Chapter- 3

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In the broadest sense, research can be defined as a systematic process of gathering data, information and facts for the advancement of knowledge. It is an organized and systematic way of finding valid answers to the selected research questions. The process of research must be systematic and follow a series of steps. The research includes creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the collection of knowledge and the use it to develop new applications. It is used to ascertain facts, reaffirm the results of previous work, solve new or existing problems, support theorems, or develop new theories. A research project may also be an expansion on past work in the field. To test the validity of instruments, procedures, or experiments, research may reproduce elements of previous projects, or the project as a whole.

Research methodology can be defined as a process used to collect information and data for the purpose of making business decisions. The methodology includes publication research, interviews, surveys and other research techniques, and could include both present and historical information. Research methodology is a systemic method/process dealing with identifying problem, collecting of facts or data, analyzing these data and reaching at certain conclusion either in the form of solutions towards the problem concerned or certain generalization for some theoretical formulation. It also comprised of a number of approaches and inter-related and frequency overlapping procedures and practices. Since there are many aspect of research methodology, the line of action has to be chosen from a variety of alternatives. The choice of suitable method can be arrived at through assessment of objectives and comparison of various alternatives.

This chapter describes the problem statement, objectives of the study, research design, type of data and method of data collection, the sampling procedure, the sukrvey
procedure utilized, hypothesis to be tested and the various statistical techniques employed in the study.

3.1 Statement of the Problem/ Description of the problem

In the research process the first step was to define the research problem for the study. The research problem is defined after going through the published research work done by other researchers on the same issue. After going through the literature review related to the executive coaching in India, it was found that most of the research studies has focused on understanding, investigating and analyzing the actual meaning of executive coaching and rather than the effectiveness of executive coaching as perceived by stakeholders.

In current business scenario, executive coaching is also a widely accepted tool for necessary learning in the arena of competitive business. It is found that executive coaching helps a lot to enhance the potential of executives and build them great learner and performer. Executive Coaching helps an executive to learn succeed in present roles and grow further for future success. With respect to the process of executive coaching, it is a progression of one to one collaboration between an experienced coach and an executive, who wants to improve his skills, access new perspective and above all reach maximum potentials. Usually in executive coaching a study is made in terms of the work style of the executive and his work environment to know more about the executive’s attitude and perception and then the strategies are designed to match his strengths with the challenges faced. A series of assessments is conducted to make the person understand himself, check out reaction and behavior, thus making him aware of the applied strategies to be successful.

In Indian context, executive coaching is slightly new concept to corporate as compared to developed economies. Due to various issues many organizations are not able to still recognize the importance of coaching as an essential tool for enhancing and utilizing the untapped potential of their employees towards excellence which is supposed to be required today in improving individual, team and organization performance and bring
desired changes. Recognizing the need of the corporate sector and the industry, research scholar as part of PhD program wanted to study the present status of executive coaching in Indian corporate sector as well as significance of executive coaching in corporate sector in India, so that new possibilities of executive coaching could be explored in order to establish best practices. This will also help corporate as well coaching industry in getting useful and practical insights to facilitate executive Coaching.

Problem statement of the present study was stated as

“To understand the concept of executive coaching, analyze the perception of stakeholders and to find out the effectiveness of executive coaching on the executive performance in Indian corporate sector.”

This research study is basically exploratory as well as descriptive in nature. It focuses on investigating the actual status of the level of executive coaching in Indian corporate sector, and more specifically it intends to cover what executive Coaching is, the objective and goals aimed in executive coaching, who uses it, when, why and how.

It aims to study knowledge, tools and technique used in executive coaching, identify the process adopted in executive coaching, how executive coaching is different than training and mentoring, identify requisites and qualities needed for successful executive coach and help to develop a model for executive coaching that can be used by organization based on study of successful practice.

3.2 Objectives of the study

Apart from main objective of the research study as reflected in problem statement as stated in earlier section the research study has attempted to identify various sub-objectives stated as follows:
• To explore the clients perception of coaching engagement and process
• To study the effects of executive coaching on self-efficacy of the coachee
• To assess the perceived effectiveness of executive coaching for organization
• To identify the factors perceived as critical for success of coaching process

3.3 Hypotheses to be tested

On the basis of defined objectives, the following hypotheses was designed to be tested in the research study:

**Hypotheses:** There exists no significant impact of the effects of executive coaching on the self-efficacy of the coaches.

**Alternate Hypotheses:** There exists significant impact of the effects of executive coaching on the self-efficacy of the coaches.

3.4. Research Design

Research design can be explained as a detailed outline of how an investigation will take place. A research design will typically include how data is to be collected, what instruments will be employed, how the instruments will be used and the intended means for analyzing data collected. This research study is an exploratory as well as descriptive research based on a large measure on the collection of primary data. This research study also includes qualitative research approach as it considers words in addition to the quantitative analysis of the primary data collected from the survey method. This applies to all of our research objectives, which are based primarily on an interview as well as written sources. This was an optimum choice for research as we aimed to gain a deeper understanding of area of executive coaching in corporate sector and identifies the process
adopted in executive coaching, how executive coaching is different than training and mentoring.

3.4.1. Scope of the Study

The study is based on the data collected from survey by using self designed questionnaires and personal contact with Head HR / Training or various User of executive coaching in the organization. The survey based research analysis was done on primary data for the examination of different aspects of executive coaching model for Indian corporate.

3.4.2 Selection of the respondents

The primary data in the research study was collected with the help of self-designed questionnaire and via telephonic interview and surveys from HR Managers, Executive coaches, CEOs, corporate heads or employees and written sources. 60 Respondents including 30 HR Managers, CEOs, or User Managers and 30 Executive Coaches have been interviewed to elicit their views on corporate executive coaching. Detailed study of 10 organizations (out of 16 contacted) from varied sectors in Indian corporate was conducted who have the history of successful implementation of executive coaching and have demonstrated results and has an organized and holistic approach to executive coaching. The reason of small sample size has been that only a selected few organizations in India have been using Executive coaching and to the desired level and Coaching is still not well accepted as norm in majority or organizations. Furthermore user employees (coachees) who got the benefit of coaching were quite hesitant to share openly their improvements for the sake of perceived notion that it may impact adversely their image/position and hence were not included.
3.4.3. Universe and survey population

The universe of the research study entitled “Effectiveness of executive coaching in India: Perception of Stakeholders.” is aggregate of executives of selected corporate sector including MNCs operating in India.

3.4.4 Sample Design and Sample Size

(i) Sampling method: The judgmental sampling method was used in the research study.

(ii) Sample size: 60 corporate HR Managers, CEOs, Reporting Managers and Executive Coaches have been interviewed to elicit their views on corporate executive coaching.

3.4.5. Designing and Developing Questionnaire

The data was collected by means of self-administered questionnaires to solicit answers as it was not possible to travel various locations of the country and interview. Self designed questionnaire was used as no standard questionnaire was available on the subject. Also it was kept mostly the multiple choice rather than open answers to facilitate comparisons. Questionnaires were developed in the following stages:-

- Identifying variables and developing first draft.
- Pilot survey
- Finalising the questionnaire
- Reliability check

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The final structured questionnaire was prepared using mainly close ended questions based on the specified choice option and some questions are open ended.

For studying the demographic profiles of the respondents, questions with multiple choices were framed in the study. A two-pronged approach of data collection was undertaken, primary and secondary data collection. Primary data was collected using structured self designed questionnaire and interviews to obtain the opinion of clients and other stakeholder. To ensure that the study is specifically about executive coaching, two other criteria were imposed for the first questionnaire. First, the subjects must have held executive-level positions or have been enrolled in a corporate executive development program while receiving executive coaching. Second, the participant must have had an external consultant as coach, paid for by the company. For the purposes of this research, these two requirements distinguish executive coaching from managerial coaching or personal life coaching. The questionnaire has been administered personally to elicit the information from the respondents.

Two questionnaires were designed for the research study. First questionnaire was designed in order to collect data from users of the executive coaching (30 respondents) and second questionnaire was designed to collect data from providers of the executive coaching-Executive Coaches) (30 Respondents).

Pilot survey

Actual data collection was preceded by a pilot survey. The pilot survey was carried out with a sample size of 10 HR, corporate employee and 10 providers of executive coaching spread across with a view to clarify questionnaire structure holistically and avoid any interpretation problems. Some teething problems were also encountered during the data collection. Suggestions and comments were invited from the respondents. This process helped developing an insight to bring about required modifications in the overall
configuration or taxonomy of the questionnaire by incorporating suggestions and observations. This also helped in improving the quality and texture of the questionnaire to ensure smooth data collection. After the pilot survey some statements were deleted, some were added and many were modified in terms of the language.

**Reliability analysis**

The reliability of the questionnaire is measured of different stages to ensure that data collected is reliable and data can be analyzed further. Cronbach alpha values were computed of three stages, firstly after collecting data from 24 respondents and subsequently after collecting data from 40 and 60 respondents. The Cronbach alpha of the responses of the questionnaire 1 (responses from users) is found to be 78.8 and of questionnaire 2 (responses from Executive Coaches) is found to be 77.4.

**Finalizing the Questionnaire**

The drafted questionnaires were finalized after the pilot survey. The final questionnaires (for coaches as well as users) comprised of two sections each. The first section comprised of questions, which related with the demographic profile of the respondents and also asked some basic questions related to organization.

The second section was named as the determinants of executive coaching in which questions related to status and significance of executive coaching were included. In order, to ensure the validity the questionnaire was discussed with the academicians from different universities as well as the experts from the industry having more than ten years’ experience in providing and using the executive coaching in India.

**3.4.6. Data Collection Method**

The data was collected from various Primary sources for which a questionnaire was prepared and this questionnaire was got filled by, scheduled interviews / personal
observations and also three sources of evidence that were used in this study i.e. Interviews, documentations and archival Records.

Interviews had been conducted with various HR, executive coaches, CEOs, corporate heads or employees for collecting more information on executive coaching. These interviews were conducted by personal interaction as well as using telephone because of the geographical distance of corporate. The interview lasted for approximately 15 to 20 minutes. E-mail was also one of the modes to contact with corporate managers and employees. In e-mail research questionnaire was presented and requested to fill it. To identify key factors which enhance customer value, primary research had been carried out.

3.4.7. **Data Analysis and Statistical Methods**

As data means raw information collected. This raw information needs filtrations in order to convert into relevant information having been compiled, edited and coded i.e. it has to pass through a process of analysis and has to be interpreted accordingly before their meaning and implications are understood. Various statistical techniques are to be used for testing the hypothesis and drawing the inferences and conclusions about the relationship. Following statistical techniques/ methods are used for analyzing the data and hypothesis testing:

**Frequency Distribution:** In statistics, frequency distribution is used to represent the nominal variables such as demographic profiles of the respondents with the help of tables and graphs. Each entry in the frequency distribution represents the frequency of the specific response and the percentage of that specific response out of total responses.

**Descriptive statistics:** Descriptive statistics is the statistical method of representing the basic statistical details of the scale variables. In descriptive statistics the measures of central tendency such as mean, measure of dispersion such as standard deviation of the variables is shown. The aim of descriptive statistics is to represent the basic information about the sample. In the research study the mean and the standard deviations of the scale
variables are calculated in order to represent the basic information of the sample with respect of the different scale variables used in the study.

**One Way ANOVA:** In statistics the One Way ANOVA technique is used to compare the means of the three or more than three independent samples. The null hypothesis of the one way anova is that the group means are statistically same. In the research study the one way anova test is used to analyze the difference of the perceptions of the users and coaches with different demographics with respect to different aspects of executive coaching practices in Indian corporate sector.

**Structural Equation Modeling:** Structural equation modelling is a statistical technique for constructing and testing statistical models, which are often underlying models. It is a technique that incorporates aspects of confirmatory factor analysis, path analysis and regression, which can be seen as special cases of SEM. SEM inspires confirmatory, rather than exploratory modelling; thus, it is fit for theory testing, rather than theory development. It usually starts with a hypothesis, represents it as a model, designing the constructs of interest with a measurement instrument and tests the model. With an accepted theory or otherwise confirmed model, one can also use SEM inductively by specifying a model and using data to estimate the values of free parameters. Often the initial hypothesis requires adjustment in light of model evidence, but SEM is rarely used purely for investigation. Among its strengths is the ability to model constructs as latent variables — variables which are not measured directly, but are estimated in the model from measured variables which are assumed to measure and represent latent variables. This allows the researcher to clearly capture unreliability of measurement in the model, in theory allowing the structural relations between latent variables to be accurately estimated. SEM is an extension of the general linear model that simultaneously estimates relationships between multiple independent, dependent and latent variables.

**Software Used:** In the research study, MS Excel, AMOS 21 and SPSS 21 were used for the purpose of data analysis.
3.5 Limitations of the Study

Present study was conducted by an individual scholar and completed under certain constraints in terms of availability of time, financial resources, universe and sample of proposed study. Since limitations help us to understand and appreciate the perspectives in a proper way, these limitations are being highlighted below.

Sample is not a universe and hence is also a cause of all such studies which are based on sampling techniques.

Some uncontrollable factors that has led to the limitations are listed here:

- Primary data is collected from respondent and assuming that they have given their genuine responses.

- The results of the study can’t be generalized for all industries as every industry has its own need and understanding of executive coaching. Because of sample size the results are not able to be completely generalized to be representative of the entire coaching industry.

- It has been assumed that representative sample would provide the similar results as for complete universe and hence a sample study was opted hoping that the results obtained would be appropriate for the strata studied as well as the universe.

- Coaches were identified via this author’s network as well as sampling process.

- The participants might have kept away from describing some of the psychological constructs as it is not easy to open up fully on such sensitive issues.