Chapter 1
Critical Perspectives on Coaching and Leadership

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ABSTRACT

This chapter explores critical viewpoints that go beyond traditional ideas of coaching and leadership, highlighting the need for a more in-depth analysis of power relations, cultural contexts, moral issues, and broader social ramifications. Cultural and social contexts are scrutinized, revealing the impact of diverse backgrounds on coaching and leadership practices. The chapter advocates for research and evidence-based practices, underlining the importance of informed decision-making in the dynamic field of coaching and leadership. Critical viewpoints also highlight how coaching, and leadership can act as catalysts for transformational change and tools for resistance against oppressive systems. To challenge conventional hierarchies and advance more equitable structures, alternative coaching and leadership models that place an emphasis on collaboration, inclusivity, and ethical responsibility are investigated. The chapter promotes rigorous assessment and ongoing research while highlighting the value of research and evidence-based coaching and leadership practices.

INTRODUCTION

The ideas of coaching and leadership have never been more important in the context of modern organizations than they are today, a time of rapid change, global interconnectedness, and shifting societal values. Organizations today face complex problems that call for creative, flexible, and moral approaches to coaching and

leadership. The goal of this chapter is to unravel the complex web of power, ethics, culture, and equity that runs through these fundamental pillars of organizational dynamics through an exploration of critical perspectives that cast a critical eye on them. The once-exclusive domain of sports, coaching has become a dominant force in business, providing both individuals and teams with a framework for growth and development. Like how traditional hierarchical structures have evolved, leadership has become a dynamic and collaborative force that directs organizations toward their objectives. However, these ostensibly well-established ideas conceal a wealth of complexities that demand scrutiny from a critical perspective. Today's higher education leadership faculty members are largely self-taught. According to Seemiller and Priest (2018), the path to becoming a leadership educator is largely self-directed and varies greatly depending on the field and profession. Gaining knowledge or a degree in a related field, such as management, public policy, organizational development, or educational leadership, can help leadership educators or professionals. However, there is still variation in who participates in leadership-related work and how they are prepared to do so (Jenkins & Owen, 2016). In fact, most teachers lack the necessary credentials, and there is little research to back up any specific pedagogical approach to teaching leadership or knowledge, as of 2018 (Kellerman). There are no requirements or necessary certifications that would ensure a standardization of knowledge and expertise among campus-based leadership educators and professionals, even though the International Leadership Association (2009) published guiding questions for developing, reorganizing, or evaluating a leadership education program.

Non-educational fields such as business (Anthony, 2017) and the military provide examples of coaching for leadership development. Indeed, leadership coaching has been a common practice in corporations for many years, as it is found in both public and private organizations of all sizes use coaching alone or in conjunction with other forms of professional development in their review of the coaching literature. Education has only recently started to emphasize executive or leadership coaching as a strategy for leadership development. Coaching has transformed over the past 30 years from a profession that was practically non-existent to a booming industry, especially in Western economies (Segers et al., 2011). Coaches advertise their services under terms like executive, performance, and life coaching (ICF, 2012), and practitioners frequently incorporate coaching terminologies and methods into well-established professions like social work, training, and counselling (Grant, 2017). The lack of recognition of coaching as a social process persists despite the industry's explosive growth. In a review of the various coaching contexts, senior managers are the ones who receive coaching most frequently in organizational settings, mostly in Western-based businesses (Grant, 2011). In these situations, coaching is frequently provided with the assurance of increased productivity and performance. Most of the coaching

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