

Structured Abstract

Purpose

The Global Financial Crisis (GFC) has undermined the legitimacy of orthodox economic assumptions, which nevertheless continue to frame business school pedagogy and in consequence there is an opportunity for socio-economic insights to be more fully incorporated into the business school curriculum. This article reports and reflects on two socio-economic case studies that were delivered to MBA students. Furthermore, the article demonstrates that contemporary literature on behavioural economics has the potential to enhance students' social-economic understanding of corruption and white-collar crime, as well as to develop their appreciation of the nature of entrepreneurship.

Design/methodology/approach

The paper presents two inter-disciplinary socio-economic teaching cases that are informed by the behavioural economics approach.

The first teaching case delivered concerned a socio-economic understanding of corruption and white-collar crime. It was also inter-disciplinary to include inputs from business history and criminology. The second teaching case was also inter-disciplinary and included andragogy theory and sources from entrepreneurial biographies. The aim of both teaching cases was to develop an appreciation among students that corruption, white-collar crime and entrepreneurship can be analysed within socio-economics lens.

Findings

The teaching case examples discussed in this article offered an alternative socio-economic understanding to core areas of the MBA curriculum, enabling students to apply a behavioural economic approach to corruption, white collar-crime and to the nature of entrepreneurship. The findings derived from these case studies is that behavioural economics has the potential to enhance the teaching of socio-economics.

Practical implications

The GFC presents an opportunity to re-shape the business school curriculum to acknowledge the centrality of socio-economics and consequently to offer an alternative to the dominant ontological assumptions -taken from the economic understanding of rationality-that have previously under-pinned business school pedagogy.

Originality/value

The originality of this article is to apply behavioural economics to socio-economic teaching case studies in core subject areas of the MBA curriculum.