; a more nuanced understanding of coaching cultures based on the perspectives of the enacting roles, and a conceptual framework and guidance for designing evidence-based coaching cultures.

I would like to thank you, and affirm that your data will be treated confidentially, and your name/personal details will be anonymised. If you have any concerns about the way that this study was conducted, please do not hesitate to contact the research supervisor Dr Lilith Whiley at l.whiley@sussex.ac.uk. If you would like to find out the outcome of this research, please do not hesitate to keep in touch with me and I will send you a summary of the results.

Thank you.

Nick Kapoutzis
nkapou01@student.bbk.ac.uk

For information about Birkbeck's data protection policy please visit: http://www.bbk.ac.uk/about-us/policies/privacy#9
If you have concerns about this study, please contact the School's Ethics Officer at: BEI-ethics@bbk.ac.uk.
School Ethics Officer,
School of Business, Economics and Informatics
Birkbeck, University of London, London WC1E 7HX
You also have the right to submit a complaint to the Information Commissioner's
Office https://ico.org.uk/

Appendix D: SLR Quality Assessment

No.	Paper	Quality Dimensions (Hong and Pluye, 2018)							Frequency			Quality Rating	
		Methodological				Conceptual		Reporting					
	Author and year	Truthfulness (Quant: Internal validity - Qual: Credibility)	Applicability (Quant: External validity - Qual: Transferability)	Consistency (Quant: Reliability - Qual: Dependability)	Neutrality (Quant: objectivity - Qual: Confirmability)	Conceptual quality	Conceptual clarity	Reporting Quality	Yes	No	CT	6 - 7	High
												4 - 5	Medium / High
												2 - 3	Medium
												0 - 1	Low
1	(Anthony & van Nieuwerburgh, 2018)	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	4	3	0		
2	(Boysen et al., 2021)	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	4	3	0		
3	(Hamilton, 2019)	Y	N	N	N	CT	Y	N	3	4	1		
4	(Lawrence, 2015)	CT	Y	N	N	N	N	N	1	5	1		
5	(Milner et al., 2020)	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	4	3	0		
6	(Rosha & Lace, 2018)	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	4	3	0		
7	(Sarsur & Parente, 2019)	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	3	4	0		
8	(Vesso, 2014)	Y	CT	Y	N	N	Y	Y	4	2	1		
9	(Vesso & Alas, 2016)	Y	CT	Y	N	N	Y	Y	4	2	1		
	No. of Ys	Y = 8	Y = 3	Y = 2	Y = 0	Y= 5	Y = 8	Y = 4					

Appendix E: Evidence Statements and Quality Ratings

Antecedent	Quality Rating	Reasoning
Top leadership buy-in and involvement	Initial evidence	Multiple studies some of which have limitations in design and execution
Formalized and planned process that includes provision of appropriate training and resources	Initial evidence	
Coaching-style management/ mindset is an important capability of leaders and people managers	Initial evidence	
Employment of dialogic processes to shift organisational identity and culture	Unclear evidence	Multiple studies all of which have limitations in design and execution
Interventions	**Quality Rating**	**Reasoning**
Executive / 1:1 coaching/ leadership development (external)	Initial evidence	Multiple studies some of which have limitations in design and execution
Leader/ manager as coach development	Initial evidence	
Coaching skills training	Initial evidence	
Team and group coaching	Initial evidence	One study of medium/ high quality
Outcomes	**Quality Rating**	**Reasoning**
Attraction and retention of high potential individuals	Initial evidence	One study of medium/ high quality
Engagement / Positive communication and consultation	Initial evidence	Multiple studies some of which have limitations in design and execution
Positive and supportive environment	Initial evidence	One study of medium/ high quality
Performance	Initial evidence	
Problem solving	Initial evidence	
Growth / empowerment	Initial evidence	
Culture change	Unclear evidence	One study of medium / low quality
Measures	**Quality Rating**	**Reasoning**
Coaching Culture Characteristics in Leadership Style model (3C model)	Initial evidence	Multiple studies some of which have limitations in design and execution
Leader's Impact on Culture" (LIC model)	Initial evidence	One study of medium/ high quality
Work Culture Survey	Initial evidence	
Engagement Survey	Initial evidence	

Appendix F: Interview Schedule

Stage	Question	Notes

1. Introduction	• Thank you for agreeing to take part in my research on Coaching Culture.
	• The aim of the study is to explore stakeholders' perceptions of coaching cultures, their lived experience of the values, principles and behaviours that underpin them and their role and contribution in developing them.
	• The interview will last between 45 and 60 minutes and the questions will explore your experience and role in designing, developing or contributing to the development of coaching cultures in organisations.
	• The interview is structured around 3 areas:
	   o Your experience and role in developing a coaching culture
	   o Any positive and negative incidents you can recall that exemplify coaching culture (or the absence of it)
	   o Finally I'd like to explore your views on coaching culture, the principles or values that underpin them and anything that those involved in designing and developing coaching culture can do differently or better.
	• Can I confirm your consent to participate? Do you have any questions before we start?
		• Proceed only if satisfied that participant fully understands the requirements/ contents of the information sheet and voluntarily participates
		• Build rapport and put participant at ease

2. Exploring Participants experience of coaching cultures	• Could you tell me about your experience of working in or with organisations that have coaching culture programmes or use coaching with an intention to develop the organisation?
	• To include: years of experience, role, sector
	   Probing questions
	   o What was your role?
	   o Who else was involved and how did you work with them?
	   o What interventions were used?
		Criteria:
		
		• Understand the role of the participant in relation to roles of others involved

3. Critical incidents *At least two incidents – one positive and one negative*	• From your experience, think situations in which you either observed or experienced something that would represent, in your view, positive and negative examples of coaching cultures.
	  ○ What was the situation? (Briefly describe relevant aspects of the background of the incident).
	  ○ Exactly what did you do, or the person observed do?
	  ○ Why was this behaviour (action) particularly effective? What less effective behaviour might be expected in the situation described?
	
	(Based on examples of CIT questions - Twelker, 2003, after Nelson, 1971).
		Criteria:
		
		• is the interviewee reporting the actual incident / behaviour.
		• was it observed/ experienced by the interviewee.
		• were all relevant factors given.
		• has the interviewee reported something that is critical.
		• has the interviewee made it clear why they believe the behaviour was critical

4. Consolidation – exploring participants views on coaching cultures	• From your experience, what is a coaching culture? What are the defining characteristics? What is not a coaching culture? (how would you describe or define a coaching culture?) • What principles or values underpin an embedded coaching culture? • Reflecting on your experience, is there anything you what would you do differently in your role to improve the way coaching cultures are designed and developed? • What could others involved in coaching culture programmes do differently to improve the way coaching cultures are designed and developed?	Criteria: Explore insights for practical application
5. Close	Thank you very much Debrief	Thank participant and next steps

Appendix G: Excerpt from Initial Notes from Interviews

Pseudonym	Date	Role 1	Role 2	Years of experience	Sector	Notes
1. Amy	17.01.2023	internal coach	educator trainer	+ 10 years (20 in educator roles)	HE	- need commitment from HRD - Engages the whole system / - Emergent / critical moment : Denise of hrd - Community of practice – where the energy lies – emergent rather than planned - Needs to be embedded in processes – strategies – in everything we do - Training ILM was a great step to develop culture – gave life to the project / camaraderie/ breaking silos – it was a catalyst for other initiatives - A passionate champion - Journey was halted after od person left - Momentum was lost – no resources to drive it - It is evident in the language - Empowering - Conversations around healthier workplaces - Parallels with learning organisations - Cc a means to creating learning organisations that are agile - Is it a nirvana? An ideology we can achieve?
2. Bryony	23.01.2023	OD lead	Internal coach	21	Charity (3rd sector) / HE	- Unhelpful term – means everything and nothing - Means to an end? – quote - Supporting change – Doing business that's more humane - Working with external providers – trust - Coaching academy – what was it there to achieve? - Integrate in lmd programmes - Women in leadership - Head of hr wasn't an ally - Individual impact rather than collective / intention was not culture change

						• Difficult to say culture has changed? The term is used with little understanding/ open culture? Collaborative culture? • Discrepancies between espoused and lived culture – our role is to point them out • Coaching gives a common language • A culture that values quality interpersonal relations • Metaphor – garden – coaching prepared the ground for other things to happen – e'g reverse mentoring • Clarity about what we mean by cc. Packaged and defined appropriately so that it doesn't do coaching a disservice in the long run • Valuing individuals and their contribution / respectful communication • One more strand (and a major tool in partnership with other things) in our desire to create a culture that is effective and respectful (to stop it from using it in this global sense)
3. Carol	24.01.2023	Coach (external)	Supervisor (OD lead)	21 +	Various – financial/ education / NHS	• Patchy interventions – led by passionate L&D people • Lukewarm senior buy in • No follow up • Externals : if it comes from L&D team – it doesn't flow through the veins • Business champion as well as od champion
4. Diana	25.01.2023	Coach (internal)	OD Lead	25 years	HE – Housing associations	• L&D to OD • Experience of coaching early on in career • Start with supporting managers • Senior manager would go to external LMD courses and experience coaching or saw that peers in other sectors had coaching • Selective to start with (senior people) – then opened up to other colleagues top reach more people • The shift was made possible by resources / L&D grew as an organ in the org • People in L&D / OD roles had impact – which raised the profile of the function • Resource intensive but was seen as beneficial • Word of mouth made it popular – people knocking at my door – trickle down effect that it was a valuable thing to do • Positive impact of becoming a coach • Diversity of internal coaches had a positive impact – helped embed org values

						- It was viewed as remedial to start with – - Holistic approach – not just about career but the intersection of personal and professional life - Internal coaches: criteria for selection – confidence grew with practice / supervision - Selecting coaches is really important - Impact – connection within the org – org knowledge - connecting the dots Principles, Values, Behaviours - PVB: doing it for a good reason – professional, confidential – the 180rganization was seen to value individuals and responded to their individual needs - PVB – a coach needs to provide challenge – feeling that the coach can be trusted so individuals open up - Respect- listening – probing – confidentiality
5. Evelyn	3/2/2023	OD lead	coach (internal)	14 years	HE / health care	- Started from training as internal coach to MSc and supervision qualification. - Joined the coaching academy – focus to create a cc and embed it in development programmes - coaching embedded in LMD - Led coaching academy. It started with an intention to develop a coaching culture and in the latter years moved more to offering coaching - Pandemic shifted to the more immediate rather than long term focus - Sponsor – key role - Embed in LM role – talent dev - Peer to peer was missing - HR involved – changed the tone of conversations - Move outside 180rganization to raise awareness in the sector with a coaching conference - Embed in appraisal, career development, conversations - Imapct – individual – high / LMD medium / culture low - Critical moment – change in leadership – in the sponsor role – lost focus - Success criterion: the offer of coaching was never challenged – it became part of the expected norms of the org – but the expected norms of the development opportunities rather than the expected norms of how people worked with each other - Sports coaching (telling) seen also to be used under the banner of coaching

						• Develop0ing a cc is a lot simpler than we think but more difficult to do in practice – CC is more than having coaches available – it is a willingness to role model that as much as possible - • If no sponsor and it gets driven by L&D that's problematic • Foundational element – Commitment from senior leaders they will attempt to adopt that mindset • Peer to peer – the forgotten piece – could be powerful • Stick with it – duration and consistency over time are key – part of the success – not just looking for the quick wins • Pandemic put command and control structures – need to move away from that • Younger generation – untapped resources and energy more aligned to a coaching approach – awareness of diversity, • Do differently: use external expertise alongside internal expertise at the beginning PVB • Negative Behaviours: directive – negative conversations • Coaching as a mindset – non-judgmental, listening, seeing others as adults with the solutions already within their gift the answers • B: questioning curiosity, pose things as questions rather than directives or fait accompli. Reading the room to draw out strengths • B: they were present with their team, very demonstrably listening, non judgmental responses – embodying coaching as a mindset B (-) directive authoritarian,

Appendix H: Coding Process on Delve

Appendix I.1: Example Initial Theming of Codes About Stakeholder Roles

Coaching Culture

Search

Codes

Snippets

Transcripts +

1. Amy 17-01-23 LM.docx
10. Kapila 3.3.23 SS.docx
11. Laura 15.03.23 WR.docx
12. Mona 7.3.23 SC.docx
13 Norah 15.3.23 MP.docx
14 Oprah 17.3.23 CH.docx
15 Prisha 17.3.23 K.docx
16 Rita 27.3.23 JF.docx
17 Stella 4.4.23 SN.docx
18. Tina 14.4.23 KW.docx
19. Vicky 17.4.23.docx
2. Bryony 23-01-23 FR.docx
20. Zofia 17.4.23.docx
3. Carol 24-01.23 GM.docx
4. Diana 30-01-23 KE.docx
5. Evelyn 03.02.23 LC.docx
6. Freya 10.02.23 PM.docx
7. Georgia 10.02.23 MP.docx
8. Ingrid 13.02.23. SL.docx
9. Jenny 27.02.23 JM.docx

Codes

Supervisor (1)
Write a description or thoughts about this code

HR (2)
Write a description or thoughts about this code

External Coach (11)
Write a description or thoughts about this code

Champion - Leaders - HRD role (40)
Write a description or thoughts about this code

> **Senior coaching champion (8)**
> Write a description or thoughts about this code

OD / LD role (13)
Write a description or thoughts about this code

Intersection of roles (20)
Write a description or thoughts about this code

Educator / trainer (4)
Write a description or thoughts about this code

Internal coach (10)
Write a description or thoughts about this code

> **motivation (1)**
> Write a description or thoughts about this code

Appendix I.2: Codes for "Experience of Coaching" Theme

Appendix J: Initial Themes

1. Passion – coaching cultures are built where the energy is and sustained by passion for coaching (or passionate communities)

2. A network / system of interventions / initiatives are needed to develop a coaching culture – wider change programme aligned to strategic objectives

3. Leadership Commitment

4. Coaching principles underpin a coaching culture giving a common language

5. It is more about coaching than it is about culture – individual impact – less so on culture – nested systems

6. From the exclusive to the inclusive

7. Building communities of the "enlightened" sustains coaching cultures

8. A coaching approach embedded in everything (metaphors – language)

9. Coaching culture requires a fundamental shift in mindset – They happen naturally if the core business or if professionals already work in that way

10. The term Coaching Culture is a proxy for something else

11. Coaching culture is about relationships and quality of conversations

12. Personal journeys and becoming self as instrument – Live it be it don't use the jargon
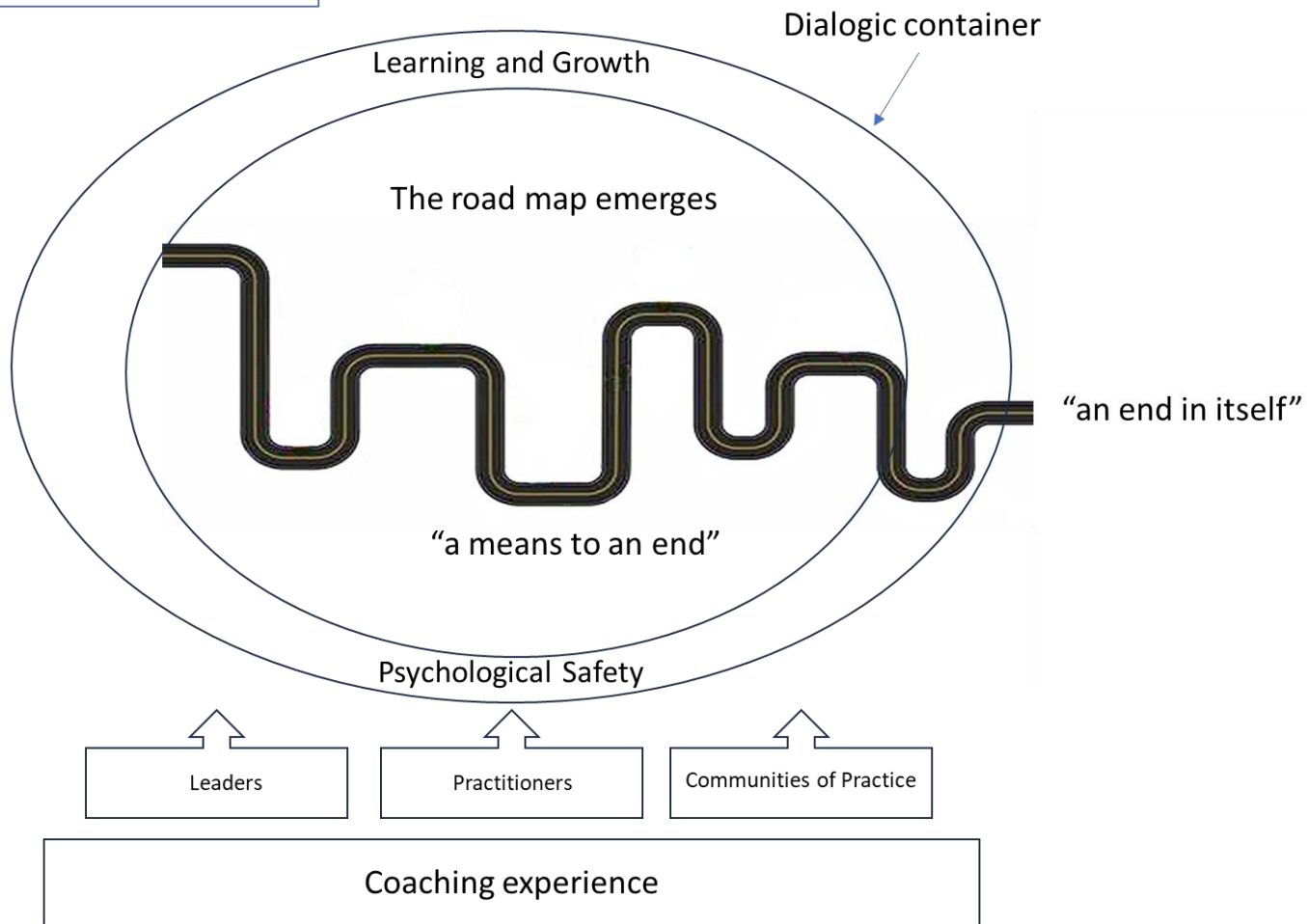
Appendix K: Interim Thematic Synopsis

Theme / Subtheme	Description	Example quotes
1. A coaching approach is embedded in "the way things are done around here" to develop coaching cultures.	Coaching cultures are organisational "containers" where a coaching approach is embedded in organisational artefacts, and people processes and interactions, and where psychologically safe exploration and growth can take place	*"… you see it on paperwork, you'd see it in the structure with roles (e.g., coaching champions or ambassadors), you'd see it being demonstrated by leadership and management… people are more assertive in their conversations, or when they host meetings".* (Annie)
1.1. Psychological safety for genuine inquiry	Coaching cultures create psychologically safe, trustful environments for non-judgmental, genuine inquiry and exploration.	*"… it feels very safe and it does feel like a challenge, you know, there's nowhere to hide… people can trust that their feedback will be heard and the action will be taken".* (Vicky)
1.2. Learning and growth through empowerment	Continuous learning and growth is a basis upon which coaching cultures are developed and is facilitated by empowering individuals and groups to develop	*"They only had two questions: how do you think that went? which is immensely powerful and empowering …and what would you do differently next time? And for me, that's a coaching culture. There was no blame so then you could take risks and you could risk being high performing.* (Ingrid)
2. Coaching cultures are grounded in first-hand experience of coaching.	Coaching is a powerful intervention, and you need to experience it to believe in its power to deliver development and change	*"We can pay thousands of pounds for people to go on amazing courses, but actually that one to one interaction, it does make such a difference to people … find it so powerful, more powerful than anything else having that one-to-one time… it's hugely rewarding.* (Kapila)

2.1. Coaching cultures are built by practitioners' passion for coaching.	Practitioners have positive experiences from coaching, and they want to promulgate this way of working and being to others.	*"Coaching helped me considerably in a number of things in my career, my personal life… It was really powerful and it's something I would like to mirror for other people"* (Freya)
2.2. Coaching cultures are championed by committed leaders and sustained by "enlightened" communities	Leaders role model and reinforce the coaching "way" of relating and being, and those who are developing a coaching practice become the channels through which these new cultural patterns are sustained.	*"I had a couple of senior leaders come on it (coaching programme). That made a massive difference because they become our champions"* (Zsofia) *"I set up a sort of community of practice with them* (participants of coaching programme) *that then became self-sustaining"* (Zsofia)
3. Coaching cultures are developed through a network of planned or emergent interventions.	Coaching cultures support wider organisational aims and utilize a network of interventions that adjust and respond to organizational or external changes.	*"When we came back last year* (after covid lockdown) *life had moved on different things that occurred, which meant that we stopped that programme and in fact the fabulous leader that led it retired".* (Kapila)
4. Coaching Culture: a means to an end AND an end in itself	Is it a destination or a change process? Coaching impact is obvious at the individual or team level but less obvious at the cultural level. However, having a vision, whether it is called "coaching culture" or something else, focuses organisational effort.	*"It is about the striving not the arriving but there has to be a purpose, there has to be some kind of vision for it, because otherwise we don't strive in the first place* (Oprah)

Appendix L: Thematic Map / Visualisation

COACHING CULTURE

Dialogic container

Learning and Growth

The road map emerges

"an end in itself"

"a means to an end"

Psychological Safety

| Leaders | Practitioners | Communities of Practice |

Coaching experience

Draft visual v1

Appendix M: Reflexive Thematic Analysis: Quality Assessment

(a) <u>Ten recommendations for producing and reporting methodologically coherent TA and being a knowing TA researcher</u> (Braun & Clarke, 2023, p. 4-5)

1. Recognize the plurality of TA; determine where your chosen TA approach is located on the scientifically descriptive (small q)—artfully interpretive (Big Q) spectrum.

2. Determine your underlying research values and philosophical assumptions; locate your use of TA theoretically.

3. Consider your analytic practice; ensure all methodological procedures and concepts cohere with your research values and TA approach.

4. Justify divergences from established practice and "mashups;" ensure these are theoretically coherent.

5. If using reflexive TA, link personal reflexivity to your analytic practice; don't mention bias.

6. Discuss how exactly you engaged with your chosen approach to produce your analysis.

7. Recognize the differences between topic summary and meaning-based interpretative story conceptualisations of themes; ensure your type of theme is coherent with your TA approach (and justify any divergences).

8. Ensure your language around theme development is coherent with your TA approach.

9. Provide a clear overview of your themes/thematic structure in the form of a list, table or thematic map.

10. Ensure the quality standards and practices used cohere with your TA approach and underlying theoretical assumptions

We encourage reviewers to use these recommendations to inform their assessments of TA manuscripts. These should not be treated a checklist in the narrow sense, but as important things to reflect on, and reason through—consider them provocations for knowing practice.

(b) <u>A tool for evaluating thematic analysis (TA) manuscripts for publication: Twenty questions to guide assessment of TA research quality</u>. (Braun & Clarke, 2021, p 18-19)

Adequate choice and explanation of methods and methodology

1. Do the authors explain why they are using TA, even if only briefly?
2. Do the authors clearly specify and justify which type of TA they are using?
3. Is the use and justification of the specific type of TA consistent with the research questions or aims?
4. Is there a good 'fit' between the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings of the research and the specific type of TA (i.e. is there conceptual coherence)?
5. Is there a good 'fit' between the methods of data collection and the specific type of TA?
6. Is the specified type of TA consistently enacted throughout the paper?
7. Is there evidence of problematic assumptions about, and practices around, TA? These commonly include:
   - Treating TA as one, homogenous, entity, with one set of – widely agreed on – procedures.
   - Combining philosophically and procedurally incompatible approaches to TA without any acknowledgement or explanation.
   - Confusing summaries of data topics with thematic patterns of shared meaning, underpinned by a core concept.
   - Assuming grounded theory concepts and procedures (e.g. saturation, constant comparative analysis, line-by -line coding) apply to TA without any explanation or justification.
   - Assuming TA is essentialist or realist, or atheoretical.
   - Assuming TA is only a data reduction or descriptive approach and therefore must be supplemented with other methods and procedures to achieve other ends.
8. Are any supplementary procedures or methods justified, and necessary, or could the same results have been achieved simply by using TA more effectively?
9. Are the theoretical underpinnings of the use of TA clearly specified (e.g. ontological, epistemological assumptions, guiding theoretical framework(s)), even when using TA inductively (inductive TA does not equate to analysis in a theoretical vacuum)?
10. Do the researchers strive to 'own their perspectives' (even if only very briefly), their personal and social standpoint and positioning? (This is especially important when the researchers are engaged in social justice-oriented research and when representing the 'voices' of marginal and vulnerable groups, and groups to which the researcher does not belong.)
11. Are the analytic procedures used clearly outlined, and described in terms of what the authors actually did, rather than generic procedures?
12. Is there evidence of conceptual and procedural confusion? For example, reflexive TA (e.g. Braun and Clarke 2006) is the claimed approach but different procedures are outlined such as the use of a codebook or coding frame, multiple independent coders and consensus coding, inter-rater reliability measures, and/or themes are conceptualised as analytic inputs rather than outputs and therefore the analysis progresses from theme identification to coding (rather than coding to theme development).
13. Do the authors demonstrate full and coherent understanding of their claimed approach to TA?

A well-developed and justified analysis

14. Is it clear what and where the themes are in the report? Would the manuscript benefit from some kind of overview of the analysis: listing of themes, narrative overview, table of themes, thematic map?

15. Are the reported themes topic summaries, rather than 'fully realised themes' – patterns of shared meaning underpinned by a central organising concept?
    - If so, are topic summaries appropriate to the purpose of the research?
        - If the authors are using reflexive TA, is this modification in the conceptualisation of themes explained and justified?
    - Have the data collection questions been used as themes?
    - Would the manuscript benefit from further analysis being undertaken, with the reporting of fully realised themes?
    - Or, if the authors are claiming to use reflexive TA, would the manuscript benefit from claiming to use a different type of TA (e.g. coding reliability or codebook)?

16. Is non-thematic contextualising information presented as a theme? (e.g. the first 'theme' is a topic summary providing contextualising information, but the rest of the themes reported are fully realised themes). If so, would the manuscript benefit from this being presented as non-thematic contextualising information?

17. In applied research, do the reported themes have the potential to give rise to actionable outcomes?

18. Are there conceptual clashes and confusion in the paper? (e.g. claiming a social constructionist approach while also expressing concern for positivist notions of coding reliability, or claiming a constructionist approach while treating participants' language as a transparent reflection of their experiences and behaviours)

19. Is there evidence of weak or unconvincing analysis, such as:
    - Too many or two few themes?
    - Too many theme levels?
    - Confusion between codes and themes?
    - Mismatch between data extracts and analytic claims?
    - Too few or too many data extracts?
    - Overlap between themes?

20. Do authors make problematic statements about the lack of generalisability of their results, and or implicitly conceptualise generalisability as statistical probabilistic generalisability (see Smith 2017)?