It's not rocket science: a neurophenomenological study into performance evolution and organisational innovation in sport enterprises

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Performance Innovation is an interdisciplinary field spanning innovation, leadership, culture, sport performance, organisational development, management and business. This collaborative PhD seeks to understand and identify how we can create an elite performing sport enterprise. Identifying, observing and critically analysing performance innovation strategies, models and processes being implemented by elite organisations in diverse sectors. Seeking to understand how we innovate the innovators.

1. Aims and Research Questions

The general purpose of this research is to investigate how we create innovative sport enterprises. To achieve this we need to identify the following research questions:

- What characteristics are needed to create an innovative sports enterprise?
- What are the types of innovative practices that are employed by sports enterprises?
- What is the place of leadership and culture in an innovative sports enterprise?

The following objectives will be used to find out how we can innovate sports organisations to improve organisational performance.

2. Research Objectives

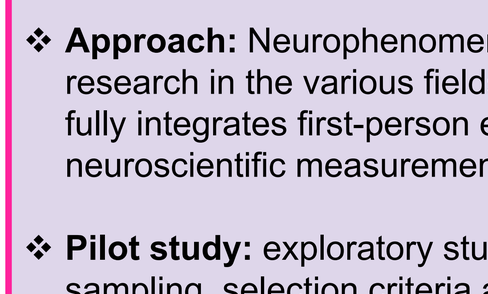
- Critically analyse elite performance training, implemented in high performing subgroups; NASA Astronauts, Corporate (financial traders), Juilliard School of Music, Extreme Action Adventure Sports (Red Bull), Military (Special Operation Forces) and Sports Organisations and identify innovative characteristics used in these subgroups.
- Collaborate with leading organisations such as NASA, Mars One (2027 Mission) along with leading academic and corporate partners (Stanford University, Harvard University, Singularity University) to identify cognitive innovative processes and practices currently in use in elite performance organisations.
- Critically analyse the performance environment in terms of and leadership and culture in other high performance organisations: The Royal Ballet, Royal Academy of Music: Orchestras, Sports Organisations; F1 Racing, Silicon Valley Tech companies.

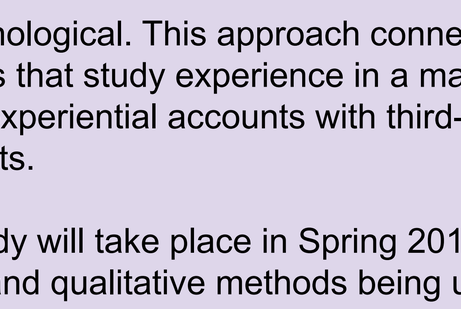
3. Research Design: Methodology

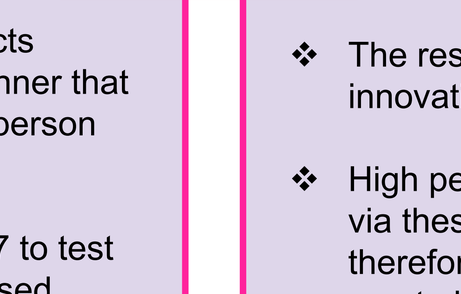
- **Philosophy:** Interpretivism
- **Approach:** Neurophenomenological. This approach connects research in the various fields that study experience in a manner that fully integrates first-person experiential accounts with third-person neuroscientific measurements.
- **Pilot study:** exploratory study will take place in Spring 2017 to test sampling, selection criteria and qualitative methods being used.
- **Mixed methods:** questionnaires, semi structured interviews and observation sessions at elite organisations.
- **Purposive sampling** method will be used, participants chosen from a wide range of high performing sectors. Purposive sampling, in which participants are selected according to predetermined criteria relevant to a particular research objective (Guest et al., 2006)
- **Data analysis:** Transcription, reflexive practice and thematic coding analysis through NVivo10 will be carried out to analyse data.

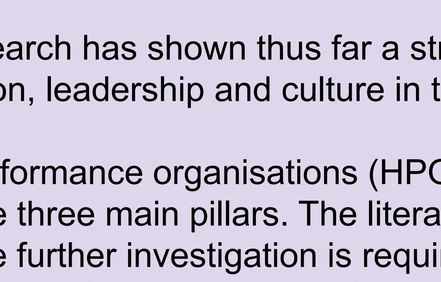
4. Findings to Date: Critical Review

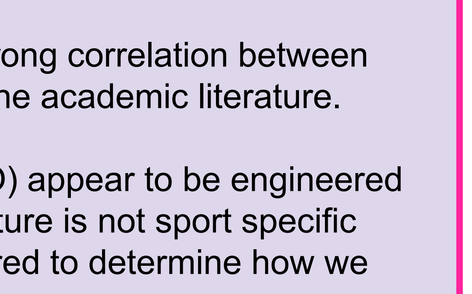
- The research has shown thus far a strong correlation between innovation, leadership and culture in the academic literature.
- High performance organisations (HPO) appear to be engineered via these three main pillars. The literature is not sport specific therefore further investigation is required to determine how we create innovative sports enterprises.
- Innovation is one of the most fundamental practices underpinning economic growth, it has enormous potential to provide solutions to a variety of sport business challenges.
- The multi disciplinary approach of this research draws on literature from a variety of disciplines, which defines the direction of the research to identify innovative practices within sports enterprises, culminating in the creation of an exploratory organisational innovation model for sports enterprises.











5. Future Research

- This research will develop, an exploratory organisational innovation model that can be applied to sport enterprises. It is anticipated that this will allow sport enterprises to set emerging trends and create new market opportunities.

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