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# Navigating heutagogic learning: mapping the learning journey in management education through the OEPA model

The learning  
journey in  
management  
education

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## Abstract

**Purpose** – The purpose of this conceptual paper is to advocate the adoption of heutagogic principles within management education and to show how it could be implemented.

**Design/methodology/approach** – This paper is the outcome of a review of the literature on learning theory and management education.

**Findings** – This paper demonstrates how heutagogic principles have been introduced in three areas: entrepreneurial education, executive coaching and e-learning.

**Originality/value** – This paper makes an original contribution to the discourse on heutagogy through the OEPA model that maps the heutagogic learning journey.

**Keywords** Heutagogy, VUCA, Management education, Individual capability, OEPA model

**Paper type** Conceptual paper

## Introduction

The Covid-19 coronavirus emergency has highlighted the volatile and uncertain world that we now confront and the imperative of building the capacity to find new solutions to new problems. Marques (2013, p. 305) called for a new approach to management education that is predicated on the “necessity for a more practical preparation for future managers”. If we are to respond to Marques (2013) and develop new approaches to management education, then we need to think beyond traditional pedagogy and the confines of competency frameworks. Instead, we should look to develop learners in a more holistic way that infers new ways of understanding professional practice and how best to promote capability. In doing so, this conceptual paper sets out to address two research questions. What benefits may be derived from the adoption of heutagogy in management education? And, how can we model the heutagogic learning journey? This paper offers an alternative approach to management education through the adoption of heutagogic principles, and a re-conceptualisation of the heutagogic learning journey through the OEPA model.

## Literature review

### *Moribund conceptions of management education*

The idea of pedagogy originated in the teaching of children in ancient Greece, and yet this term has become entrenched in the lexicon of university and professional education, which is concerned with adults. This adherence to traditional modes of teaching and learning through



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the transmission of a defined body of knowledge has characterised much of the educational experience for many students. It is an approach that privileged the educator as an “expert” over the educated “student”, as well as how knowledge production was enacted. In many respects, this transmission model of knowledge (Winter *et al.*, 2008; Wang *et al.*, 2017) was appropriate for a working environment that was predictable and in which a functional conception of knowledge was deemed necessary in order to deliver core competencies in any given role. Flyvbjerg (2001) called for management education to be reformed with rules-based and theory-driven knowledge balanced with greater emphasis on context-dependent professional skills development. Moreover, as Marques (2019) contends, this focus on traditional technical-rational disciplines inhibits those socially-responsible management behaviours that are now expected within contemporary organisational life. For Marques (2019, p. 15), management educators should aim to devise curricula that are appropriate for “upcoming moral challenges, and shape their minds toward constructive and community-advancing, rather than self-centred, problem solving”. If this is to be achieved, future curricula should incorporate inter-disciplinary approaches in order to promote transdisciplinary understanding and engage more fully in “moral-relational” management practice (Jarvis and Logue, 2016). Such a development would facilitate a paradigm shift from functional knowledge to more practical forms of knowledge, described by Aristotle as *phronesis* (Kemmis, 2012; Jarvis and Logue, 2016).

In addition to embedding transdisciplinary thinking, management education must reappraise its predilection towards competency-based notions of management practice in favour of a broader understanding of management work. For Kemmis (2012, pp. 148–151), “*phronesis* cannot be developed – and it is not something that can be taught; it can only be learnt”. Herein, we must acknowledge the limitations of traditional approaches to management education, and in particular the reliance on the concept of competence to measure learning. The notion of competence has influenced curricula design since the 1970s (Albanese, 1989), but how useful is this today? Boyatzis (2008) claimed that it was possible to identify and then develop emotional, social and cognitive intelligence, and this could be achieved through the targeting of these management competencies through appropriate teaching methods. However, Grzeda (2005) argues that not only is there insufficient evidence establishing a causal relationship between competencies and performance but that there is a clear divergence between the United States and the United Kingdom over whether competency is a dependent or an independent variable. Importantly, a number of scholars have highlighted the need for a broader interpretation of competency beyond a narrow definition of work-based technical skills to one which includes a broader range of personal qualities and adaptive capability and which is relational in nature, and in doing so acknowledges the socially-situated nature of work environments (Clark *et al.*, 2014; Kurucz *et al.*, 2014; Rausch and Washbush, 2002). If we are to accept that traditional competency-based notions of management education are limited in their efficacy, then what alternatives are available for management educators?

#### *Re-conceptualising management education*

Whereas competence may serve to measure low-level functional skills, for higher order thinking management, educators should look to prioritisation and development of individual capability. As Halsall *et al.* (2016, p. 7), describe “a capable individual, as opposed to a competent person who performs effectively in the present, is someone who is also forward thinking and concerned with potential realisation, imagining the future and making it happen”. For Hase and Kenyon (2001, p. 3) “the world is no place for the inflexible, the unprepared, and the ostrich with head in sand” because it is relational in nature and context-specific. Hase (2000, p. 6) elaborates upon this need to develop capability through individual learning:

The challenge for higher education is to design curricula that not only develop competence but also develop critical features of capability such as creativity, the capacity to learn, self-efficacy, appropriate values, being able to work with others, and being able to use competencies in novel situations.

The Covid-19 emergency, together with its dislocation of organisational practices and the reliance placed on individuals, highlights the benefits of a flexible, creative and self-management workforce. The literature has identified the need for greater critical insight within management roles through reflection on action, as well as reflection in action (Schoen, 1995), and how reflection may improve organisation performance (Kapasi, 2016). This imperative for organisations to move from single-loop learning that simply explores a problem to double-loop and triple-loop learning that explores meaningful changes in practice is part of the new normal that attends the volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) world that we confront (Bennett and Lemoine, 2014). In order to effect this change, we need to promote metacognition in educational programmes in which learners are better able to understand how they learn and solve problems.

In an extension of metacognition, management professionals should look beyond the outcome of their work but also to the process that they adopted and place this within its wider relational context (Cunliffe, 2002, 2016). Hibbert and Cunliffe (2015) suggest that there is still some way to go before responsible management is embedded in practice because of a disconnect between abstract knowledge and daily practice. In order to address this gap in ethical and socially responsible practice, Hibbert and Cunliffe (2015) call for the adoption of moral reflexive practices and new ways of management learning. This capability to engage in self-critical reflexivity is seen as a pre-requisite for effective management practice (Lindh and Thorgren, 2016). Furthermore, Cunliffe (2002, p. 42) presents management learning “as an embodied reflexive dialogical process in which we are struck and moved to reflect on and/or reflexively question”. This idea of individual dialogue and reflexive thought necessitates a shift in cognition from the acquisition of theory to the exploration of self-concepts and learning from within. For Colville *et al.* (2016), this shift in cognition infers a need to better understand how we make sense of our experiences, as well as question established knowledge and assumptions. This cognitive shift has connotations for how we conceive of ourselves, our work and our values.

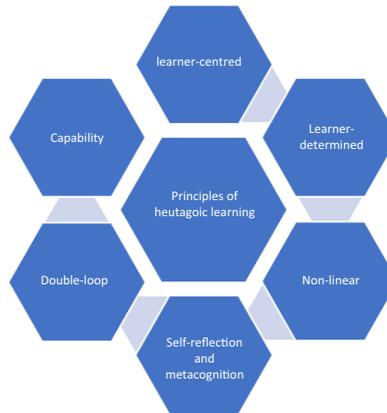
#### *Heutagogy and its relevance to management education*

Heutagogy is defined by Blaschke (2012, p. 56) as an approach to teaching and learning where:

Learners are highly autonomous and self-determined and emphasis is placed on development of learner capacity and capability with the goal of producing learners who are well-prepared for the complexities of today’s workplace.

The underpinning principles of heutagogy identified by Blaschke and Hase (2016) are presented in Figure 1.

Heutagogy represents a significant development of learning theory and establishes a number of principles that differentiate it from pedagogy and andragogy. Heutagogy has its origins in the work of Hase (2000) and Hase and Kenyon (2001) and their research into professional learning, particularly in the Australian military. Examples of how heutagogy can be integrated into a range of professional training contexts have been reported in sports coaching (Stoszowski and Collins, 2017), nursing (Bhojrub *et al.*, 2010), and journalism (Mulrennan, 2017). In this respect, heutagogy derives its foundational concepts from the workplace environment and those daily demands that impinge on decision-makers in organisations, unlike pedagogy and andragogy. Whereas pedagogy is more properly



**Figure 1.**  
The principles of  
heutagogy (after  
Blaschke and  
Hase, 2016)

associated with the education of children and andragogy with adult education (Knowles, 1984), heutagogy is much more closely aligned with the workplace and the development of transferable interdisciplinary skills associated with life-long learning. Although the focus on the learner and their development are common to both andragogy and heutagogy, the position and capacity of the learner differ. Andragogy is linked to the capability for *self-directed* learning (Blaschke, 2012; Kapasi, 2016) and “is based on a transactional process design where the teacher manages” (Winter *et al.*, 2008, p. 1) the process of learning and serves as an essential part of the learning journey, whereas heutagogy is concerned with *self-determined* learning. This is defined by Blaschke (2012, p. 57) as “learners are highly autonomous and self-determined and emphasis is placed on development of learner capacity and capability with the goal of producing learners who are well-prepared for the complexities of today’s workplace”. Moreover, although heutagogy is associated with autonomous forms of learning, it can also be extended to a more pervasive understanding of student ownership and empowerment of people as learners and citizens. Although Blaschke (2012) accepts that andragogy has the potential to be transformative and empower better understanding of the learner’s context, she contends that it is inherently limited in its scope because of the interventions of the educator. The role of the educator as a mentor or tutor is cited as being one of the differentiating features between andragogy and heutagogy (Winter *et al.*, 2008; Blaschke, 2012) and remains one of the challenges to address should educational institutions look to adopt heutagogy in practice.

Comparison of these three approaches to teaching and learning have sought to differentiate heutagogy from pedagogy, and in particular, andragogy (Winter *et al.*, 2008; Canning, 2010; Blaschke, 2012; Garnett and O’Beirne, 2013; Kapasi, 2016). Although the discourse on heutagogy is still relatively recent compared with pedagogy and andragogy, research focusses on the nature of learner autonomy and the attendant implications for educational practice and institutional policy (Winter *et al.*, 2008; Kapasi, 2016). A summary of the established consensus is shown in Table 1.

### Research method

This conceptual paper is the outcome of a wide-ranging review of the literature in management education and theories of learning. The process of undertaking a review of the literature in the production of a conceptual paper is widely reported (Hallinger, 2013; Borrego *et al.*, 2014; Lee *et al.*, 2018; Arghode *et al.*, 2017). A number of procedural models, such as the

Feature	Pedagogy	Andragogy	Heutagogy
Definition	“Leading the child”	Self-directed learning	Self-determined learning
Role of the student	Largely passive and receptive	Focussed on an imposed curriculum or task	Concerned with problem solving, often in the work context
Role of the educator	Controls learning- the educator as the “expert”	A partnership between the educator and learner- the educator as a “facilitator”	Learner is in control of learning- the educator is a “coach”
Learning context	Learning is concerned with on meeting the learning objectives and assessment criteria	Learning is task-driven and often multi-disciplinary in nature, and learner autonomy	Learning is enquiry-based and determined by the learner. Learning can be non-linear in nature
Curriculum context	Formal, common to all learners and non-negotiable	Develops self-concept through support and guidance	Self-conceived, meeting the needs of an individual and their context
Cognition context	Cognitive- the process of acquiring specified knowledge	Metacognitive- reflection on own learning and how this can be improved	Epistemic- thinking about the meaning of an individual’s position in a wider societal context
Motivation context	Motivation is influenced by external context- i.e. family, peer group, etc.	Motivation is intrinsic, with self-worth linked to achievement	Motivation is tied to the benefits of learning how to learn
Knowledge production context	To understand the facts / knowledge of a subject	To arrive at a negotiated understanding	To create new knowledge for the individual and a new understanding of their real-world environment
Institutional context	School, post-compulsory and Higher Education sectors	Adult learning sector	University sector

**Table 1.**  
A summary of the key features of pedagogy, andragogy and heutagogy

PRISMA and the PICO model (Liberati *et al.*, 2009), all aim to provide structure and organisation to this process. In general, however, some consensus recognises the importance of three stages to this process: planning, conducting and reporting (Tranfield *et al.*, 2003). Importantly, in the initial planning stage, there is the need to identify the scope of review (Lee *et al.*, 2018) and those search terms to be used. In addition to heutagogy, capability-building, metacognition and reflexivity within management education were important search terms. Furthermore, as much of the pioneering work on heutagogy was undertaken by Hase and Kenyon, and later by Blaschke, their surnames featured prominently in the search and the subsequent list of references. Hallinger (2013) makes a distinction between relatively narrow “selective”, focussed “bounded”, and “exhaustive” searches. This research adopted a “bounded” approach that delimited the scope of the search and the terms used. In this planning stage, the scope of the review was concerned with how management education could be improved in order to promote greater ownership over the learning journey for students, so search terms relating to self-determined learning, as well as critiques of the Business School curriculum, were used as primary search terms.

The second stage of the review involved clarifying the research themes developed by leading authorities in the development of heutagogy, most notably, Stewart Hase, Chris Kenyon and Lisa-Marie Blaschke. Their focus on entrepreneurial and vocational education, as well as e-learning proved useful in that it identified three developed pathways in the literature of heutagogy. Given these three “bounded” pathways, it was possible to adopt a process of “snow-balling” using these research pathways to generate further work. As a result, more precise focus was placed on particular aspects of the ways in which learning

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takes place within a professional context, including capability, reflexivity and metacognition. Much of the early work on heutagogy originated through conference publications (Hase, 2000; Hase and Kenyon, 2001), and this has continued with subsequent work (Winter *et al.*, 2008). The choice of journal papers was influenced by their reputation within the management education community and included *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, *Management Learning*, *Journal of Management Education*, and the *Journal of Management Development*, as well as Higher Education journals, such as *Studies in Higher Education*. Once the research notes had reached saturation point, the findings were organised into thematic clusters.

The reporting stage is presented in the paper itself. There are, of course, limitations in any review of the literature, not least acceptance of the dominant discourse within management education, its prevailing research foci, as their implied values. Haddaway *et al.* (2015, p. 1596) acknowledge that reviews of the literature “are susceptible to a number of biases during the identification, selection, and synthesis of individual included studies”. Academic journals implicitly drive research through their publication of what they see as important. This practice of publishing what is viewed as valued knowledge by journals may militate against what may be perceived as peripheral research. In this sense, journals tend to lag behind work that is published through conferences or working papers. This potential for “publication bias” may be viewed as inhibiting a truly representative view of research (Borrego *et al.*, 2014). For example, compared to the extensive research into pedagogy, there is relatively little published work associated with heutagogy in Business Schools. This limitation in scope is important. If management educators are to move the discourse on heutagogy from theory-building to theory-testing, then this should be based on a more expansive empirical foundation.

## Discussion

*The benefits to be derived from the adoption of heutagogy in management education*

Three streams have emerged in the past decade to establish an evidential base for heutagogy in management education: team-based entrepreneurial learning, coaching and e-learning.

Heutagogic approaches to learning are reported as facilitating entrepreneurial skills both for university students and entrepreneurs (Barton, 2012; Kapasi, 2016; Fearon *et al.*, 2019). Kapasi (2016, p. 20) suggests that “complex and changing environments require today’s Higher Education Institutions (HEI) students to take ownership and control of their (lifelong) learning. This is true for entrepreneurship education as it is of any other”. In part, heutagogy promotes an entrepreneurial “mind-set” that engages with emergent problems in positive and solution-oriented ways. In addition, the process of exercising ownership over the learning journey develops creative thinking, analytical, communication and team-working skills. Universities across the globe have adopted the “Team Academy” (TA) approach that was developed at Jyväskylä University in Finland. The TA approach to learning is underpinned by five key principles: as a dynamic force for change; a willingness to self-organise; accept responsibility for their actions; a commitment to thinking creatively; and to act as responsible citizens. The TA approach represents more than an approach to delivering the entrepreneurial curriculum, and it infers a set of values of how we should work together in a responsible and ethical manner. The learning journey for learners centres on the formation and conduct of a business enterprise, together with all its attendant legal and regulatory obligations. Learners work as a collective of “Teampreneurs” sharing ideas and responsibility through mutual trust and negotiation. The “Team” is supported by an academic but is not taught in the conventional sense. The academic is there to listen but not instruct as the Team is autonomous and self-driven.

As a pioneering and ambitious project, the TA approach to learning is not without challenges. The most immediate concern is how to define the learning objectives for such a programme, or indeed should these be defined at all. Many leading Business Schools aim to

secure accreditation from professional bodies in order to enhance their reputational capital in the globalised Higher Education market. So, obtaining accreditation from bodies such as the Association of Advanced Collegial Schools of Business (AACSB) necessitates the identification of curriculum goals and learning outcomes by universities. Moreover, recognition by professional bodies in the United Kingdom, such as the Chartered Institute of Management (CMI) or the Chartered Institute of Personal Development (CIPD), is regarded as essential in recruitment by HEIs. This reconciliation has been achieved, for example, in the case of Northumbria University in pioneering a TA variant Entrepreneurial Business Management undergraduate degree, as well as securing AACSB accreditation. Such ambition infers commitment both by programme developers and senior leadership figures. This is possible where the organisational culture enables initiative and supports academics effectively through training in order to facilitate such learning innovations. The challenges facing the TA approach are not limited to internal concerns. Although [Kapasi and Grekova \(2017\)](#) report, students welcomed much in the TA approach, they were concerned about how their degree programme was perceived by large bureaucratic corporations who were more conversant with traditional pedagogical approaches. This concern of how a heutagogy-informed qualification is valued is compounded by others who argue that the performance management systems that exist in HE militate against the adoption of such radical departures from traditional pedagogy ([Adams, 2014](#); [Halsall \*et al.\*, 2016](#)).

Heutagogic principles can be seen in coaching practices in a variety of contexts, ranging from professional sport to executive education. [Stoszowski and Collins \(2017, p. 5\)](#) make the link between coaching and heutagogic principles:

A key tenet of the heutagogy paradigm is a belief in the notion of human agency, with power and autonomy firmly in the hands of the learner... the role of the educator is positioned as that of a learning facilitator who guides the development of ideas and learners' learning capabilities.

In particular, coaching has been identified as facilitating individual metacognition and reflexivity. [Collins and Collins \(2015\)](#) describe how coaching can be organised in stages, with movement to higher levels of achievement through support that places an emphasis on personal development as much as the acquisition of skills. In this respect, coaching is regarded as appropriate for management learning scenarios where there is a need to develop interpersonal and people leadership capabilities ([Datar \*et al.\*, 2011](#); [Towell and Hall, 2016](#); [Reid \*et al.\*, 2020](#)). Moreover, [Kets de Vries and Korotov \(2007\)](#) call for coaching in executive education to move to a greater emphasis on how to manage emotional and cognitive development from a transformational perspective. As we move to a broader understanding of management in a socially responsible manner, heutagogy offers "whole person learning" ([Muff, 2016, p. 147](#)) that develops people-management capabilities.

The benefits of integrating heutagogic principles within management e-learning programmes are also widely recognised ([Blaschke, 2012](#); [Klotz and Wright, 2017](#); [Richardson \*et al.\*, 2017](#); [Schniederjans \*et al.\*, 2017](#)). [Blaschke and Hase \(2016\)](#) interpret the technological innovation as leading to new opportunities for educational change. In moving from an educator-led model of teaching to a learner-centred model of learning, the process of knowledge acquisition and understanding is transformed. [Blaschke \(2012\)](#) explains that:

Web 2.0 design supports a heutagogical approach by allowing learners to direct and determine their learning path and by enabling them to take an active rather than passive role in their individual learning experiences. Key affordances of social media – connectivity with others, information discovery and sharing (individually and as a group), and personal collection and adaptation of information as required – are also affordances that support self-determined learning.

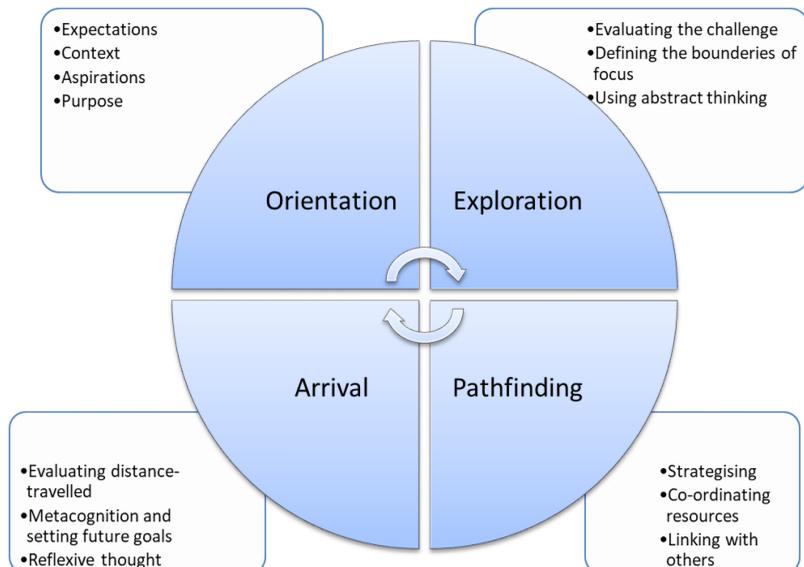
With HE moving to greater reliance on online learning as a result of the Covid-19 emergency, educators have the opportunity to innovate by adopting heutagogic principles. For many

institutions, as [Klotz and Wright \(2017\)](#) recognise, a blended approach that combines face-to-face and online learning may be preferred, especially as this necessitates less investment in the training of faculty. However, as technology develops and we see greater reliance placed within society on information technology, HE will be expected to develop online curricula. Innovative use of information technology can enhance metacognition, research-rich learning, as well as new ways of connecting learners in new networks. One possible avenue to explore is the use of Personalised Learning Cloud (PLC) technology as a way of promoting heutagogic learning online. [Moldoveanu and Narayandas \(2019, p. 47\)](#) recommend the use of PLCs so that learners “will be able to map out their own development and career-related needs and interests”. This personalisation of learning, metacognition and career development is established through the use of PebblePad+ in Business School education ([Stoten, 2016](#)). Heutagogic principles may usefully inform the development of new online curricula through the focus on the learner and the practice of personalised learning.

#### *Mapping the learning journey: the OEPA model*

The analogy of the map as a description of an individual’s learning journey is cited in the literature of heutagogy ([Hase and Kenyon, 2007](#); [Moldoveanu and Narayandas, 2019](#)) and provides a useful way of conceptualising the non-linear nature of learning. [Hase and Kenyon \(2007, p. 59\)](#) encapsulate this conceptualisation of the learning journey as “learners create the learning map, and instructors serve as the compass”.

[Figure 2](#) describes four distinct phases in the heutagogic journey, beginning with orientation (O) to learning, followed by the exploration (E) and pathfinding (P) phases, and ending with the arrival (A) at the desired learning outcome. This OEPA model provides a framework within which to plan for resource creation or interventions for coaching. So, for example, during the orientation phase, a programme of induction to the idea of heutagogic learning and how students should engage with this approach could be undertaken. For many students, a shift from pedagogical teaching to heutagogic learning could appear challenging. Within the exploration phase, research-rich learning that prioritises inquiry-based curricula



**Figure 2.** Mapping the formal heutagogic learning journey

(Healey and Jenkins, 2009) could be used to promote personal ownership and learner responsibility. The pathfinding phase will be particularly evident in the way learners develop their self-regulated learning skills. Useful research could explore how the performance stage within self-regulated learning theory (Zimmerman, 2000) maps onto this phase. Finally, the arrival phase could integrate learning logs and professional journals as metacognitive tools in order to scaffold the reflection of action (Schoen, 1995). In breaking the learning journey into phases, the OEPA model provides a structure and clarity both for learners and curriculum developers. This model also enables both learners and educators to revisit areas for celebration or development, and as such, provides a starting point for future work in embedding heutagogic principles in the curriculum.

### *Implementation of the OEPA model*

One challenge that confronts those educators who wish to adopt heutagogy is implementation. As Belt (2014) alludes to an idealised form of heutagogy, known as version 1 or informal heutagogy is more easily facilitated on non-credit-bearing study programmes where learners are not constrained by credentialism and institutional practices. Where learners are obliged to learn within those constraints imposed by awarding institutions, they become “bound autodidactic” in version 2, or formal heutagogy. For Belt (2014, p. 181), this means that “there is structure and control for the student in the learning process. In formal learning, the student searches for knowledge from dedicated knowledge sources including, but not limited to, an online. . . or university environment”. So how could we conceptualise version 2 heutagogy in management education?

Personal development planning offers one way of integrating heutagogic principles within the curriculum and across professional contexts. This approach is evident in the use of professional logs or journals. Research reports on the importance of reflective professional journals in the teaching profession in order to promote well-being (Kelly *et al.*, 2020), to avoid burn-out among physicians and to address possible compassion fatigue (Portoghese *et al.*, 2020). An induction to the use of professional journals can be undertaken prior to entry into the professions, particularly in the form of personal professional development planning. Professional development plans (PDPs) are characterised by three core features that pertain to the student’s academic, personal and career aspirations and are used in a range of HE institutions (Yorke, 2009; Manchester University, 2020). As such, PDPs link to the vocational origins of heutagogy and provide a practical educational road-map of a student’s learning journey. A number of scholars have provided insight into implementation strategies that accommodate the constraints inherent within version 2 heutagogy with varying models of formal integration of self-determined learning within the curriculum (Atley, 2009; Ward and Watts, 2009; Beusaert *et al.*, 2013; Rubens *et al.*, 2017; Kivimaki and Meriluoto, 2018). Atley (2009) identified a mediated process of learning in the embedded model, which incorporated formal accreditation alongside student ownership. In embedding student navigation over the learning journey, an embedded model of learning “becomes a holistic way of working, draws in work and life experience” (Atley, 2009, p. 26). This holistic approach that integrates learning with vocational relevance and personal context offers an approach to underpin life-long learning. Rubens *et al.* (2017, p. 1) describe how such an approach was applied in a leadership course in MBA study and the positive response from students who thought of it as “one of the most important outcomes in their MBA experience” particularly in terms of promoting reflection on their own conception of leadership identity. In their research Kivimaki and Meriluoto (2018) refer to the incorporation of PDPs into the co-design of the learning journey. Importantly, those students who participated in this PDP project not only felt that it was a positive learning experience but were able to complete more credits in the academic year than those who had not participated. This potential for innovative co-creation

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of the personalised curriculum through PDPs offers new opportunities for learners to set targets, define their own learning goals and track progress. As a navigation tool, the PDP process aligns with the OEPA learning journey and documents the path taken in learning in order to accommodate institutional accreditation.

### Conclusion

Although much has been written about the possible benefits of heutagogy in the promotion of personalised learning, less has been published on how we can implement it in practice. This paper offers an important contribution to the discourse on heutagogy in management education in two respects. First, it provides an evidential base of heutagogy in practice and highlights the benefits for management education. Second, it offers a model of heutagogic learning through the OEPA model.

Attempts to fashion new curricula that are informed by heutagogy confront a fundamental tension that exists between the formal accreditation of achievement and the need to empower learners to become independent life-long learners. Version 2, or formal heutagogy, mediates between the idealism of heutagogy and the practicalities of a qualifications-based education system. There is sufficient evidence to show that heutagogy has begun to influence curriculum design and can supplement further innovation in management education. As Business Schools re-balance their curricula towards individual capability-building rather than the traditional bias in favour of knowledge acquisition, then the concerns raised by management educators can be addressed (Marques, 2013, 2019; Gosling and Mintzberg, 2006). Reflexive learning, as evidence in PDPs, is an important part of this paradigm shift in management education, away from the over-reliance on abstracted knowledge based on theory to understanding based on phronesis and the embedded social context of management practice. If we are to create new ways of educating our future management cadre, then we need to focus more on the capability of individuals to learn rather than focus on their competence to perform a limited role- and heutagogy offers exciting opportunities to think imaginatively of future management learning.

Advocates of heutagogy confront a number of challenges in realising the potential of this relatively new learning theory. First, there is the need to generate a greater volume of empirical research in a broader range of settings and, second, to develop the theory of heutagogy in practice. Understandably, since heutagogy originated in a work-based context, much of the writing in the twenty years since has focussed on vocational training and short-term learning, (Hase, 2000; Hase and Kenyon, 2001). Future research could usefully explore how heutagogy could be integrated into mainstream curricula within Higher Education, where there is a greater emphasis on credentialism and traditional forms of assessment. In particular, investigation into innovative forms of assessment that promote independent, self-determined learning could inform our understanding of how to implement heutagogic principles. This tension between traditional forms of assessment and personalised learning remains a significant hurdle to overcome. It is within this context that version 2 or formal heutagogy could serve as a basis for innovative practice and further research. In particular, future research could explore how institutions and professional bodies are able to accommodate heutagogy within the existing qualifications regime, the professional demands placed on educators and the response of students. In so doing, the empirical data generated from the research could usefully inform further theorisation of the concept of heutagogy. As a theory of learning, heutagogy could be viewed as being in an exploratory phase of development and its contribution in relation to pedagogy and andragogy elaborated.

The OEPA model provides a framework within which to understand the processes involved in heutagogic learning and, in so doing, enable educators to create a supportive map for the learning journey. This model could usefully inform future research into addressing the

practical challenges that face management educators when devising curricula. In particular, the four stages of the OEPA model provide analytical frames within which to track learning and identify areas for intervention through “reflexive dialogue” (Cunliffe, 2002). As we search for innovative ways of promoting reflexivity in management education, the OEPA model may serve to structure formal or informal “check points” in which the learner engages in reflexive learning. In particular, conceptual links to self-regulated learning (SRL) may prove informative and generate new insights into how learners manage their learning journey (Zimmerman, 2000; Stoten, 2019). The potential exists here to develop SRL as methodological aid to better understand the processes involved in self-determined learning journeys within the OEPA model.

As with all conceptual papers, this discussion is limited by a lack of empirical data. It does, however, serve to identify the potential benefits for management education as we search for ways to engage learners and promote personalised learning. This conceptual paper represents one stage in a journey that we all can undertake in improving the way we learn about our work.

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